

November 9, 2022

The Martin County Board of Commissioners met in a Regular Session on Wednesday, November 9, 2022, 7:00 p.m. in the Superior Courtroom at the Martin County Governmental Center, 305 East Main Street, Williamston, North Carolina.

ASSEMBLY

Present in the Boardroom: Chairman Ronnie Smith, Vice Chairman Dempsey Bond, Jr., Commissioner Joe R. Ayers, Commissioner Emily Biggs, County Manager U. James Bennett, Clerk to the Board Julia S. Rease, County Attorney Benjamin Eisner and Sheriff Tim Manning.

Commissioner Gurganus was not in attendance due to unforeseen circumstances.

Others Present: Mayor Charlotte Griffin of the Town of Bear Grass, Mayor Jerry McCrary of the Town of Parmele, and Chief Deputy Drew Robinson.

Chairman Smith called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m. Commissioner Biggs led the Pledge of Allegiance, and Town of Parmele Mayor Jerry McCrary provided the invocation.

Chairman Smith extended a welcome to all.

AGENDA APPROVAL

Commissioner Biggs made a **Motion** to approve the agenda, with a **Second** by Commissioner Ayers. The Motion was **Carried** unanimously.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Hunting Property

Mr. Jeff Grubb made a public comment regarding his property and hunting. Mr. Grub stated he paid to hunt on his property and there was an ongoing issue with a hunting club hunting on his property. Mr. Grub stated that the hunting club behind his property has prevented him from hunting due to their hunting dogs running on his property. Mr. Grub stated that he was a truck driver and only had two days of hunting in which hunting dogs have run and have been released on his property. The hunting laws were referenced in the public comment and Mr. Grub stated that it was illegal to release dogs for hunting on someone else's property. Mr. Grub stated that he has posted no trespassing signs, painted purple paint on the trees on his property, and spoken with many officials with no resolve. Mr. Grub stated that he paid to hunt on his property and his taxes, therefore he should be able to hunt on his property without interruption. Mr. Grub stated that there should be laws made regarding the issue.

Chairman Smith stated that public comments did not require a response from the Board, but the situation would be looked into.

CONSENT AGENDA

Vice Chairman Bond Jr. made a **Motion** to approve the consent agenda as presented, with a **Second** by Commissioner Ayers. The Motion was **Carried** unanimously.

1. Minutes for September 21, 2022 Regular Meeting

2. Financial Report for October 2022

3. Tax Assessor - Tax Refund Requests – October 2022 - \$514.50 (\$149.51 to Deny with Board approval)

4. Tax Assessor – Tax Relief Orders – October 2022 – \$1120.17

Year Levy	Lname	Fname	Reason	Value	Total
2022	Hyman	Clarence, Gregory	Listed as Stolen	\$500.00	\$4.85
2022	Griffin	Jimmy	SW removed due to 1 SW being used for storage	-----	\$182.00
2021	Griffin	Jimmy	SW removed due to 1 SW being used for storage	-----	\$182.00
2022	Company LTD	GD Capital Leasing	Sold MV	\$11,381	\$197.82
2021	Company LTD	GD Capital Leasing	Sold MV	\$11,381	\$197.82
2022	Reyes	Julia, Joelle	Error in LFF	-----	\$182.00
2022	Ebron	Cornelius Jr.	No Trash Cart	-----	\$182.00
2020	Keel	Sylvia Pierce	Clerical Error Sold Equipment	-----	\$29.70
2022	Rodgers	Walter Edward	Double Listed	-----	\$53.38
			Total Real & Personal Releases		\$514.50
2020	Andrews	Ellen Delois	Situs Error		37.16
2020	Bullock	Antonio Clayton	Situs Error		330.50
2020	Cooper	Jerry Lloyd	Situs Error		0.43
2020	County View Family Farms		Situs Error		6.20
2020	Creech	Joseph Ernest	Situs Error		65.19
2020	CScapes, Inc		Situs Error		49.52
2020	Flowers	Jennifer Jeffries	Situs Error		82.78
2020	Fountain	Elouise Jones	Adjustment		5.96
2020	James	Charles Wendell	Situs Error		42.30
2020	Lilley International AL INC		Situs Error		4.78
2020	Lilley International AL INC		Situs Error		4.12
2020	Rascoe	Vernetta Louise	Situs Error		63.70
2020	Washington	Vickey Ann	Situs Error		0.40
2020	Waste Industries LLC		Situs Error		42.57
2020	Waste Industries LLC		Situs Error		49.94
2020	Waste Industries LLC		Situs Error		40.21
			Total VTS Refund Requests		\$ 825.76

5. Tax Collector's Report – October 2022

	Category	October	6-21 Y-T-D
Real Property	20	\$8,346.79	\$40,016.40
Personal Property	25	\$616.67	\$6,832.92
Total		\$8,963.46	\$46,849.32
Motor Vehicle	30	\$11.10	\$78.66
Total MV		\$11.10	\$78.66
All Total		\$8,974.56	\$46,927.98

6. Board Appointments/Reappointments

Airport Commission and Airport Height Restriction Advisory Boards

The **Airport Height Restriction Advisory Board** had one vacancy after the passing of a dedicated member. Chief Deputy Drew Robinson was recommended to fill this vacancy. If so approved by the Board, Chief Deputy Drew Robinson would complete the uncompleted term. This 3 year term would be filled until the expiration date of October 31, 2023

The **Airport Commission Board** had two vacancies after a passing of a member and the resignation of another member. Chief Deputy Drew Robinson was recommended to fill an uncompleted 4 year term ending on January 31, 2023. The second vacancy was recommended to be completed by Williamston Fire Chief Michael Peaks. If so approved, the 4 year term would expire on January 31, 2026.

The Board **Approved** the above reappointments as part of the consent agenda.

Animal Control Appeal Board

The Animal Control Board follows the Martin County ordinance that calls for the Animal Control Board to hear appeals regarding dogs being declared potentially dangerous, dangerous or vicious. The Board recently received notification of resignation and staff recommended Mr. Lawrence Rawls to complete the incomplete 4 year term to expire on April 30, 2023.

The Board **Approved** the above reappointments as part of the consent agenda.

Martin County Regional Water and Sewer Authority (MCRWASA)

MCRWASA Board Directors James Bennett, Eric Pearson, Stacy Stalls, Julius Patrick, Dempsey Bond Jr. (Alt.), and William Freeman (Alt.) board terms will expire on November 30, 2022. This reappointment would be a three-year term, which would expire November 30, 2025.

The Board **Approved** the above reappointments as part of the consent agenda.

Tax Collector/ Deputy Tax Collector Appointments

On June 30, 2018, Tax Collector Christie Blevins was appointed Tax Collector for a four-year term. Tax Collector Blevins has maintained responsibility of managing the DMV license Plate Agency. She has been certified as a Tax Collector since 2011. Tax Collector Christie Blevins has

also asked that Tax Collector Kim Ross be reappointed as Deputy Tax Collector. Tax Collector Kim Ross has also served in the DMV License Plate Agency and served as Deputy Tax Collector since 2008. NC General Statute 105-349, the statute that references the appointment of a Tax Collector, did not dictate a term for a Tax Collector. Historically, the Tax Assessor has been re-appointed for four-year terms.

The Board **Approved** the above reappointments as part of the consent agenda.

Tax Assessor's Office – Review Officer's Resolution

Article 2, Chapter 47 -30.2 Of the North Carolina General Statutes requires the Board of Commissioners, of each county, by resolutions, designate by name one or more persons experienced in mapping or land records management to be appointed as a Review Officer to certify the maps or plats presented to the register of deeds as complying with all statutory requirements for recording.

MARTIN COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS RESOLUTION APPOINTING REVIEW OFFICERS

WHEREAS, Article 2 of Chapter 47 (47-30.2 Review Officer) of the North Carolina General Statutes requires the Board of Commissioners of each county, by resolution. designate by name one or more persons experienced in mapping or land records management to be appointed as a Review Officer to certify the maps or plats presented to the Register of Deeds as complying with all statutory, requirements for recording: **WHEREAS**, the review of statutory requirements is of a technical nature: and

WHEREAS, it appears most efficient for the County of Martin to designate Count) staff to he appointed or reaffirmed h) the Martin County Board of Commissioners to serve as Revie"" Officers, in order to certify each map and plat presented to the Marlin County Register 01· Deeds for recording satisfies the statutory requirements for recording.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Board of Commissioners of Martin County that this resolution shall take effect immediately upon its adoption. That the following person is recommended to be appointed or reaffirmed by the Martin County Board of Commissioners to serve as Review Officer for all lands within the municipal and extraterritorial jurisdiction of the County of Martin in order to certify each map and plat presented to the Martin County Register of Deeds for recording satisfies the statutory; requirements for recording:

<u>Name</u>	<u>Position/Title</u>
Melissa S. Phillips	Tax Assessor
Paulette Bullock	Property Tax Specialist
Erica Davis	Property Tax Specialist
Hilton Edmundson	Real Estate Appraiser

Remove the following from being a review officer:

Name
Elisha Hardison
Joshua Hollis

Adopted this this 9th day of November 2022.

Ronnie Smith, Chairman

Julia Rease, Clerk to the Board

The Board **Approved** the above reappointments as part of the consent agenda.

8. Clerk Report included for informational purposes.

INTRODUCTION OF NEW EMPLOYEE(S)

Tax Assessor Melissa Phillips introduced Mr. Alan Hilderbrandt as a new Tax Assessor for Martin County. Tax Assessor Phillips stated Mr. Hilderbrandt was in training and was a hard worker since being hired.

The Board welcomed and thanked Mr. Hilderbrandt for choosing Martin County.

PRESENTATIONS

Roanoke River Partners (RRP) and Rosenwald School

Town of Bear Grass Mayor Charlotte Griffin made a presentation regarding the former Hamilton Colored School, a famed Rosenwald School nationally registered since 1980. Chamber of Commerce Director Chase Conner and Town of Parmele Mayor Jerry McCrary attended the meeting in support and additional information.

Video Presentations

Video presentations were narrated by Mayor of Parmele Jerry McCrary and produced by Chamber of Commerce Director Chase Conner. The presentation gave information regarding the Rosenwald School being repurposed into a hub of amenity activity where visitors can learn about the Roanoke River, its history, and the areas that developed around it. Mayor Charlotte Griffin gave a tour of the historical Rosenwald School, information on renovations made thus far, and the plans of the school in the video presentations. The Rosenwald School was stated to have majority of its original infrastructure, furnishings, and equipment. Mayor Griffin of Bear Grass shared that some windows were repaired to prevent weatherization from deteriorating the historic site. Bear Grass Mayor Charlotte Griffin showed the original classrooms, the uses of the original appliances, and the new additions planned for the school. Bear Grass Mayor Griffin explained in her video presentation that there were originally 4 classrooms and 2 more were added later due to the volume of students. Mayor Griffin reported that there were classes to teach machinery repair, construction, cooking, sewing, and a stage for programs. Mayor Griffin stated there were stoves to cook food for the children, provide heating, and purify water for drinking.

Future Rosenwald Plans

Mayor of Bear Grass Griffin stated the Roanoke River Partners had existed for 25 years and purchased the Rosenwald School property in 2007. Since then, the Roanoke River Partners still own the school and had spent \$100,000 through grants and other financial means. Mayor Griffin stated that the Hamilton Rosenwald School was built around 1919-1920 and expressed it to be a gem in a historical and modern day context. Mayor Griffin stated that there was one room that was going to be utilized as an office space for the Roanoke River Partners and the Roanoke River State Trail. Another room would be renovated into a prep kitchen wherein food could be prepped before a meeting and or event in the future. Mayor Griffin stated that two bathrooms would be added to

the building as well as wheelchair accessible ramps. Overall, Mayor Griffin stated the Rosenwald School would provide as a historic preservation project, headquarters for the Roanoke River Partners, the newly formed Roanoke River State Trail as designated by the state legislature, and a regional community center for the Town of Hamilton. Mayor Griffin stated the location of the area was one of the few places that could only be reached by the river or the road system. Mayor Griffin advocated that the Hamilton area of the county needed a place for meetings, festivals, regional meetings, and a host of other activities.

Funding Regarding Repurposing the Hamilton Rosenwald School

Mayor Griffin reported that a sum of funding was granted after the Roanoke River State Trail was named, in which \$250,000 was allocated to this project. The total funding at that time was \$380,000 and the total project was a \$1.2 million project including a park area and trail. Mayor Griffin stated there were grant applications submitted for a couple of funding sources. Mayor Griffin anticipated that it would take approximately \$500,000 additional monies to what they already had in cash to restore the school. Mayor Griffin reported attending a Roanoke River Partners meeting today and was awarded \$5,000 from the Roanoke Electric Trust. There was another grant reported worth \$100,000 that would be announced in December as well as a Community Development Block Grant (CDBG). Mayor Griffin stated if the funded was granted, work would begin immediately as the first \$115,000 of funding was spent on master plans.

Manager Bennett interrupted the presentation to announce an email from the Assistant Secretary of Rural Economic Development Kenny Flowers of the Department of Commerce, stating that the CDBG grant for \$550,000 was funded to Martin County.

Tourism Development Authority Director Chase Conner commented that this was a big project, but it would have a bigger impact on economic development and tourism to the area. TDA Director Conner stated that next year the Roanoke River State Trail could be capitalized off of, especially when the trail received its designation from the state legislature.

Chairman Smith asked if the funding from the CDBG funding was totally funding the Rosenwald School project and Mayor Charlotte Grin of Bear Grass agreed. Chairman Smith then asked for updates and Mayor of Bear Grass Griffin agreed.

Transit of Firearm and Badge and Presentation of Retiree Plaques

Sheriff Tim Manning introduced Mr. Chuck Roberson as a retiree working from July 1, 2015 to August 1, 2022. Sheriff Manning stated some of Mr. Roberson's job duties were to administer concealed weapon permits and collect monies. Sheriff Manning stated he and Finance Officer Cindy Ange could vouch for Mr. Roberson that he always kept up with the departments funding. Sheriff Manning commented that Mr. Roberson was a trustworthy, hardworking individual, and provided the citizens of Martin County with a great job. Sheriff Manning then, presented Mr. Chuck Robinson with a plaque of recognition of service and thanked him.

The Board also thanked Mr. Rogerson for his service to the citizens of Martin County.

Next, Sheriff Manning introduced retired Corporal Kit Campbell with the Martin County Sheriff's Office, effective August 1st, 2022. Sheriff Manning stated Corporal Campbell was originally working in Beaufort County and brought many assets to Martin County. Sheriff Manning stated that Corporal Kit Campbell was a Student Resource Officer at Riverside Middle School, he was a great worker with the children, and the school staff loved Corporal Campbell as well. Sheriff

Manning presented retired Corporal Kit Campbell with a plaque of recognition of service from April 13, 2017- August 1, 2022.

All board members thanked the new retiree Corporal Kit Campbell for his service. Commissioner Biggs, as a teacher at Riverside Middle School, also thanked retiree Campbell for his service and his cooking skills utilized at school events.

Lastly, Sheriff Manning asked the Board for the approval to surplus Corporal Campbell his issued pistol and badge in accordance with NC General Statute 20-187.2, so that Corporal Campbell may take these items with him for his years of dedicated service to the Citizens of Martin County.

Glock Model 45 pistol Serial Number BLAZ958 Smith and Warren Sheriff's Badge

OLD BUSINESS

Tax Assessor's Reevaluation Program Approval

Tax Assessor Melissa Phillips informed the Board of four companies that could bid on service for reevaluation which were:

- Piner Appraisal
- Pearson Appraisal
- Cowan Services
- Tyler

Tax Assessor Phillips gave reviews and a recommendation list of the companies based on experience from the surrounding counties. Tax Assessor Phillips stated Tyler was out of the budget set for reevaluation. Tax Assessor Phillips stated Cowan Services did not have any appraisal experience for revaluations for any county, therefore there was no one to contact to get input. Tax Assessor Phillips reported that there were no good reviews for Piner from surrounding counties. Tax Assessor Phillips then reported that Pearson had mixed reviews of good and bad reviews from surrounding areas. Tax Assessor Phillips stated that this could be corrected with a contract that stated what needed to be conducted. Lastly, Tax Assessor Phillips recommended the services in the order of Piner, Pearson, Cowan, and Tyler.

Tax Assessor Phillips gave her personal experience with the companies. Tax Assessor Phillips stated that Piner Appraisal had staff that was majority made of retired administrators, assessors, and experienced staff working with company that's had conducted revaluations. Tax Assessor Phillips stated that Pearson Appraisal had a few people that were involved in revaluations. Assessor Phillips stated that she would recommend both Piner and Pearson Appraisal and stated that it really mattered how the contract was written for services needing to be completed.

County Manager Bennett stated Tax Assessor Johnny Edmundson, Tax Assessor Phillips, Finance Officer Cindy Ange, and himself reviewed credentials and applications. Manager Bennett it was cheaper to take Pearson than Piner Appraisal, but the trust was in Tax Assessor Phillips recommendation.

Chairman Smith asked Vice Chairman Bond Jr. about his choice and Vice Chairman Bond Jr. stated Piner Appraisal was his choice due to the recommendations given.

Commissioner Ayers was asked for his choice and he stated that he was inclined to accept Tax Assessors Phillips recommendation. Commissioner Ayers asked what the Pearson quote was and Tax Assessor Phillips stated \$24.50, which was a substantial difference. Tax Assessor Phillips stated that money had been quite an issue regardless because the budget for reevaluation was not going to be enough due to an unexpected \$24 bid price. Commissioner Ayers asked since Piner was recommended, were they a better servicer. Tax Assessor Phillips stated that she had experience with the staff at Piner Appraisal and she had a lot of trust in them. Tax Assessor Phillips stated that if she had the same work experience with Pearson, she would've recommended them as much as she did Piner. Commissioner Ayers asked if Piner had a good reputation and Tax Assessor Phillips agreed. Commissioner Ayers stated that he would approve of Pearson since it had the lower bid to conduct the reevaluation. Commissioner Ayers then asked what the difference was in bid prices between Piner and Pearson Appraisal. Tax Assessor Phillips stated the difference would be around \$60,000.

Manager Bennett asked Tax Assessor Phillips what was the difference between the amounts budgeted cross referenced against the prices quoted for Piner and Pearson Appraisal. Tax Assessor Phillips stated the budgeted amount for reevaluation was around \$280,000, the Piner quote was \$450,000, and the Pearson quote was \$500,000.

Commissioner Biggs was asked for her thoughts. Commissioner Biggs stated if both companies were able to provide the same service and the quality of service was comfortable, she would approve of Pearson Appraisal.

Chairman Smith then shared his thoughts on which reevaluation company was favorable. Chairman Smith stated he heard a difference between Piner and Pearson Appraisal and there was a reason Tax Assessor Phillips recommended Piner over Pearson. Chairman Smith stated Tax Assessor Phillips referenced her past work experience with both companies as professionals that delivered services. Chairman Smith then asked with the recommendations received from other surrounding counties, she still leaned towards her own recommendations for Piner Appraisal to conduct the reevaluation. Tax Assessor Phillips agreed. Tax Assessor Phillips stated that she did not report to the Board that she received any negative feedback from Piner at all, wherein she did receive some from Pearson Appraisal. Tax Assessor Phillips reported in speaking with the other assessors, the issues had with Pearson could have been avoided if there was something written differently in their contract. Tax Assessor Phillips reiterated that if the contract was written correctly, the assessor's office shouldn't run into the same issues as stated by other counties.

Commissioner Biggs made the **Motion** to Approve Piner Appraisal as the reevaluation company with a **Second** by Vice Chairman Bond Jr.

Commissioner Ayers stated he was not sure if the Board wanted to approve of spending more money, when Tax Assessor Phillips stated that the contract could prevent issues with a lower bidding company. Commissioner Ayers stated that he understood that Tax Assessor Phillips knew the staff at Piner, but it did not mean that the Pearson staff was not successfully because she was not familiar with them.

The Board members had a reiterated discussion between approving the pros and cons of Piner and Pearson appraisal until Tax Assessor Phillips stated Bertie County utilized Pearson Appraisal and had to delete everything that was completed by that company. Tax Assessor Phillips stated that Bertie County was working with Piner Appraisal, but the issues could have been corrected with a better written contract.

Motion to Approve Piner Appraisal for Reevaluation Services made by Commissioner Biggs and **Seconded** by Vice Chairman Bond Jr. Motion was **Carried** unanimously.

Animal Control Appeal Board – Commissioner Vacancy

Manager Bennett stated the Animal Control Appeal Board needed a Commissioner's Representative to be appointed to the Board as former Commissioner Tommy Bowen's seat had not been filled.

Chairman Smith made the **Motion** to Appoint Vice Chairman Bond Jr. as the Commissioner Representative for the Animal Control Appeal Board with a **Second** by Commissioner Biggs. Motion was **Carried** unanimously.

Vice Chairman Bond Jr. made a **Motion** to Appoint Chairman Smith as the Alternate Commissioner Representative on the Animal Control Appeal Board with a **Second** by Commissioner Ayers. Motion was **Carried** unanimously.

NEW BUSINESS

Compromise of Penalties

Tax Assessor Melissa Phillips stated that there was a request on a compromise of penalties from a citizen. Tax Assessor Phillips stated that the citizen's mother was receiving a tax exemption for the elderly, and the mother passed away in 2020. The Tax exemption was not removed after the passing of the previous homeowner. Tax Assessor Phillips stated that Tax Office was not aware of this and had to fill the exemption amount from 2022-2022. The citizen was reportedly unaware that there was a tax exemption, requested that the Board compromise on the penalties, and the citizen would pay the additional taxes owed (\$458.21).

Motion to Comprise on Penalties made by Commissioner Ayers with a **Second** by Commissioner Biggs. Motion was **Carried** unanimously.

Tax' Assessor's Oath to Office

Tax Assessor Phillips stated that she completed all classes to receive her certification and passed the state test. Tax Assessor Phillips was then sworn in as a certified Tax Assessor by Clerk to the Board Julia Rease.

Emergency Medical Services

Manager Bennett referenced meeting notes from Emergency Services Director Jody Griffin and stated Commissioner Ayers would be able to give an update due to him being on the committee. Commissioner Ayers was asked to give an update on the Emergency Medical Services study. Commissioner Ayers stated the first meet was very preliminary and a schedule of events was set. Commissioner Ayers stated the first event was a visit to some if not all fire and rescue stations yesterday and he was unsure if this occurred. At some point, once there is enough information gathered, a presentation would be made to the committee for final recommendations. Commissioner Ayers stated that consulting group was very excited and knew that time was not of the essence. Commissioner Ayers stated that he liked that the consulting group declined the suggestion that the chiefs need to attend a centralized location to meet, and instead the consulting

group staff wanted to meet with each station to see their equipment and speak with everyone by himself.

Budget Amendments

Budget Amendment #3

Finance Officer Cindy Ange explained the County was awarded an Asset Inventory and Assessment Grant from the NC Department of Environmental Quality in the amount of \$150,000.

BUDGET ORDINANCE AMENDMENT-3

BE IT ORDAINED by the Board of Commissioners of Martin County, North Carolina, that the following amendments be made to the annual budget ordinance for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2023.

Section 1. To amend Water District #1, the expenditures are to be changed as follows.

	Increase	Decrease
AIA Grant	\$ 150,000	

This will result in an increase of \$150,000 in the expenditures of Water District #1. To provide an increase in the revenues for the above, the following revenues will be changed.

AIA grant	\$ 150,000
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Section 2. Copies of this budget amendment shall be furnished to the Clerk to the Governing Board and to the Finance Officer for their direction.

Motion by Commissioner Ayers and **Seconded** by Vice Chairman Bond Jr. to adopt the above budget ordinance amendment this 9th day of November 2022. Motion was **Carried** unanimously.

Budget Amendment #4

Finance Officer Ange stated the Board approved CrisisTEC to perform an emergency medical services study in September. This is a joint project with the North Carolina Association of County Commissioners whom will be paying half of the \$14,500 contract price.

BUDGET ORDINANCE AMENDMENT-4

BE IT ORDAINED by the Board of Commissioners of Martin County, North Carolina, that the following amendments be made to the annual budget ordinance for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2023.

Section 1. To amend the General Fund, the expenditures are to be changed as follows.

	Increase	Decrease
Public Safety		
Emergency Management	\$ 7,250	

This will result in an increase of \$7,250 in the expenditures of the General Fund. To provide a decrease in the revenues for the above, the following revenues will be changed.

Fund Balance

\$ 7,250

Section 2. Copies of this budget amendment shall be furnished to the Clerk to the Governing Board and to the Finance Officer for their direction.

Motion by Vice Chairman Bond Jr. with a **Second** by Commissioner Biggs to adopt the above budget ordinance amendment this 9th day of November 2022. Motion was **Carried** unanimously.

Budget Amendment #5

Finance Officer Ange reported in the September 21, 2022 meeting the County Board of Commissioners chose a proposal by Ascendant Healthcare Advisors to conduct an assessment and provide guidance concerning the future of Martin General Hospital. The proposal included a projected cost of the first phase of this project to be up to \$85,000. The Board also chose to add an additional service concerning a feasibility study on the physical building for \$40,000 at the October Board meeting.

BUDGET ORDINANCE AMENDMENT-5

BE IT ORDAINED by the Board of Commissioners of Martin County, North Carolina, that the following amendments be made to the annual budget ordinance for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2023.

Section 1. To amend the General Fund, the expenditures are to be changed as follows.

	Increase	Decrease
Administration Commissioners	\$ 125,000	

This will result in an increase of \$80,000 in the expenditures of the General Fund. To provide a decrease in the revenues for the above, the following revenues will be changed.

Fund Balance	\$ 125,000
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Section 2. Copies of this budget amendment shall be furnished to the Clerk to the Governing Board and to the Finance Officer for their direction.

Motion by Commissioner Ayers and **Seconded** by Commissioner Biggs to adopt the above budget ordinance amendment this 9th day of November 2022. Motion was **Carried** unanimously.

Budget Amendment #6

Finance Officer Ange stated the Martin County Sheriff's office received an \$84,270 State Directed Grant. Directed Grants in equal amounts were awarded for Sheriffs' officers in counties with a population fewer than 210,000 people. The funds could only be used for law enforcement purposes and could not be used for supplanting. The Sheriff planned to use these funds for in car cameras.

The Sheriff's office was unable to purchase the cameras in last fiscal year. This budget amendment re-appropriates the funds to this fiscal year.

BUDGET ORDINANCE AMENDMENT-6

BE IT ORDAINED by the Board of Commissioners of Martin County, North Carolina, that the following amendments be made to the annual budget ordinance for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2023.

Section 1. To amend the General Fund, the expenditures are to be changed as follows.

	Increase	Decrease
Public Safety		
Sheriff	\$ 80,975	

This will result in an increase of \$84,270 in the expenditures of the General Fund. To provide an increase in the revenues for the above, the following revenues will be changed.

Restricted Intergovernmental	\$ 80,975	
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Section 2. Copies of this budget amendment shall be furnished to the Clerk to the Governing Board and to the Finance Officer for their direction

Motion by Vice Chairman Bond Jr. and **Seconded** by Commissioner Biggs to adopt the above budget ordinance amendment this 9th day of November 2022. Motion was **Carried** unanimously.

Manager's Report

Staff Certification's

Manager Bennett informed the Board of the certification of Tax Assessor Melissa Phillips, Veteran's Services Officer Thurman Savage, and Clerk to the Board / Executive Assistant to the County Manager Julia Rease.

Veteran's Services Appreciation Ceremony

Next Manager Bennett stated that there was a Veteran's Services Appreciation event on Friday, November 11, 2022 at the Martin County Courthouse/Governmental Center Courtyard beginning at 11:00 a.m.

County Luncheon

Manager Bennett then discussed the Martin County Luncheon to take place on December 22, 2022 at 12:00 p.m. at the Farmers Market. Manager Bennett stated that there would be service and retiree awards given due to the retirees who retired within the years that the county could not hold the annual luncheon. Manager Bennett stated that Mayors of the towns in Martin County were invited as well. Manager Bennett stated that 911 Communications Director Jason Stewart would MC the program. There would be a performance by Commissioner Gurganus and Mr. Buck Davis, lip syncing performances by staff members, and a game of Family Feud amongst other entertainment.

Holiday Gifts for Employees

Manager Bennett stated that there would be gifts given out by December 19, 2022 from the Employee Holiday Gift books and the deadline to turn gift choices in would be November 17, 2022.

December Meeting

Manager Bennett reported the Board meeting after elections in December would historically occur on the first Monday, wherein Board members would be sworn in. Manager Bennett stated the first Monday in December would be December 5, 2022 and the meeting would take place at 7:00 p.m.

Town of Williamston Property Summons

Manager Bennett stated at the last Board meeting there was a discussion regarding County Attorney Benjamin Eisner handling a lot of summons from Zacchaeus Legal Services in relation to property of the Town of Williamston. Manager Bennett stated the company sent another summons wherein the Town of Williamston was the plaintiff and Martin County was listed as the defendant. Manager Bennett reported speaking with the legal services and there was a meeting schedule for tomorrow. In speaking with County Attorney, Manager Bennett stated County Attorney Eisner advised if Manager Bennett was his client he recommend Manager Bennett being a part of the plaintiff. Manager Bennett stated in speaking Williamston's Town Administrator Eric Pearson, the Town of Williamston was not paying any monies and, but this was being based on the percentage collected. Manager Bennett stated Tax Collector Christie Blevins would be available at a future Board meeting to discuss the matter further with the Board. Manager Bennett stated that it was not fair to County Attorney Eisner to handle this matter outside of his job description with Martin County without compensation. Manager Bennett stated that there was a summons regarding \$7,000 to be collected for the Town of Williamston in which Martin County would not be able to receive any of these monies due to Martin County not being the plaintiff.

Commissioner's Dinner

Manager Bennett stated the tallest structure in Martin County was the 5 story Devil's Gut Hunting lodge in Jamesville, NC. Manager Bennett stated he and other officials were invited to tour the facility for the Commissioner's Christmas Dinner. Manager Bennett asked if the Board was in agreement the Christmas Dinner could take place at the facility for \$200.00, which was a discount. Manager Bennett stated that there was a grant to pay for this cost. The Christmas Dinner would take place on Sunday, December 18, 2022 at 6:00pm at Devil's Gut if the Board agreed. Manager Bennett added that there was another hunting lodge named Cherry Island and described the features of the Devil's Gut hunting lodge.

Rural Community Capacity (RC2) Program

Manager Bennett stated he and Finance Officer Cindy Ange attended and graduated from the Rural Community (RC2) Grant Class. Manager Bennett stated that the class was a requirement to obtain a grant of \$550,000. Manager Bennett stated that there were plans to apply for another grant of \$800,000 for the third floor of the hospital, but did not apply due to the county not having full control of the hospital. Manager Bennett stated there were plans to apply for this grant in the future.

Martin County Economic Development CEO and President Resignation

Manager Bennett reported Martin County Economic Development CEO and President Jason Semple resigned to join another county, had done a fantastic job, and wished him the best in his future endeavors. Manager Bennett stated an application has been posted on many platforms to obtain another EDC director. Manager Bennett added that the application for the job would close on December 2, 2022. Manager Bennett stated if the Board saw fit that Mr. Jason Semple be awarded, he would, but he would not be able to be awarded at the next Board meeting due to his resignation date.

Martin County Water Systems Director Retirement

County Manager stated Water System Director Ed Warren has submitted his retirement and this position has been advertised as well. Manager Bennett stated Mr. Ed Warren worked for the county since 2010 and this was his second retirement. Manager Bennett stated Mr. Warren was appreciated as the job was not an easy one. Manager Bennett asked if the Board saw fit, Mr. Ed Warren would be given an award at the December Board meeting.

Before entering the Closed Session, there was a 5 minute break

CLOSED SESSION – N. C. G. S. § 143-318.11(a) (6) – Personnel

At 8:39 p.m., Vice Chairman Bond Jr. made a **Motion** to enter Closed Sessions NC G.S. § 143-318.11(3) Attorney/Client Privilege and NC G.S. § 143-318.11(4) Contracts/Agreements with a **Second** by Commissioner Biggs. Motion was **Carried** unanimously.

At 9:13 p.m., Vice Chairman Bond Jr. made a **Motion** to exit Closed Session NC G.S. 143-318.11(a)(3) Attorney/Client Privilege and NC G.S. 143-318.11(a)(4) Contracts/Agreements, with a **Second** by Commissioner Biggs. The Motion was **Carried** unanimously.

Motion to Approve AR Textiles meeting for December 13, 2022 at 3:30 p.m. made by Commissioner Ayers, with a **Second** by Vice Chairman Bond Jr. Motion was **Carried** unanimously.

Motion to Approve the Commissioner's Christmas Dinner on December 18, 2022 at 6:00 p.m. in Jamesville, NC, made by Commissioner Ayers, with a **Second** by Vice Chairman Bond Jr. Motion was **Carried** unanimously.

BOARD REPORTS / COMMISSIONERS' COMMENTS

Chairman Smith Congratulated Commissioner Ayers on his reelection to the Board and Commissioner Ayers congratulated Chairman Smith on his reelection to the Board as well.

Chairman Smith stated he and Vice Chairman Bond Jr. would be attending the North Carolina Association of County Commissioner's (NCACC) Annual Legislative Goals Conference in Raleigh next week. Chairman Smith explained the conference gathered the 100 counties to participate in voting sessions to finalize legislative goals, which guide NCACC's advocacy efforts. The conference is the final step in a comprehensive process, which gives each county an opportunity to shape NCACC's legislative agenda. Chairman Smith reported the representatives from the counties would begin with four hundred goals and end with seven. Chairman Smith also stated there was a two – thirds vote on each item.

Manager's Report

Manager Bennett stated the Rural Development Opportunity Fund awarded Charter broadband company for Martin County. Manager Bennett reported Charter had 6 years to conduct broadband services. Manager Bennett reported the company had a link that provided citizens the ability to search their address to see if services could be provided. Manager Bennett stated it was explained that there would be a hub in Wilson, a smaller hub in the Jamesville area, and then red dots were graphed on a map in smaller areas to serve at least 300 homes. Manager Bennett stated the contract for work applied to 2100 homes and he asked what would happen if this limit was reached. This was good for the customer base.

Manager Bennett added that he would meet with the Cloudwyze CEO and CFO on Tuesday. Manager Bennett reported Cloudwyze and Charter Broadband companies both stated that they would do better to keep the public informed with updates.

Chairman Smith asked if the companies discussed overlapping services.

Manager Bennett stated that he did not speak with either company as of yet, but he did ask if they were going to the high areas of concentration. Finance Officer stated the response was that they had to serve the unserved households to win the grant and those areas were defined by the state.

Manager Bennett added that the broadband company reported they would have everything built out within a three year period of time.

Chairman Smith stated concern in the change of administration at the state level that could change the outcome of the grant funding and or areas to be serviced.

Manager Bennett stated monies would be available for families, some business such as the Fire/EMS Squads to provide low monthly costs on services (\$50.00/month/300 mpbs). Manager Bennett stated that this was called a legacy program.

ADJOURNMENT

At 9:30 p.m. Vice Chairman Bond made the **Motion** to adjourn, with a **Second** by Commissioner Biggs. Motion was **Carried** unanimously

Ronnie Smith, Chairman

Julia S. Rease, Clerk to the Board