

July 12, 2023

The Martin County Board of Commissioners met in a Regular Session on Wednesday, July 12, 2023, at 7:00 p.m. in the Commissioners Boardroom 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, Commissioner David “Skip” Gurganus, County Manager U. James Bennett, Clerk to the Board Julia S. Rease, County Attorney Benjamin Eisner, Finance Officer Cindy Ange, and Sheriff Tim Manning with Chief Deputy Drew Robinson.

Chairman Smith called the meeting to order at 7:01 p.m. Commissioner Biggs led the Pledge of Allegiance, and Commissioner Gurganus provided the invocation.

AGENDA APPROVAL

Chairman Smith asked if the following changes could be made to the agenda

- Add Sheriff’s Animal Surrender Fee Update to the Consent Agenda
- Add the Swearing in of the Tax Assessor, Deputy Tax Collector, and Tax Collector after Item 3
- Add Child Protective Services Appreciation to Presentations after the Register of Deeds presentation.
- Add Closed Sessions –1. N.C.G.S § 143-318.11. (3) Client /Attorney Privilege
2. N.C.G.S § 143-318.11. (6) Personnel

Commissioner Gurganus made a **Motion** to Approve the agenda with the stated changes, with a **Second** from Vice Chairman Bond Jr. The Motion was **Carried** unanimously.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Ms. Cindy Harrison – 2220 West Bear Grass Road, Williamston, NC

Ms. Harrison stated she was speaking on the behalf of her mother and brother regarding their family farm on 1300 Lee Road Extension. There were neighbours whom attended the meeting and Ms. Harrison reported that they all owned the land on Lee Rd. Ext. Ms. Harrison added that her family’s property was located at the back of the road. It was reported that Ms. Harrison and her brother found out at the last minute that their road was being paved. Ms. Harrison stated they had tremendous problems with trying to keep hunters off the property, people from partying, home invasions at her brother’s home on that property, and more. It was stated that a gate was being requested to block the end of the road. The end of the road was reported to be 150 feet and the North Carolina Division of Transportation (NCDOT) would not allow a gate to block the property until it was brought to the Board. NCDOT would then conduct a process of abandonment and a gate could be erected.

Chairman Smith asked about NCDOT plans to pave the road. Ms. Harrison stated that no one in her family was notified that the road was being paved until they saw workers on the road. Ms. Harrison stated that she delivered all documents regarding the matter to the County Manager's Office the next day. The paving was to begin next week.

CONSENT AGENDA

Commissioner Biggs made a **Motion** to approve the Consent Agenda as presented, with a **Second** by Commissioner Gurganus. The Motion was **Carried** unanimously.

1. **Minutes** for April 17, 2023 Special, May 31, 2023 Special, June 12, 2023 Special, June 14, 2023 Regular
2. **Financial Report for June 2023**
3. **Tax Assessor – Tax Refund Requests – June 2023-- None**
4. **Tax Assessor – Tax Relief Orders – June 2023**

Year Levy	Lname	Fname	Reason	Value	Total
2016	Bucher	Kenneth	Out of County	\$12,204	\$177.87
2017	Bucher	Kenneth	Out Of County	\$11,350	\$178.56
2018	Bucher	Kenneth	Out of County	\$10,896	\$171.40
2019	Bucher	Kenneth	Out of County	\$10,460	\$166.83
2020	Bucher	Kenneth	Out of County	\$10,042	\$164.59
2021	Bucher	Kenneth	Out of County	\$9,640	\$158.00
2022	Bucher	Kenneth	Out of County	\$9,640	\$167.55
2021	Council	Branden Bunting	Sold Vehicle	\$2,040	\$19.74
2022	Council	Branden Bunting	Sold Vehicle	\$2,040	\$19.74
			<i>Total Real & Personal Releases</i>		\$1,224.28
2023	Hess	Luke Alan	-----	\$153.08	\$144.18
2023	Watson	Lawrence, William III	-----	\$72.33	\$66.80
			<i>Total VTS Refund Requests</i>		\$ 18.65

5. Tax Collector's Report – June 2023

	Category	June	6-21 Y-T-D
Real Property	20	\$6,958.30	\$0.00
Personal Property	25	\$905.48	\$0.00
Total		<u>\$7,863.78</u>	\$0.00
Motor Vehicle	30	\$0.00	\$0.00
Total MV		<u>\$0.00</u>	<u>\$0.00</u>
All Total		\$7,863.78	\$0.00

6. Approval of Update Water Rate Schedule, Moratoc Park Rental Agreement/Policy, Approval of Farmer's Market Rental Agreement/Policy

With the approval and adoption of the 2023-2024 Fiscal Year (FY) Budget Ordinance, multiple policies, agreements, and fee schedules needed to be updated. The Updated Water Rate Schedule, Moratoc Park Rental Agreement/Policy, and the Farmer's Market Rental Agreement/Policy were attached to the agenda packet and can be requested from the County Manager's Office.

The item above was **Approved** by the Board as part of the Consent Agenda.

9. New Road Name Request- Bailey Ridge Lane

A request for a new road name on a parcel off Bailey Rd, which is located within the Crossroads Jurisdiction, was submitted to the Tax Assessor's Office. The proposed name road was in the Bear Grass Fire District and Williamston EMS Response area. Per Martin County Road Naming and Addressing Ordinance, Tax Assessor Melissa Phillips requested an approval of the suggested name of Bailey Ridge Lane. The request/petition of the landowner, with road name suggestions; and the approval of the Martin County E-911 Committee, Bear Grass Fire Chief, and the Emergency Medical Service Squad Captain were included in the agenda packet.

The item above was **Approved** by the Board as part of the Consent Agenda.

10. Approval of Updated Animal Surrender Fee

Sheriff Tim Manning requested that the Commissioners raise the animal surrender fee to forty dollars. Sheriff Manning informed the Board and staff of this increase during our budget retreat. The fee was ten dollars if a person surrendered an animal to the shelter and twenty dollars the animal had to be picked up. Sherriff Manning checked the surrender fee of other counties and they were higher. Sheriff Manning recommended forty dollars as a fair rate because care and food would be given to the surrendered animals. The main population of surrendered animals came from Hunters that would bring their dogs to the shelter after hunting season and citizens that hoarded cats. The hope was to raise the surrender fee so that citizens would get their animal spade, neutered, or at least be more responsible.

The item above was **Approved** by the Board as part of the Consent Agenda.

11. Board Appointments/Reappointments

Tax Assessor's Reappointment

In accordance with N.C.G.S § 105-294 – Persons occupying the position of county assessor on July 1, 1983, shall continue in office until the first Monday in July 1983. At its first regular meeting in July, 1983, and every two years or four years thereafter, as appropriate, the board of county commissioners of each county shall appoint a county assessor to serve a term of not less than two nor more than four years; provided, however, that no person shall be eligible for initial appointment to a term of more than two years unless such person is deemed to be qualified as

provided in subsection (b) of this section or has been certified by the Department of Revenue as provided in subsection (c) of this section. The board of commissioners may remove the assessor from office during his term for good cause after giving him notice in writing and an opportunity to appear and be heard at a public session of the board. Whenever a vacancy occurs in this office, the board of county commissioners shall appoint a qualified person to serve as county assessor for the period of the unexpired term.

Tax Assessor Melissa Phillips was appointed to a 2-year term that would expire on July 31, 2025.

The reappointment stated above was **Approved** by the Board as part of the Consent Agenda.

Tax Collector and Deputy Tax Collector

According to N.C.G.S § 105-349 The governing body of each county and municipality shall appoint a tax collector on or before July 1, 1971; to serve for a term to be determined by the appointing body and until his successor has been appointed and qualified. Until the first, such appointments are made, county and municipal taxes shall be collected by the tax collectors presently serving under prior provisions of law. The governing body may remove the tax collector from office during his term for good cause after giving him notice in writing and an opportunity to appear and be heard at a public session of the governing body. No hearing shall be required; however, if the tax collector is removed for failing to meet the prerequisites prescribed by G.S. 105-352(b) for delivery of the tax receipts. Unless otherwise provided by G.S. 105-373, whenever any vacancy occurs in this office, the governing body shall appoint a qualified person to serve as tax collector for the period of the unexpired term.

Tax Collector Kim Ross was recommended for reappointment and Deputy Tax Collector Stacy Taylor was recommended for appointment of a 4 year term ending on July 31, 2027

The reappointment stated above was **Approved** by the Board as part of the Consent Agenda.

3. Clerk Report included for informational purposes.

Swearing in Tax Assessor, Tax Collector, and Deputy Tax Collector

Before Swearing in the Tax Assessor, Manager Bennett stated that the Board needed to decide on a 2 or 4-year term. Manager Bennett reported that currently the Board approved the 2-year term appointments.

Chairman Smith added that previously the Tax Collector was appointed every 4 years and the Tax Collector every 2 years before asking the Board for feedback.

Commissioner Gurganus and Commissioner Ayers asked questions clarifying the term years. Manager Bennett stated that the Board had to choose the length of term for the Tax Assessors appointment.

Commissioner Ayers recommended keeping both Tax Collector and Tax Assessor appointments

for 4 years to coincide with each other. Commissioner Ayers felt that the process would be smoother.

Chairman Smith stated that the reason why the 2-year appointment was used previously was due to the time it took to become a certified Tax Assessor (2 years). Chairman Smith stated that some Tax Assessor's would complete their certification in less than two years; some may be hired already certified.

Commissioner Ayers stated that if this was the case, the terms should remain the same.

Commissioner Gurganus made the **Motion** to Approve the appointment periods as they were, with a **Second** by Commissioner Biggs. Motion was **Carried** unanimously.

Tax Assessor Melissa Phillips, Tax Collector Kim Ross, and Deputy Tax Collector Stacy Taylor were sworn or affirmed into their positions. The term of the Tax Assessor Melissa Phillips would end on July 31, 2025. Tax Collector Kim Ross and Deputy Tax Collector Stacy Taylor would complete incomplete terms that would end on July 31, 2027.

The Board took pictures with the newly sworn or affirmed staff members.

PRESENTATIONS

Register of Deeds – Director Kim Griffin

Director Kim Griffin presented an update to the Board regarding the Register of Deeds Office. The first update given was in regards to an increase in real estate in March and April. Director Griffin reported seven deeds that totalled in excise stamps over \$17,000 from one company. The same company had mortgage totalling at \$209 million borrowed from one secured party. Director Griffin informed the audience of a property notification system. The system was reportedly designed to notify individuals if their name was used in transactions. Director Griffin stated that citizens could sign up for this program on the Register of Deeds Facebook page or the County website.

Chairman Smith stated that this was a great program and gave background information on an incident that occurred due to this issue. Chairman Smith stated that fraudulent property sales were occurring and it took a lot of hard work to reverse the action.

Director Griffin continued to urge citizens to sign up for the program to make sure that no one was using their information to make fraudulent transactions.

Next Director Griffin stated that citizens could request vital records (birth, death, marriages) online. Request for the records could be submitted and paid online from the Facebook or County Website.

Chairman Smith stated that most Counties needed identification for a death certificates. Director Griffin agreed and stated that the rule applied to marriage and birth records. Chairman Smith

asked how difficult it was and what documentation was needed when requesting these records. Director Griffin stated that anyone could have a Xerox copy of the vital records. It was reported that an image was needed to be downloaded to the online services to receive a certified copy of the vital records.

Director Griffin thanked the Board for changing her part time employee into a full time employee position. Director Griffin stated that it there were other programs that needed to be implemented, but the employee would have to be certified first. The employee was stated to need certification first, which took 5 years.

Commissioner Gurganus expressed appreciation towards the Register of Deeds Office for providing services to citizens.

Then, Director Griffin warned about fraud letters sent to citizens offering tax property cards and deed copies at a high price. Director Griffin informed the audience that the tax property cards and or deeds could be purchased from the Register of Deeds Office for \$0.25. Director Griffin encouraged all questions to be sent to the Register of Deeds Office.

Commissioner Gurganus urged residents and citizens to not respond to scam/fraud phone calls, emails, and or mail. Commissioner Gurganus spoke about the devastating effects of interacting with spam encounters and that the main target was to the elderly and or widowed population. Commissioner Gurganus stated that not much could be done to track the scammers due to them being in another country.

Chairman Smith commented that the United States was the only continent in the world where property information was documented. Chairman Smith added that other countries did not provide protection regardless of property being purchased and thieves were challenging the U.S. property system. Chairman Smith thanked the Register of Deeds Office.

Lastly, Director Griffin stated that there was an Artificial Intelligence (AI) system being used in Texas and Florida that may come to North Carolina. The AI services were reportedly being used to update information.

Department of Social Services - Child Protective Services Appreciation

Social Worker Program Director Nancy Conner, Child Protective Services Supervisor Q'uintina Little, and Investigations and In-Home Social Worker Chell'le Craig were asked to stand before the Board, explain the services provided, and to discuss recent reports.

Program Manager Conner introduced herself, Q'uintina Little, and the Foster Care Supervisor Lanita Garrett whom was not in attendance. Program Manager Conner stated that there was a lot of new staff members. It was reported that social workers had to take on an extra caseload due to there being one foster care social worker last year. Program Manager Conner stated at the end of last year, the unit was down one Investigative/Family Assessment Social Worker. Supervisors and Social Workers were reported to assist with the caseload in this matter as well. Program Manager Conner added that the positions were becoming filled and that it took some time to train

Social Workers. Program Manager stated that there was constant change from the State and that there was a great amount of information to be learned.

Program Manager Conner explained the processes of being a Social Worker. It was stated that any citizen was a mandated reporter regarding child abuse and or neglect. Once the call is made to the office with a report, a 17 page-screening tool would be used as the report was given. The screening tool would then be used to screen the report in or out. The screening tool was also reported to determine the response time in which a Social worker should go out to the home. The response times was reported to be Immediate, 24 hours, or 72 hours.

Chairman Smith asked the Social Workers about a report wherein a child had to spend the night in the CPS building.

Program Manager Conner stated that there were two incidents and Chairman Smith asked if both could be explained. Program Manager Conner stated that there was a 15 year old in foster care who ran away around the weekend of July 4th. Diligent efforts were made to locate the child by having meetings with the law enforcement agencies, meetings regarding plans for when she was found, arrangements and the process of a new placement, and searches. Program Manager Conner reported on the difficulty of finding a placement for teenagers, especially if they had behavioural issues. Program Manager Conner reported that another meeting was conducted with the Social workers to discuss how the child's personal needs would be taken care of, a rotation schedule to supervise the child, and how she would be fed. It was reported that Program Manager Conner went to Walmart to purchase an air mattress, sheets, and things that may be needed if the child had to spend the night at the facility. When notification was received that the child was found, Program Manager Conner stated that the child was picked up, transported to the hospital for an exam, and given food. Program Manager Conner stated that the child had not eaten in a while, but immediately went to sleep after being fed. Program Manager Conner reported that Social Worker Chell'le Craig had a young child of her own and Social Worker Craig had to spend the night (12 hours) supervising another child at the agency. Social Worker Craig was relieved from her duties by Supervisor Little. An area group home was contacted and was able to accept the child with a daily cost. Program Manager Conner reported that the Supervisor Little coordinated with the group home to make sure that the child had everything that was needed. Appreciation was given to the staff from Program Manager Conner for volunteering their time and being willing to help.

Chairman Smith stated that he did not know the whole story, but he heard of the story. Chairman Smith stated that he wanted to inform the Board and citizens of this. Chairman Smith talked about things being taken for granted and most organizations were at the "grassroots level" of things.

Program Manager Conner stated that Social Worker Supervisor Little could explain the second situation that occurred that week. Supervisor Little stated that she and Social Worker Craig received a report at 10:00 p.m. because they were on call. Supervisor Little added that Social Workers worked more than 8 hours, especially if they were on call that week. There was reportedly a dependent child and both Social Worker Craig and Supervisor Little had to leave their homes and drive miles to work to assist the child. Supervisor Little reported that she

arrived home at 5:40 a.m. due to the need to locate the parents who were non English speakers, assess the situation, and to make sure that the needs of the child were met. Both employees reportedly went to work after being out from 10:00 p.m. to 5:40 a.m. the next morning.

Chairman Smith mentioned that Social Workers were expected to go into homes where they were never wanted without weapons, spray, or anything to protect yourself with. Chairman Smith stated that Child Welfare was more dangerous than law enforcement due to the inability to protect yourself.

Supervisor Little responded that there were only online trainings on how to deescalate situations when in the home. Supervisor Little stated that Social Workers were cursed out every day, going into homes where parents were passed out from drugs, or assessing homes that may have vicious animals. Chairman Smith agreed stating that there was no telling what they were walking into.

Supervisor Little stated that there was a toll being taken on the workers and it was what they were receiving from County. Supervisor Little reported that the newest worker was fresh out of college and left due to benefits and salary. Supervisor Little stated that she had another worker that was considering the military over being a Social Worker in Martin County.

Chairman Smith stated that he wanted the Board to be aware of what was going on and that he appreciated the employees for sharing with the Board. Chairman Smith also stated that the County would try to compete with the salaries from surrounding counties. Chairman Smith asked Manager Bennett about any provisions for Board members to attend on call reports with the social workers. Manager Bennett gave specific instructions to the Board regarding the Board signing up for on call.

Manager Bennett made comments regarding Program Manager Conner's years in Child Welfare and her experiences, which included an infant that passed in her arms. Board members thanked the Child Welfare Unit.

OLD BUSINESS

Broadband Update

Chairman Smith stated that there was money and providers coming to the County to provide Broadband services. Chairman Smith reported that the Broadband Committee was comprised of several members including Commissioner David "Skip" Gurganus and Commissioner Emily Biggs.

Commissioner Gurganus reported that there were several rounds and types of grants being administered, whether they were on a State or Federal level. Currently, it was reported that orange HPB pipes could be seen in the northern or southern parts of the County. Commissioner Gurganus stated that these pipes would secure a trump line for fiber to run through. It was reported that Spectrum put down the pipes and was on the way back to Martin County.

Commissioner Biggs stated that the main objective of the Board was to ensure as many homes as

possible, had access to the internet. With each pot of money and or funding source, came with different regulations, obligations, or matching funds that needed to be met. Commissioner Biggs reported that the Broadband companies needed to meet certain obligations and the Board was trying to make sure that they had a “say so” as the Board represented the people of the County to make sure that everyone or majority had Broadband access.

Chairman Smith added that there were time constraints for the broadband companies to provide active services based on the grant(s) being used. It was reported that 2028 was the deadline for broadband services to be implemented in the County based on the grant used and what areas were covered by the grant. Chairman Smith stated that there were different pots of money towards these services and Martin County was guaranteed a certain pot of money. There was reportedly some grant opportunities that were not active in funding cycles. It was stated that there were some setbacks wherein a provider was replaced by another provider to perform services at no fault to the County. These setbacks may have pushed back the milestones in which services were supposed to be rendered. To keep from penalizing the County and not being involved in the competitive process, money has been set aside by the state. Chairman Smith stated that he was not stating that every household in Martin County would have fiber optic running at their doors, but Board members were on the Broadband Committee to ensure that there would be internet access. Lastly, Chairman Smith talked about his residence being in a wooded area and he knew that he would not have fiber optic internet services.

Lastly, Commissioner Gurganus stated that someone asked him why services weren't going to certain areas. Commissioner Gurganus stated that the location of pipes and fiber lines was controlled by the Federal and State government. The location of equipment installation was based on FCC Data and similar data programs. Commissioner Gurganus stated that the Board was making sure that the County received its fair share of grant funding; the Broadband services were installed by the plan that was submitted, and the plan should cover the County with the first three sets of funding that was sent out. Commissioner Gurganus reiterated that Board did not determine where the services were being implemented, but the CAB Grant would allow the Board to have more input. It was noted that the companies receiving the funding to produce internet services, would use return on investment. Commissioner Gurganus stated that providers might not install fiber optic in rural areas to get a low return on their investment.

Chairman Smith asked if there were any questions and there were none. Appreciation was shown to the North Carolina Department of Information Technology (NCDIT) and the Rural Center in assisting and supporting in this matter.

NEW BUSINESS

911 Addressing Ordinance Amendment

Tax Assessor Melissa Phillips stated that there was a 911 Addressing Ordinance in place already that were improved in regards as to how road names and addressing were created for the County. Code Enforcement Director Jody Griffin and E-911 Addressing Coordinator provided input on the existing ordinance to make changes for improvement. Tax Assessor Phillips stated that there were two public hearings regarding 911 addressing along with the mobile home parks and

subdivision ordinances. Since the 911 Addressing Ordinance was already in place, the changes were recommended to be approved. The changes were listed as:

- No roads could be named after a person when requesting a new road name. There were many roads in the County named after people, which caused confusion for law enforcement and EMS responding to calls. (page 2)
- An E-911 Address application would have to be completed that could be retrieved from the County website or the Tax Assessor's Office; submittal of a project plan that could be retrieved from the Inspections department, submittal of passed perk test to the Inspectors' or Tax Assessor's Office. (page 3) This allowed them to know how to address the property properly accordingly. The address would be assigned after these items were submitted to the appropriate offices.

Commissioner Gurganus made the **Motion** to Approve the 911 Addressing Ordinance with listed changes, with a **Second** by Commissioner Ayres. Motion was **Carried** unanimously.

Late Present Use Value (PUV) Application Appeal

Tax Assessor Phillips state that any late PUV application that were submitted to the Tax Assessor Office had to be approved by the Board if there were good cause. Tax Assessor Phillips stated that the Board needed to be aware of what was considered a "good cause" as the trajectory of future appeals would be determined by it. Tax Assessor Phillips listed the efforts made diligence to inform the property owner of the matter:

- **December 23, 2022** - Owner Transfer Letter informing the property owner that they had 60 days to provide the Tax Assessor's Office a new PUV application.
- **February 13, 2023** – Denial Letter was sent to the property owner because the new PUV application was not received from the property owner.
- **February 18, 2023** - Deferred Taxes were billed to the property owner.
- **June 20, 2023** - An appeal letter was received with a late PUV application. The application would have been approved if received within the 60-day deadline.

Chairman Smith asked what the recommendation from the Tax Assessor's Office was. Tax Assessor Phillips stated that they did not give any recommendations and that the Board would have to determine if the explanation for the late PUV application was of good cause. Tax Assessor Phillips stated that her definition of "good cause" was if the property owner was hospitalized, handling business out of town, or etc. Tax Assessor Phillips stated that the decision still remained with the Board.

Commissioner Gurganus asked what the deferred taxes amounted to. Tax Assessor Phillips responded that \$ 897.33 was billed in March towards deferred taxes and interest had been added since then.

County Manager Bennett reiterated Tax Assessor Phillips statement that the Board needed to be cognizant as to what they considered "good cause" of a late PUV application appeal as it would

set a precedent for future matters.

Commissioner Ayers stated that a precedent had already been made in previous appeals that were approved or denied. Commissioner Ayers added under those circumstances, he thought that the appeal should remain as denied.

Commissioner Gurganus stated that he could not disagree with Commissioner Ayers. Commissioner Gurganus commented on the difficulties of being a caretaker and his personal situation as a caretaker himself. Commissioner Gurganus added that the property owner stated that he “dropped the ball” in the appeal letter, submitted to the Tax Assessor’s Office. Commissioner Gurganus stated that there was a precedent that was set, which made the decision hard to accept the appeal.

Commissioner Ayers made the **Motion** to Deny the Late PUV program Late Application, with a **Second** by Vice Chairman Bond Jr. The Motion was **Approved** unanimously.

Resolution Declaring Intent to Close Lee Road Extension

Tax Assessor Phillips presented a resolution to declare intent to close Lee Road Extension due to a submitted request by a resident who owned property at the portion of road to be closed. Tax Assessor Phillips contacted the North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) and NCDOT stated that they would continue paving the road up to the property line. Tax Assessor Phillips reported that the state did own a right away on the property in this matter and that NCDOT would have to abandon it. The property owners could not put up a gate to block the entrance to the property on Lee Road Extension due to the right away. In order for the property owners to put up a gate, the matter had to be presented to the Board.

Tax Assessor Phillips reported that there were no issues with the other property owners on the road. Part of the statutory requirements included a resolution, a public hearing, approval of resolution, and submittal to NCDOT. Tax Assessor Phillips stated that NCDOT would then abandon right away, giving the property owner the ability to put up the gate.

Manager Bennett mentioned property owners at the beginning of the road that had been asking NCDOT to pave the road for the past 10-12 years. Manager Bennett stated that he spoke with the property owner whom was acceptable of the request to close the portion of road being mentioned.

Chairman Smith asked for confirmation of any other resident/property owner having any issues with the closure of Lee Road Extension. Manager Bennett confirmed that there were no issues amongst other resident and or property owners.

Commissioner Ayers made the **Motion** to Adopt the Resolution Requesting Abandonment of a Portion of State Road 1172, A Portion of Lee Road Ext., From the North Carolina State Maintained Secondary Road System, with a **Second** by Commissioner Gurganus. The **Motion** was Carried unanimously.

**RESOLUTION REQUESTING, ABANDONMENT OF A PORTION OF STATE ROAD
1172, A PORTION OF LEE RD EXT, FROM THE NORTH CAROLINA STATE
MAINTAINED SECONDARY ROAD SYSTEM**

WHEREAS, as authorized by N.C.G.S 136-63, the attached petition, by the only affected property owners, has been filed with the Martin County Board of Commissioners requesting that a portion of State Road 1172, a portion of Lee Rd Ext, the location of which has been indicated on the attached map, be abandoned from the North Carolina State Maintained Secondary Road System; and

WHEREAS, the County has reviewed the petition requesting abandonment and finds that no property owner would be deprived of reasonable means of ingress and egress to his/her property, the petitioners own all of the adjacent property, and there would be no negative impact from maintenance being abandoned on the portion of State Road 1172, a portion of Sandy Lane; and the County therefore recommends in favor of the petition to abandon the said portion of road; and

WHEREAS, based on the recommendation of the County, the Martin County Board of commissioners finds that the abandonment would serve the best interest of the people of Martin County.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Martin County Board of Commissioners hereby requests the Board of Transportation, to review the proposed abandonment of the above described portion of State Road 1172, a portion of Lee Road Ext, and if in its opinion the public interest demands it, to abandon the said identified portion of the road from the State Maintained Secondary Road System.

Adopted this 12th day of July 2023.

Ronnie Smith, Chairman

Julia S. Rease, Clerk to the Board

Commissioner Gurganus asked if anyone lived in the home located at the end of Lee Road Extension. The property owner attended the meeting and confirmed his residency in the home. Commissioner Gurganus asked if the property owner was sure that they wanted to put up a gate blocking the entrance to the residence. Commissioner Gurganus stated that he was concerned about law enforcement, fire, and rescue services not having access to the property. The owner of the residence and property agreed that they wanted the gate to block the entrance of the residence. The property/residence owner stated that there were people who trespassed on the property, had parties, and caused other issues in which a gate would stop this from happening in the future.

Budget Amendment(s)

Budget Amendment #1

Finance Officer Cindy Ange stated that an error was found in the Budget Ordinance adopted by

the Board of Commissioners on June 14, 2023 in Section 28. This section set the construction and demolition fee at \$60/ton, when it was the intent of the Board to set this fee at \$55/ton. The landfill revenue adopted by the Board was calculated at the \$55/ton fee and therefore no additional changes are needed.

BUDGET ORDINANCE AMENDMENT-1

BE IT ORDAINED by the Board of Commissioners of Martin County, North Carolina, that the following amendment be made to the annual budget ordinance for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2024.

Section 1. In the Budget Ordinance adopted by the Martin County Commissioners on June 14, 2023 for the 2023-2024 fiscal year, Section 28 states the Construction and Demolition fee is set at \$60/ton. The correct fee is set at \$55/ton.

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 Gurganus and **Seconded** by Commissioner Ayers to adopt the above budget ordinance amendment this 12th day of July 2023. The Motion was **Carried** unanimously.



Budget Amendment #2

Finance Officer Ange stated the Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services allocated an additional \$76,203 to Martin County Soil and Water District to conduct vegetative debris removal in streams in Martin County. In addition, there was \$9,840 from the previous allocation that had not been expended. District Director Lynn Whitehurst was working on amendments to current contracts. Director Whitehurst focus was on Flat Swamp and Collie Swamp. It was reported that the services might be completed by September.

BUDGET ORDINANCE AMENDMENT-2

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
Economic & Physical Development		
Soil and Water	\$ 86,043	

This will result in an increase of \$86,043 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 \$ 86,043

Section 2. Copies of this budget amendment shall be furnished to the Clerk to the

Restricted Revenue

\$ 76,140

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 Gurganus and **Seconded** by Commissioner Biggs to adopt the above budget ordinance amendment this 12th day of July 2023. The Motion was **Carried** unanimously.

CLOSED SESSION(S) – N.C.G.S. § 143-318.11. (a)(3) – Client/Attorney Privilege and 2. N.C.G.S. § 143.318.11(6) Personnel

At 8:22 p.m. Commissioner Gurganus made the **Motion** to Enter Closed Session (s) N.C.G.S. § 143-318.11. (a)(3) – Client/Attorney Privilege and 2. N.C.G.S. § 143.318.11(6) Personnel, with a **Second** by Vice Chairman Bond Jr. Motion was **Carried** unanimously.

At 8:51 p.m., Vice Chairman Bond Jr. made the **Motion** to Exit Closed Session(s) N.C.G.S. § 143-318.11. (a)(3) – Client/Attorney Privilege and 2. N.C.G.S. § 143.318.11(6) Personnel, with a **Second** by Commissioner Gurganus. Motion was **Carried** unanimously.

OPEN SESSION

BOARD REPORTS / COMMISSIONERS' COMMENTS

Manager Bennett informed the Board of the 250th Anniversary of Martin County. Manager Bennett also mentioned a meeting to take place on July 26, 2023 at the NC Telecenter at 6:00 p.m. to discuss plans for the anniversary.

Mayor of Bear Grass Charlotte Griffin attended the meeting and mentioned speaking with a WITN anchor who would be in attendance to the anniversary.

Commissioner Gurganus added that Tourism Development Authority (TDA) Director Chase Conner was working on a geo fencing app that would inform people of events going on in the County and that this would be implemented for the 250th Anniversary.

ADJOURNMENT

At 9:01 p.m. Vice Chairman Bond made a **Motion** to adjourn the meeting, with a **Second** by Commissioner Gurganus. Motion was Carried unanimously.

Ronnie Smith, Chairman

Julia S. Rease, Clerk to the Board