

The Sampson County Board of Commissioners convened for their regular meeting at 6:00 p.m. on Monday, June 7, 2021, in the County Auditorium, 435 Rowan Road in Clinton, North Carolina. Members present: Vice Chairperson Sue Lee, and Commissioners Thaddeus Godwin, Jerol Kivett, and Lethia Lee. Absent: Chairman Clark Wooten.

Vice Chairperson Lee called the meeting to order and called on County Manager Ed Causey to provide the invocation. Commissioner Kivett then led the Pledge of Allegiance.

### **Approval of Agenda**

Upon a motion made by Commissioner Godwin and seconded by Commissioner Lethia Lee, the Board voted unanimously to approve the agenda with the following changes: add to Consent Agenda Home and Community Care Block Grant Provider Summary; add to Consent Agenda item (d) an additional CDBG-NR policy: Section 504 Compliance Officer/Grievance Procedure.

### **Item 1: Presentations**

Presentation of a 2021 NCPTA Safety Award to Sampson Area Transportation Sampson Area Transportation Director Ro Oates-Mobley introduced David Rhew, Director of NC Public Transportation Association, who presented Sampson Area Transportation with a 2021 NCPTA Safety Award and recognized staff members for the accomplishment.

### **Item 2: Planning & Zoning Matters**

Consideration of Preliminary Plan for Taylors Creek Phase III (21-lot, R) Located on Autry Mill Road Senior Planner Austin Brinkley reviewed the request for approval of the preliminary plan for the 21-lot Taylors Creek Phase III Subdivision, located on Autry Mill Road. Upon a motion made by Vice Chairperson Lee and seconded by Commissioner Godwin, the Board voted unanimously to approve the preliminary plan for Taylors Creek Phase III, as recommended by the Planning Board.

Amended Planning Board Rules of Procedure Implementing Changes Required by NCGS Chapter 160D Senior Planner Austin Brinkley presented the proposed amendments to the Planning Board's Rules of Procedure, implementing the changes required by NCGS Chapter 160D. Upon a motion made by Commissioner Kivett and seconded by Commissioner Godwin, the Board voted unanimously to approve the amended Rules of Procedure as recommended by the Planning Board.

### Item 3: Action Items

Public Hearing – Proposed Budget for FY 2021-2022 Following a brief review of the public comment guidelines provided by Assistant County Manager Susan Holder, Vice Chairperson Sue Lee called the hearing to order and open the floor for comment. The following were received:

Wendy Taylor: Thank you for the opportunity to address the Board of Commissioners. My name is Wendy Taylor granddaughter of a former Sampson County commissioner who used to sit in one of those seats, J. Homer Butler. He helped mold me into who I am today and growing up he taught me that if I wanted change that I had to be the change. So here I am. He's probably looking down saying, "Oh Lord. Here she goes." To give you a little background on me. In middle school I played at Fisher Drive, softball there. That led to me playing four years at Lakewood High and several summers in the co-ed league in Garland during my high school years. After having children of my own I coached for several years in Garland when my boys were young and played there. And now my granddaughter will be playing her first T-ball game there Thursday night and I invite each and every one of you to join me at 7 p.m. so you can see just how many people, kids and adults, that benefit from this league. I am a retired teacher now but still substitute regularly for Sampson County schools. Before retiring I taught at Clear Run Middle, Union Middle, Midway High and Union High. I consider the Union district my home because the people in this end of the county are great and I love working with them and I am here tonight as an advocate for the kids of the district I call home. This past year has been extremely difficult on everyone as you know. Life was turned upside down in the blink of an eye. Shutdowns, masks, remote learning, social distancing; there was no such thing as normal anymore. What we thought was 2 weeks to slow the spread ended up being a full year of everyone's life. While it was only inconvenient for some of us, we now know the children were the most profoundly affected by the madness. They were scared and isolated for far too long. Over the course of the year, I have seen too many children in the Garland area wandering the streets with idle time. Parks were shut down and there was absolutely nothing for them to do. So, when I learned that the softball league in Garland was a go for this year I was overjoyed. This little, small town league has been going strong since 2016 when the late Judy Smith, a town commissioner had the vision to bring it back after the county recreation department vacated it roughly 10 years earlier. There are around 100 kids currently playing. Volunteer sponsorship pays for t-shirts and other supplies. Coaches use their own money to buy bats and supplies for their team. The town of Garland helps by paying the light bill and keeping the grounds outside of the field maintained. Local volunteers keep the grass cut and fields ready for practices and games. There is quite a network of people chipping in to make this possible. The registration fee is a very affordable \$5 - not \$35 - and all of the games are played right there in Garland where many players can walk to the park while others only have a few miles to drive. All of this is made possible by volunteers and donations from generous businesses, which

leads me to why I'm here tonight. As a taxpayer in the sometimes-forgotten end of the county I always question when I make that check out to Sampson county tax Collector, what am I getting for my money? And the honest answer is bare minimal services. No garbage collection. No County water. No sewer. No discount on homeowner's insurance because I'm over 5 miles from a fire station. There's no such thing as internet or cable options. If I dial 911 maybe a sheriff's deputy is there within 30 mins if I'm lucky and if I need medical attention I just hope the one medical unit is not on someone else's call. The Southern end of the county has sadly been forgotten in a lot of ways and it's always been that way. I'm here to ask our commissioners to invest a little in our part of the county. The people living in Garland don't have the economic advantages the rest of the county has. The kids in this district need this park and its league to continue. We have lights and fencing that need repairing. We would love for our facilities to be as nice as the ones in Newton Grove or Roseboro, or any of the other recreational parks funded by our tax dollars. The last year has been rough on us all. (Vice Chairperson Sue Lee informed Ms. Taylor that her allotted time had expired) So I am asking is board to show this struggling town, down in the lower end of the county where we don't have a lot, we don't get a lot - to show us that we haven't been forgotten down there and to help finance the much-needed recreational facility for the kids to have an outlet. Thank you. And I will be emailing this along with some pictures from the park to show you, because I know I had to go through it fast and I missed some of it and I was out of time so I will email this to each of you so you can see pictures. And I invite each of you to come down on any given night and see the number of people that it serves.

Brook Taylor: I'd like to thank you for letting me come out and speak with you guys tonight. My name is Brook Taylor and I am a coach and a parent of a t-ball player in Garland. I have a total of 12 children on my team. The Garland League has a total of two t-ball teams and together we coach 24 kids. I've learned a lot about these children and their families since our first practice on May 10<sup>th</sup>. Upon registering my daughter, I asked the Chairman of the league if there was any help that was needed and his response was, "please". I was happy to volunteer and mentor these children. This is not only their first year playing but my first year coaching. I'm here tonight to reach out to you to ask you about targeted funds that will benefit and be specific to the Garland Softball League or any softball related projects that will happen in Garland. The families that come from my end of the county are struggling economically, low income, or receiving governmental assistance. The families in our town go beyond for our children. They attend every practice and go out of their way to volunteer any help. I previously stated that I am a mother of a player. I stay at home with my two children and my husband is our bread winner. Only having one income, I went out and purchased throw-down bags, balls, and a batting tee so the children could learn to hit off of a tee and run the bases. All of these were not provided and came out of my own pocket as well as the other coaches. The children have been socially isolated for the past year. For half of the year our kids couldn't even go play on a playground or step foot on a field. We as adults know how important socialization is for our mental health. Could you imagine being trapped inside with no where to go and no

one your age to interact with? It's heartbreaking. At the age they are they need some sort of interaction with kids their age. I know my daughter does. COVID put a halt on her attending pre-school this year and when we heard that the Garland League was registering kids to play, I was so happy that my daughter would have an outlet to make new friends. Just last Wednesday the coach and I put our heads together to ask the parents at the last minute to bring the kids to the park to scrimmage. Every parent immediately replied with yes. Not only were there parents out there, there were grandparents, cousins, friends, coaches, citizens of Garland out there watching our kids play. They had the best time watching the kids and there were smiles on every sideline. The league is very important to me not just because my daughter plays, but because its all Garland has. We no longer house a dance studio, we barely have a safe play area for our kids to play on. And studies show that playing sports as a young adolescent not only shapes them into the success in the future, but also success in the classroom. As parents we strive for our children to be more successful than we are. The more we build on to this league, the less kids we're going to have roaming the streets in Garland, participating in illegal activities. We play every Thursday night at 7 o'clock on the main field. I ask you to please come out and watch these kids and interact and get to know the parents of your county. I do thank you and I stand before you tonight in hopes that you can hear the cry for the help that our town and children need. Thank you.

Vice Chairperson Sue Lee asked if any other comments were received via mail or email. Susan Holder confirmed that none were received. The hearing was closed.

Public Hearing - Economic Development Expenditures in Proposed Budget for FY 2021-2022 Vice Chairperson Sue Lee called the hearing to order and opened the floor for comments. None were received. She then asked if any comments had been received via mail or email, and the Clerk confirmed that none had been received. The hearing was closed.

The Board agreed to schedule budget planning sessions on Tuesdays, June 15<sup>th</sup> and 22<sup>nd</sup> at 6 p.m. in the Administration Building Conference Room, 406 County Complex Road, Clinton, NC.

Public Hearing - Naming of Private Roads The Chairman opened the hearing and called upon Assistant County Manager Susan Holder who reviewed the recommendations for naming certain private roads as follows:

PVT 1446 5404 161	Heron Court
PVT 1832 907	Country Cove Lane
PVT 1146 3087	Bradsher Farm Lane
PVT 1602 Murray Farms (Road A)	Tiger Paw Lane
PVT 1602 Murray Farms (Road B)	Sanford Lane
PVT Murray Farms (Road C)	Stegman Lane
PVT Murray Farms (Road D)	Athens Lane

Upon a motion made by Commissioner Kivett and seconded by Vice Chairperson Sue Lee, the Board voted unanimously to name the private roads as recommended.

Approval of Amendments to Ordinances Implementing Rules and Regulations of Sampson County Water and Sewer Districts I and II Public Works Director Lin Reynolds provided a brief historical overview of the water system and the challenges causing the amendments to the ordinance, noting increased operation costs and outdated equipment as primary challenges. Upon a motion made by Commissioner Kivett and seconded by Commissioner Godwin, the Board voted unanimously approve the amendments as presented.

County Attorney Joel Starling advised the Board that the item will need to be added to the Consent Agenda of the July 12, 2021, regular scheduled meeting, for a second reading when all board members are present to vote.

Consideration of Execution of a Memorandum of Agreement Between the State of North Carolina and Local Governments on Proceeds Relating to the Settlement of Opioid Litigation The item was tabled to the July 12, 2021, meeting when all board meetings are present for discussion.

Convention and Visitors Bureau Upon a motion made by Vice Chairperson Lee and seconded by Commissioner Kivett, the Board voted unanimously to appoint Wally Bashlor, Roland Hall, and Shawn Hobbs.

Aging Advisory Council Upon a motion made by Vice Chairperson Lee and seconded by Commissioner Godwin, the Board voted unanimously to appoint Clark Hales.

Economic Development Commission Advisor Board Upon a motion made by Vice Chairperson Lee and seconded by Commissioner Kivett, the Board voted unanimously to appoint Bartley Warren and Gary Mac Herring.

**Item 4: Consent Agenda**

Upon a motion made by Commissioner Kivett and seconded by Commissioner Godwin, the Board voted unanimously to approve the Consent Agenda as follows:

- a. Approved the minutes of the May 3, 2021 and May 24, 2021 meetings
- b. Authorized execution of the Juvenile Crime Prevention Council Certification for FY 21-22 (Copy filed in Inc. Minute Book \_\_\_\_ Page \_\_\_\_.)
- c. Adopted a Resolution of Support for the Building Reuse Program application for Project Keegan (Copy filed in Inc. Minute Book \_\_\_\_ Page \_\_\_\_.)

- d. Approved documents associated with the CDBG-NR grant program: Equal Employment and Procurement Plan, Language Access Plan, Program Policies, Project Ordinance, Recipients Plan to Further Fair Housing, Residential Anti-Displacement and Relocation Assistance Plan, Section 3 Plan and Section 519 Resolution, and Section 504 Compliance Officer/Grievance Procedure (Copies filed in Inc. Minute Book \_\_\_\_ Page \_\_\_\_.)
- e. Approved execution of the Contract to Audit Accounts between Sampson County and W. Greene PLLC for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2021 (Copy filed in Inc. Minute Book \_\_\_\_ Page \_\_\_\_.)
- f. Approved the Financial Conflict of Interest Policy associated with Sampson County Emergency Management's participation in the RACE CARS trial on pre-hospital cardiac arrest protocols (Copy filed in Inc. Minute Book \_\_\_\_ Page \_\_\_\_.)
- g. Approved the execution of the Memorandum of Understanding between Sampson County (via Sampson County Health Department) and the Sampson County Child Advocacy Center (Copy filed in Inc. Minute Book \_\_\_\_ Page \_\_\_\_.)
- h. Approved the delinquent-filed property tax exemption for Whosoever Will Disciples of Christ Church
- i. Approved tax refunds and releases as submitted:

#9575	Michael Warren	\$102.52
#9558	Michelle House	\$136.39
#9587	Timothy Pope	\$307.20
#9589	Romeo Johnson	\$103.36

- j. Approved budget amendments as submitted:

<b><u>EXPENDITURE</u></b>		Juvenile Crime Prevention Council		
<u>Code Number</u>		<u>Description (Object of Expenditure)</u>	<u>Increase</u>	<u>Decrease</u>
05558310	510000	JCPC Administration	\$6,137.00	
05558310	561002	JCPC Mediation Program	\$47,955.00	
05558310	561011	JCPC Temporary Shelter Program		\$16,800.00

<b><u>REVENUE</u></b>				
<u>Code Number</u>		<u>Source of Revenue</u>	<u>Increase</u>	<u>Decrease</u>
05435831	303612	Grant Dept of Public Safety	\$37,292.00	

<b><u>EXPENDITURE</u></b>		Elections		
<u>Code Number</u>		<u>Description (Object of Expenditure)</u>	<u>Increase</u>	<u>Decrease</u>
11141700	534300	Election Expense	\$10,668.00	
11141700	526200	Departmental Supplies	\$48,354.00	
11141700	526201	Dept. Supplies Equipment	\$8,198.00	
11141700	551000	Capital Outlay	\$7,038.00	

<b><u>REVENUE</u></b>				
<u>Code Number</u>		<u>Source of Revenue</u>	<u>Increase</u>	<u>Decrease</u>
11034170	402600	HAVA	\$74,258.00	

<b><u>EXPENDITURE</u></b>		Sheriff		
<u>Code Number</u>		<u>Description (Object of Expenditure)</u>	<u>Increase</u>	<u>Decrease</u>
11243100	581000	Transfer to State Agency (Weapon)	\$7,000.00	

<b><u>REVENUE</u></b>				
<u>Code Number</u>		<u>Source of Revenue</u>	<u>Increase</u>	<u>Decrease</u>
11034310	404115	Concealed Weapons Fee	\$7,000.00	

<b><u>EXPENDITURE</u></b>		Communicable Disease		
<u>Code Number</u>		<u>Description (Object of Expenditure)</u>	<u>Increase</u>	<u>Decrease</u>
12551250	523900	Medical Supplies	\$50.00	

<b><u>REVENUE</u></b>				
<u>Code Number</u>		<u>Source of Revenue</u>	<u>Increase</u>	<u>Decrease</u>
12532125	408900	CD-Misc Revenue	\$50.00	

<b><u>EXPENDITURE</u></b>		Animal Shelter		
<u>Code Number</u>		<u>Description (Object of Expenditure)</u>	<u>Increase</u>	<u>Decrease</u>
11243800	526200	Departmental Supplies	\$1,287.00	

<b><u>REVENUE</u></b>				
<u>Code Number</u>		<u>Source of Revenue</u>	<u>Increase</u>	<u>Decrease</u>
11034380	408401	Donations	\$1,287.00	

- k. Approved the Proposed Capital Budget Expenses 2021-22 document submitted by Sampson County Schools (does not obligate allocation of funding; adopted budget ordinance document will authorize final allocation) (Copy filed in in Inc. Minute Book \_\_\_\_ Page \_\_\_\_.)

**(walk-on)** Approved the Home and Community Care Block Grant Provider Services Summary as submitted. (Copy filed in in Inc. Minute Book \_\_\_\_ Page \_\_\_\_.)

**Consent Agenda, Board of Health**

- l. Approved revisions to the Health Department fee schedule as recommended by the Health Advisory Board
- m. Wrote off as uncollectible certain delinquent accounts, as submitted
- n. Approved the Environmental Health Quality Assurance Policy (Copy filed in in Inc. Minute Book \_\_\_\_ Page \_\_\_\_.)
- o. Approved the Environmental Health Prioritization Policy (Copy filed in in Inc. Minute Book \_\_\_\_ Page \_\_\_\_.)

**Item 5: Board Information (Board of Health Items)**

- a. Health Advisory Board Meeting Minutes for March 15, 2021 and March 29, 2021
- b. Environmental Health QA Summary

**Item 6: County Manager's Report**

County Manager Ed Causey reminded the Board of the hiring of Ms. Kelsey Edwards as the new Library Director and Mr. Richard Sauer as the new Emergency Management Director. Both are expected to be officially introduced at a later date.

**Item 7: Public Comment Period**

Following a brief review of the public comment guidelines provided by Assistant County Manager Susan Holder, Vice Chairperson Sue Lee opened the floor for comment. The following were received:

Alan Williams: Thank you all for letting me speak. My concern is three-fold. This is a budget request item. It's a public safety item. And it's a first responders safety item. But there was a line item from EMS Supervisor Erick Herring for \$230,000 to hire six paramedics in this county. Right now there are six advance life support units in this county. Only six. From Highway 24 North, there's five; two in Clinton and three stays in the northern end of the county. 24 South there's only one. The issue is when that EMS 77 unit goes out on a call, we're at zero. \$230,000 to hire 6 paramedics that can save lives is a small price to pay for what needs to be done. That's not the fix. That won't fix the EMS problem here in the county but it's a start. Back during football season a young man from Charlotte was playing football at Harrells and broke his collar bone. He laid on the football field for 45 minutes. I sat there with him with his parents. That's unacceptable. There was a wreck a few weeks ago in Harrells. The EMS unit came from Newton Grove. Three patients that needed to be transported sat on the side of the road for 45 minutes waiting on an ambulance. Unacceptable. Saturday we were at a fire in Garland. The firefighters were getting their rehab and getting checked out by EMS and there was another EMS call in Garland. My assistant chief looked at me and said what do I do? Do I keep the truck here or do I let it go? I said you let it go. They are advance life supporters, they are paramedics, they are not EMTs, they are not firefighters like us. When we're called, we go, we can go perform life saving measures. We need those advance life support units. So I'm asking that you reconsider that request. It was not recommended in the proposed budget that I saw. Mr. Wooten and Mr. Causey we had this discussion in a Fire Commission meeting. I'll answer any question that you have. The EM Supervisor at this time, Erick Herring and Kevin Hairr can get you any number that you need. I've seen it first-hand. We're going to hurt somebody in this county. I told Mr. Clark Wooten that we're going to kill somebody in this county the direction we're going. We see it out there every day. I just stronger urge you to reconsider and please add those six paramedics. That won't get but one truck but that's one that we



don't have. When that one truck is gone that's it. There's nothing. I don't have anybody to call for help.

Commissioner Lethia Lee added by noting that she had recently experienced a wait time of 45 minutes while in need of emergency assistance for a family member, which she noted was unacceptable.

Alan Williams: From the public safety standpoint and a first responder, so you've got that truck coming from Newton Grove driving more aggressively than they will normally drive trying to make up that difference. See that's where we're going to hurt somebody.

Commissioner Jerol Kivett shared that he had experienced a long delay during a past incident and that response times have since improved. He continued by asking Mr. Williams what he thought will be a long-term solution.

Alan Williams: The long-range plan will probably be if they add three trucks in this county over a period of time. Would you agree with that Mr. Causey? We can't do it all at one time, but the issue right now is from Clinton south, when that unit is either gone to New Hanover or wherever it goes, we don't have anybody there.

Commissioner Kivett asked if three trucks will be the solution.

Alan Williams: I think, in my opinion, and of others, that three trucks, which will be nine paramedics, I think that would address all the problems. For the foreseeable future, but to fix the immediate need, my concern was that if this doesn't get added back to the budget for this year then we are going to go a whole year without that one truck.

Commissioner Kivett asked if \$5,500,000 was currently in the budget for this cause. Mr. Causey stated that the request for six paramedics was noted in the proposed budget, however, staff had determined to "hold the request for paramedics in abeyance and do an in-depth review over the next year. We want to review schedules, headquarter locations, data on calls, better utilization of the volunteers, etc. and respond to our potential needs in the most proactive and responsible manner possible. We will then recommend additional positions as needed", as noted in the budget message. He continued by noting that staff acknowledges the need, however, staff desires to conduct an in-depth review of the current system in order to be able to ensure changes are targeted and as fiscally responsible as possible.

Commissioner Kivett continued by asking Mr. Williams to clarify the statement made regarding the County killing someone.

Alan Williams: Just say we're at a structure fire and I have two firefighters inside that actively fighting fire and when they come out and when they need help. By the county

contract, there's supposed to be an EMS advance life support transport unit on that scene when we're actively fighting fire, at every structure fire in the county.

Commissioner Kivett asked if the lack of equipment would result in a non-response in the event there were simultaneous fire events.

Alan Williams: There are six units in the county right now, so if there is a structure fire that ties one of them up it is dedicated to that fire.

Commissioner Kivett asked if there is a 7<sup>th</sup> fire event would that result in a non-response.

Alan Williams: We would have to land a helicopter or bring somebody from Duplin, Pender, or Bladen. That's the issue. The magic number we would have to do the study to find out. We wouldn't want to go out and hire 20 paramedics and add six trucks if that is not what we needed. But where I told Commissioner Wooten where we were going to kill somebody is that there is nobody. That truck the other day that had to wait 45 minutes. We sat there with them three kids on the side of the road. We can't do chest compressions for 45 minutes and have a viable patient. That's the issue. There was an electrocution a while back and never in my life had I mashed an AED and it said to shock the patient. I shocked the patient and life comes back in the patient, but without that EMS unit there that young man wouldn't have made it. We don't carry the equipment, the drugs, what they need to save lives.

G.H. Wilson (Board of Elections): I am G.H. Wilson with the Sampson County Board of Elections and I have with me tonight Dwight Williams and our Director Niya Rayner. Niya stand up. This young lady filled in a spot last year in probably the biggest election we've had in my lifetime, and she did a great job. She started working July-August and she went through that election, run-off, and recount and everything and she did a real good job. And if you haven't met her I want you to meet her. Go over there and talk with her. But we three met with Mr. Causey and David Clack a couple of months back and discussed the possibility of finding a place that will be more room for our election staff. And I want to thank you for listening to our request and allowing us to swap places with the Veterans Office. It will give us much more space to work in and to store our voting records. But, we are concerned about the early voting. We may be fine in the municipal elections this year and may be in the primary next Spring. But we're concerned about the fall elections and 2024 presidential election. We feel that we may be cramped in there and people having to wait outside in inclement weather or something like that you know. Over 9,000 people voted early last year in Clinton at the Badcock building, which is 32% of the people that voted in the whole county the whole time. We just figured that we may not have enough room for them at the Veterans Office and we would like a permanent place that we can have Early Voting every year. A designated place. We don't have to have that for offices, but we do need a bigger place for early voting. We would really appreciate it if you could help us look into this. Our Board is having discussions about how to reduce the polling places especially around the city of

Clinton. There's five precincts in Clinton and then one at the armory for Kitty Fork. That's six places within 10 miles that we are voting. Now I'm not talking about changing the precincts, I'm just talking about reducing the polling places because with that we could use less people in the voting. This year we tried to use 12 according to the State. It's just hard to find 23 polling places times 12 people. I want to make sure that you understand that I am not talking about cutting down precincts. I'm just talking about cutting down polling places. We've got two polling places within 100 yards of each other just about. It's something that we would like you to look at. 17 days of early voting is a lot of time for folk to vote and a permanent place for early voting in the city of Clinton we feel would help us tremendously and be a benefit to the people of Sampson County.

Commissioner Kivett commended Director Niya Rayner for the performance during the 2021 general election.

### **Recess to Reconvene**

Upon a motion made by Vice Chairperson Sue Lee and seconded by Commissioner Kivett, the Board voted unanimously to recess to reconvene on June 15, 2021 at 6 p.m. in the Administration Building Conference Room.

/signed copy on file in Clerk's Office

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Clark H. Wooten, Chairman

/signed copy on file in Clerk's Office

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Susan J. Holder, Clerk to the Board