

**April 14, 2021**

The Martin County Board of Commissioners met in a Regular Session on Wednesday, April 14, 2021, 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 James Bennett, Deputy County Clerk to the Board Marion B. Thompson, Finance Officer Cindy Ange, Sheriff Tim Manning, Chief Deputy Drew Robinson, and IT Director Jeb Gardner.

Others in Attendance: Town of Jamesville Mayor Protem Willis Williams and Commissioner/Pastor Larris Tolson.

Present via Cisco WebEx: Lead for North Carolina Fellow Elizabeth Mitchell and Bear Grass Mayor Charlotte Griffin.

Chairman Smith called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. Commissioner Ayers led the Pledge of Allegiance. Town of Jamesville Commissioner/Pastor Larris Tolson provided the invocation. Chairman Smith extended a welcome to all.

**AGENDA APPROVAL**

Vice Chairman Bond made a MOTION to approve the agenda as revised to include Closed Session for NC G.S. 143-318.11(a)(6) – Personnel, with a SECOND from Commissioner Biggs. The Board APPROVED the motion unanimously. (5-0)

**PUBLIC COMMENTS** – None

**CONSENT AGENDA**

Commissioner Ayers made a MOTION to approve the consent agenda as presented, with a SECOND by Commissioner Gurganus. The Board APPROVED the motion unanimously. 5-0)

**1. Minutes Approval**

Minutes for March 10<sup>th</sup>, 2021 Regular Session, March 17<sup>th</sup>, 2021 Special Called Meeting – Departments/Office Holders Presentations, and March 24<sup>th</sup>, 2021 – Outside Agency Presentations

**2. Financial Report for March 2021**

**3. Tax Assessor – Tax Refund Requests – March 2021 – None**

**4. Tax Assessor – Tax Relief Orders –March 2021**

Year Levy	Lname	Fname	Reason	Value	Total
2019	Ambrose	John D. Heirs	Surrendered Tags		4.05
2020	Ambrose	John D. Heirs	Surrendered Tags		4.05
2019	Dante Boyce	Trucking Inc	Sold Vehicle		11.11
2018	Dante Boyce	Trucking Inc	Sold Vehicle		11.28
2017	Dante Boyce	Trucking Inc	Sold Vehicle		11.76
2016	Department of	Transportation	Error-Landfill Fee		172.00
2016	Department of	Transportation	Error-Landfill Fee		172.00
2017	Department of	Transportation	Error-Landfill Fee		172.00
2017	Department of	Transportation	Error-Landfill Fee		172.00
2018	Department of	Transportation	Error-Landfill Fee		172.00
2018	Department of	Transportation	Error-Landfill Fee		172.00
2019	Department of	Transportation	Error-Landfill Fee		172.00
2019	Department of	Transportation	Error-Landfill Fee		172.00
2020	Department of	Transportation	Error-Landfill Fee		172.00
2020	Department of	Transportation	Error-Landfill Fee		172.00
2020	Garrett	Christopher A.	Out of County		8.48
2020	Gibbs	Dan Warren	Error in Listing		18.11
2020	Gibson	Jasper E. Jr.	Sold Vehicle	2,332	35.91
2020	Griffin	Kimberly J.	Error in Value		17.31
2020	Joyner	Vondra	Error-Landfill Fee		172.00
2020	King	Phyllis Jean	Double Billed		43.30
2020	Rawls	James A.	Double Billed		11.75
2020	Satterthwaite	Mitchell R.	Sold Vehicle		371.41
2019	Satterthwaite	Mitchell R.	Sold Vehicle		386.88
2018	Satterthwaite	Mitchell R.	Sold Vehicle		102.76
2017	Satterthwaite	Mitchell R.	Sold Vehicle		107.05
2020	Williams	Brice Winston	Out of County		283.18
2019	Williams	Brice Winston	Out of County		294.99
2018	Wisswell	Richard J.	Double Billed	8,554	79.98
2019	Wisswell	Richard J.	Double Billed	8,212	78.59
2018	Wisswell	Richard J.	Double Billed	8,554	-79.98
2019	Wisswell	Richard J.	Double Billed	8,212	-78.59
2020	Dante Boyce	Trucking Inc	Correction		11.72
2020	Carter	George Gary	Bill Move Process		1,055.92
			<i>Total Real &amp; Personal Releases</i>		\$4,683.02
2021	Purgason	Joe Wesley	Over Assessment		14.45
			<i>Total VTS Refunds</i>		\$ 14.45
			<i>Total Tax Relief Orders</i>		\$4,697.47

## 5. Tax Collector's Report – March 2021

	Category	Mar-21	Mar-21 Y-T-D
Real Property	20	\$556,443.16	\$9,368,776.14
Personal Property	25	66,612.88	\$5,203,469.39

Total		\$623,056.04	\$14,572,245.53
Motor Vehicle	30	858.03	\$1,129.72
Total MV		\$858.03	\$1,129.72
All Total		\$623,914.07	\$14,573,375.25

## 6. Board Resignation

### a. Tourism Development Authority Board

The Martin County Tourism Development Authority Board of Directors forwarded a resignation to the Board received from Mrs. Libby Jenkins, TDA Board Member, on March 1, 2021, effective immediately. In the resignation letter, Mrs. Jenkins stated she enjoyed working with this great group of people who share a love for Martin County.

The above listed resignation was APPROVED and ACCEPTED as part of the consent agenda.

## 7. Job Description – Part-time Deputy Clerk to the Board

During the December 14<sup>th</sup>, 2020 Board of Commissioners Special Called Meeting, the Board voted to appoint Finance Officer Cindy Ange as the Interim County Manager, due to the resignation of County Manager David Bone. County Clerk Jessica Godard was approved to receive additional responsibilities, as well. Additionally, the Board approved the hiring of a part-time Deputy Clerk to the Board, on an as needed basis.

County Clerk Jessica Godard submitted her resignation, effective March 5, 2021. At the March 10<sup>th</sup>, 2021 Board of Commissioners' Regular Monthly Meeting, the Board voted to hire former Martin County Clerk Marion B. Thompson as part-time Deputy Clerk, until a full-time County Clerk could be hired.

Martin County did not have a job description for a part-time Deputy Clerk to the Board on file. A job description was drafted for approval by the Board of Commissioners.

The Board APPROVED the part-time job description for Deputy Clerk to the Board (*entered into these minutes by title reference*) as part of the Consent Agenda.

## 8. Clerk Report included for informational purposes.

**INTRODUCTION OF NEW EMPLOYEE(S) - None**

## PRESENTATIONS

### COVID-19 Update

MTW Health Director Wes Gray was present via Cisco Webex to provide the monthly COVID-19 update to the Board of Commissioners. The coronavirus COVID-19 has affected 218 countries and territories around the world.

As of April 14<sup>th</sup>, 2021, Director Gray reported Martin County had 2211 total cases and 48 active cases. There had been forty-two (42) deaths. At the time of the report, five (5) Martin County residents were hospitalized. In Martin County, of the 25,118 tests or 111.9% of the population, two point five percent (2.5%) tested positive from March 21- April 3. There had been a slight decrease in total diagnostic tests administered.

Director Gray provided an update on vaccinations in Martin County. MTW District Health Department had administered (or transferred to District congregate living homes) 11,975 doses of vaccine.), as of April 14<sup>th</sup>, 2021. Director Gray reported there had been a decline in the request for vaccinations.

### **Economic Improvement Council Agency Impact & Pop the Trunk & We Pack It**

Executive Director, Dr. Landon B. Mason, Sr. for the Economic Improvement Council Agency, shared information on the economic impact the agency had on Martin County in FY2019-2020. During that period, EIC served two hundred-eight (208) families. Of those served, one hundred-sixty (160) children attended Head Start and forty-eight (48) attended Early Head Start. Total revenue for Head Start reported was \$1,427,177.60. The amount reported for Early Head Start was \$384,000.00. The overall total revenue the agency contributed to the Hamilton area of Martin County was \$1,811,177.60 for FY2019-2020.

Dr. Mason also presented information on recent Big Pop Up events held throughout the state of North Carolina. These, signature community action sponsored programs, focus on low income modernized communities. Dr. Mason noted an event scheduled at the Perquimans County Recreation Center on Tuesday, May 25<sup>th</sup>, 2021 for 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. At these events, drivers remain in their vehicles, pop the trunk, while volunteers, agencies, sponsors, and others pack the truck with household products, PPE products, etc. Dr. Mason stated there was no eligibility requirement to received goods. Volunteers needed and welcomed. Dr. Mason asked Martin County Commissioners to consider sponsoring an event in the near future.

### **Tax Assessor Department Presentation**

County Manager Bennett selected the Tax Assessor Department for a presentation for the April meeting. Elisha Hardison started by commending the staff of the Tax Assessor Department for their dedication, hard work, and friendly compassionate customer service.

Tax Assessor Hardison highlighted some of the achievements for the department.

- For 2020 tax collections, the department added \$20,930.266 of value (\$169,535 levy). For 2019, tax value added was \$17,871,920 of value (\$144,763 of levy).
- Starting April 1<sup>st</sup>, 2021, through a team effort with the Register of Deeds, deed e-recording went live.
- In conjunction with the NC 911, a joint statewide project was completed. Martin County T/A Department was 5<sup>th</sup> out of 100 counties in the state to complete the Q3 status.
- In September, T/A Department updated the GIS aerial photography, which now offers a mobile friendly website. T/A Department teamed up with Emergency Management to ensure that five (5) and six (6) mile Fire Insurance road mileage was added to the GIS maps.

Tax Assessor Hardison listed some of the continued focus or goals of the T/A Department were:

- To find unlisted/added values in a decreasing economy by auditing the mandatory 1/8 of all accounts.
- Work on solution for the solid waste availability issues.
- Gear up for Revaluation effective 2025.
- Add valuable information to the GIS website.
- Interlink the GIS with the Register of Deeds office.
- Provide effective, consistent, friendly customer service.

Tax Assessor Hardison put taxpayers on notice to expect auditing of real and personal properties. Tax Assessor Hardison also asked for input/suggestions on ways to make the GIS website better.

County Manager Bennett acknowledged Tax Assessor Hardison for her role on the Tax Assessor State Association. Tax Assessor Hardison stated recently, the NC T/A Association appointed her Treasurer of the Association, which would be a six-year term.

Board members commended the Tax Assessor Department for a job well done.

### **Recognizing Corporal Cody Jones – Advanced Law Enforcement Certificate Recipient**

Sheriff Tim Manning reported on March 12, 2021, the North Carolina Sheriffs' Education and Training Standards Commission awarded Corporal Cody Jones with his Advanced Law Enforcement Certificate. The Commission awards this prestigious award for years of service, a commitment of continuing education, as well as for college and in-service training.

Corporal Jones began working with the Martin County Sheriff's Office on September 3, 2013 and has a total of seven (7) years of experience. Sheriff Tim Manning stated Corporal Jones has been an asset to the Sheriff's Office and the citizens of Martin County. With his four-year degree, it took 540 hours of law enforcement training to obtain this degree.

Sheriff Tim Manning explained the North Carolina Sheriffs' Education and Training Standards Commission did not freely give this award. The Commission would list Corporal Jones among the elite law enforcement officers in North Carolina.

Board members commended Corporal Jones for his hard work, commitment and for receiving this award.

### **HOME Consortium Grant Program & Proposal for Multi-County Affordable Housing Initiative**

In October 2020, the County engaged with ECU's Division of Research, Economic Development and Engagement office in a grant initiative funded by the SECU Foundation. The purpose of the initiative was to identify affordable housing needs and to create a strategic plan in the counties of Bertie, Halifax, Hertford, Martin, and Northampton by the end of April. As part of this process, ECU made Martin County aware of a federal grant opportunity that required the creation of a multi-county partnership. County Manager Bennett stated he had reached out to the other counties in the initiative. Several counties had shown an interest.

Director Merrill Flood, ECU Local Community Affairs & Planning explained via Webex that the Home Investment Partnership Act, known as the HOME program, was a federally funded formula housing grant initiative of the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). The program was created as a result of the 1990 Cranston-Gonzalez Affordable Housing Act and was designed to fund housing programs and activities that address the needs of low to moderate-income citizens. Three categories of funding created under the program act are outlined below:

1. Participating Jurisdictions also referred to as “PJ’S, (these are entitlement communities that by formula allocation are eligible for \$750,000 in a direct HOME program allocation annually),
2. Funding to State agencies that fund affordable housing programs for Non-PJ communities,
3. Consortiums (two or more geographically contiguous local governments that agree by a legally binding commitment to be considered as a Consortium under the HOME program.

Specific Consortium funding categories are divided into three sub-categories. Consortia are units of local government that are geographically connected and must be either one of the following types:

1. An Urban County Area
2. A Non-Urban County Area
3. A Metropolitan City

Director Flood commented Consortium funding category recommended to Bertie, Halifax, Hertford, Martin, and Northampton counties was the Non-Urban County Area. Director Flood added a decision was not needed until March 1<sup>st</sup>, 2022.

Director Flood continued if the area was determined eligible for annual funding, the formula must generate an amount of first year funding of \$750,000. However, if the formula generated an amount that is less than \$750,000 in the first year, the newly formed Consortium would be allowed to make-up the difference. The formula based on demographic and geographic information, must have municipality buy-in, so the Consortium can receive the full award amount. For this proposed Consortium, the eligibility has been preliminarily determined and generates a potential grant award of just over \$657,000 annually. Thus, the Consortium, if funded, would need to provide just under \$93,000 in the first funding year only. This amount would be divided between the counties. The Consortium would continue to receive a grant award of \$657,000 annually for at least five years for affordable housing programs and services such as down payment assistance, rental assistance, and building rehabilitation in the five-county area.

Director Flood stated it was recommended that the Consortium secure an experienced grant administrator to assist with grant writing and administration. Estimated costs range from \$50,000 to \$80,000 depending on scope and experience. The counties must chose a “Lead Entity” (the local government to serve as the program administrator and coordinator of the Consortium). The Consortium could continue to receive an annual grant award indefinitely, as long as the joint cooperation agreement had continuous renewal and the Consortium completed a consolidated plan every five years, with a one-year action plan. Grant revenues could be shared equally or on a pro-rata basis, depending upon what the counties agree upon.

By participating in the HOME program, communities agreed to meet HOME program requirements. Some requirements:

- All projects and activities will serve persons or families of moderate to low income. (For the five county region the low-income threshold for a family of four persons average to just under \$46,500.)
- Match of 25% for non-federal funds (Match does not have to be new monies. Other program, such as programs administered by the Choanoke Area Development Association (CADA) to which the County contributes non-federal funds may apply toward the required match.) ECU was working on outside funding to help pay for the match.
- 15% of the grant award to the Consortium must be allocated to Community Housing Development Organizations or CHDO's.
- 10% of the grant award can be allocated to eligible administrative costs associated with carrying out the grant activities.
- Agreement to carry out federal requirements and studies associated with the program implementation.

The Consortium must utilize funds to provide, support, and maintain affordable housing that would serve individuals and families with incomes less than 80% the median income (adjusted by the family size). Some examples:

- Production of new units of affordable housing or related costs.
- Rehabilitation of substandard housing of low to moderate income residents.
- Assistance to first time low to moderate income individuals acquiring affordable housing (down payment, assistance/closing costs, secondary mortgages).
- Rental Assistance
- Activities of the Community Housing Development Organizations in connecting with affordable housing development.

Director Flood concluded by saying the secret and beauty of the HOME program was the ability to partner and leverage housing resources with both non-profit and for-profit housing developers.

#### Timeline Key Dates

- July 2021 – Agreement to key terms of the Consortium by participating entities
- August 2021 – Issue RFP for grant administrator
- September 2021 – Secure grant administrator
- March 1, 2022 - Submission by letter of a Notice of Intent to Greensboro HUD Field Office
- June 1, 2022-Submission of HOME Program Joint Cooperation Agreement to HUD
- August 1, 2022 - HUD notifies the Consortium of Approval

County Manager Bennett asked the Board to consider a few key items for which staff needed direction:

- Does the County wish to invite incorporated towns to participate in the Consortium? This would be an important step to ensure the Consortium receives the full \$657,000 award.
- Does the County wish to split the match evenly between the counties (and therefore equally split grant revenues) or pro rata based on population with grant revenues accordingly?

The Board would be giving County Manager Bennett feedback before the March 1<sup>st</sup>, 2022 deadline.

## **OLD BUSINESS**

### **Solid Waste Availability Fee Appeal**

Taxpayer, Mrs. Winifred Williams requested a refund for the solid waste availability fee for 2020 tax year based on the reasoning that the improved property/dwelling only had (1) one solid waste container for the year. Mrs. Williams received a listing/abstract form in January 2020 giving her a notice of the value and availability fees for his property for the upcoming 2020 tax year with a notification of a 30 days appeal period. There were no appeals filed in January 2020 for the property at 402 Blount St owned by Mrs. Williams.

Regular tax bills for 2020 were mail August 1, 2020. Mrs. Williams consulted with the Tax Assessor in the month of December 2020 to discuss the solid waste availability fee. The Tax Assessor's office denied her request for the release of the fee based on the reasoning that the appeal was untimely and there was (2) two solid waste cans on the property at one point in time. Mrs. Williams was not satisfied with the denial decision and wanted to appeal to the Board. The Tax Assessor's office re-inspected the property for the additional can, which was gone. For year 2021, the Tax Assessor's Office charged Mrs. Williams for one solid waste container.

During the February 10<sup>th</sup>, 2021 Board of Commissioners' meeting by teleconferencing, Mrs. Winifred Williams called in to the meeting to address her concerns to the Board and to request a refund for a solid waste availability fee. Mrs. Williams stated her dwelling only had (1) one solid waste container for the 2020 tax year and requested the removal of \$172 from her tax statement, as she did not have two trashcans. That the man that lived there before her had two trashcans.

During the same February meeting, Chairman Smith stated there was a picture in the agenda packet that showed two trashcans at the address in question. Chairman Smith recalled speaking to Mrs. Williams one day at the Governmental Center, and listening to her story. How Mrs. Williams explained she bought the house many years ago. Chairman Smith asked Ms. Williams to take a picture of the home and send to him. The picture revealed that the packet picture was many years old, and Chairman Smith explained there had been many renovations to the current home.

Chairman Smith did not call for a motion at the February 10<sup>th</sup>, 2021 to allow time to review the matter.

Using NC G. S § 153A-202 and the Martin County Waste Ordinance for cause for her ruling, Tax Assessor Elisha Hardison recommended that the solid waste service availability fee stay as billed for the 2020 tax year. However, Tax Assessor Hardison requested that the Board render an official ruling on the appeal for Mrs. Winifred Williams.

Chairman Smith asked for a motion to reimburse Mrs. Williams for the amount requested. Commissioner Gurganus made the MOTION to reimburse Ms. Winifred Williams \$172.00 for the solid waste availability fee FY 2020, with a SECOND by Vice Chairman Bond. The Board APPROVED the motion unanimously. (5-0)

## **NEW BUSINESS**



## **Resolution Authorizing the Assessment of Fair Housing for Community Development Block Grant-Coronavirus (CDBG-CV) Program**

On August 25, 2020, the state announce a new grant program for local governments. NC Commerce's Community Development Block Grant Coronavirus (CDBG-CV) grant program was designed to help local governments and communities respond to the health and economic impacts of COVID-19. The program provides \$28.5 million in funding received from the U. S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) to support North Carolina's COVID-19 response efforts. This allocation was authorized by the CARES Act of 2020.

The primary objective of the County proposal was to provide up to 6 months of emergency utility payments to prevent service disconnection of electricity, water, sewer, gas, internet, and telephone services. A second objective was to provide up to 6 months' emergency rent/mortgage payments to prevent eviction and homelessness.

The Board of Commissioners held two public hearings, as required. The first public hearing was held on September 9<sup>th</sup>, 2020. The second public hearing was held on September 16<sup>th</sup>, 2020.

Martin County applied for the grant in September 2020 and received notice of a CDBG-CV grant award of \$900,000 on October 16<sup>th</sup>, 2020.

The grant agreement was executed on January 5, 2021 at a Special Called Meeting of the Board of Commissioners. Martin County issued a Request for Proposals to establish a contract with an experienced CDBG Grant Administrator consultant, which would provide technical assistance to CADA for the income verification requirements. Proposals were due January 29, 2021. The County received two eligible bids, one from the Insight Planning and Development and one from The Wooten Company.

At its February 10, 2021 meeting, the Board of Commissioners approved The Wooten Company as the Grant Administrator for the CDBG-CV grant.

During the March 10<sup>th</sup>, 2021 meeting, the Board of Commissioners approved the Grant Agreement for Professional Services with The Wooten Company and the Grant Project Ordinance for \$900,000.

Economic Coordinator Kyle Touchstone, of The Wooten Company reported that Martin County's Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing or Assessment of Fair Housing would cover the municipalities within the County. The County's 2006 and 2012 ALS covered five-year periods and identified the following impediments: affordability, fair housing awareness, rental market and education. Based on the updated data analysis, it appeared that access to affordable housing remains the primary local impediment.

EC Touchstone commended the local government staff, Board of Commissioners, and community leaders for being active and staying engaged to promote comprehensive community and economic development programs to help combat this housing impediment. Housing Partners such as Martin County Department of Social Services, Habitat for Humanity of adjacent counties, Robersonville Housing Authority, Williamston Housing Authority, and Choanoke Area Development

Association (CADA) have been and continue to be deeply involved in sharing resources to provide safe, quality affordable housing to those in need.

Vice Chairman Bond Made the MOTION to approve the Resolution Authorizing the Assessment of Fair Housing for Community Development Block Grant-Coronavirus (CDBG-CV) Program, with a SECOND by Commissioner Biggs. The Board APPROVED the motion unanimously. (5-0)

**MARTIN COUNTY  
CDBG PROGRAM  
ASSESSMENT OF FAIR HOUSING RESOLUTION**

*A Resolution Authorizing the Assessment of Fair Housing for Martin County during the North Carolina Small Cities Community Development Block Grant- Coronavirus (CDBG-CV) Program.*

WHEREAS, the County participates in the Small Cities CDBG Program under the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974, as amended, and administered by the North Carolina Department of Commerce (DOC), Rural Economic Development Division (REDD);

WHEREAS, the County certifies to the Division that it will affirmatively further fair housing; and

WHEREAS, the Assessment of Fair Housing is required under this program;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Board of Commissioners of Martin County, North Carolina:

That this Assessment of Fair Housing is hereby adopted and to be used throughout the implementation of the Martin County CDBG Program

Adopted this \_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2021.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Ronnie Smith, Chair

ATTEST:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_, Clerk to the Board

**GFL Recycling**

Martin County was under contract with Green For Life, or GFL (formerly known as Waste Industries), through June 2021 for the weekly collection of approximately 11,672 waste carts from municipal and rural residences throughout the County. A contract for solid waste collection was a service contract and was not subject to competitive bidding requirements under state law. Waste Industries billed the County a monthly fee for each cart (currently \$10.37 per cart per month, effective July 1, 2021), which was scheduled for collection.

The contract with Waste Industries was originally with Waste Management (February 25, 2003) and assigned to Waste Industries in 2010. The Board of Commissioners approved a new contract

with Waste Industries in 2016 and runs through June 30, 2021. A contract extension had been proposed, and the following were the major changes in the proposed contract extension:

- TERM – The contract amendment would extend the agreement through June 30, 2026.
- RECYCLING CHANGE – One of the proposed contract amendments would change recycling from weekly 18-gallon bin pick-up to every-other-week collection of a 65-gallon container. During the December 7<sup>th</sup>, 2020 meeting, County Manager Bone spoke about the benefits of changing over to the 65-gallon container (protection from wind/rain, lowering cost because of the decrease in wet items).
- RATE – The rate was currently \$10.37. The new rate would be \$10.86, which reflected the additional cost of a recycling cart, rather than a bin (if the Board chose that option).

With the 5-year extension proposal, GFL staff stated there would be no CPI (consumer price index) increase for the first year of the extension, but there would be a CPI increase in the subsequent years based on common factors and indicators.

At that time, County Manager Bone stated if the Board chose the option to go with a recycling cart, the change would go into effect with the new contract on July 1, 2021. The \$6 increase would need to be taken into consideration during budget preparation.

At the December 7<sup>th</sup>, 2020 Board of Commissioners meeting, the Board voted to approve the contract through June 30, 2026 with a change to the 65-gallon container, with the increased rate of \$10.86.

After further review, County Manager Bennett explained due to increasing cost of Recycling using the small tubs, the projected over budget amount would be \$40,000. Currently in the budget, which consist of Trash/Recycling Pick up at \$1,458,000, there are three months trash pickup and four months of recycling left. This prompted staff to explore various causes of the increase. Some potential causes listed were COVID, Tipping Fees and Cross Contamination. Reportedly, some customer were filling the 18-gallon recycling tubs with household garbage. GFL takes the contents to Eastern Carolina Vocational Center (ECVC). ECVC sorts the contents and transfer the non-recyclables to the Landfill. At the present time, the Landfill charges ECVC but ECVC does not pass the charges to the County. Reportedly, ECVC planned to start passing the cost to Martin County.

County Manager Bennett continued to state that in addition, Martin County had ordered 12,000 of the 65-gallon containers at \$800,000. If this were to continue, the unbudgeted amount would also increase. Also, County Manager Bennett spoke of taking an informal survey, along with Finance Officer Cindy Ange in the community and in fact some of the containers were being used as reported. County Manager Bennett stated he had suspended the purchase of the 65-gallon containers.

Mike Donovan and Willie Brown, of Green For Life, attended the Board meeting and supported County Manager Bennett's comments regarding the use of the recyclable container. All agreed the focus should be on continued education.

County Manager Bennett asked the Board to approve amending the GFL contract clause regarding the 65 gallon containers previously approved, which is due to become effective July 1<sup>st</sup>, 2021, and to approve the continued use of the small recycling containers already in use.

Commissioner Ayers made the MOTION to amend the contract between Martin County and Waste Industries/GFL, and to cancel the order for the 65-gallon recycling containers and to approve the continued use of the small recycling containers as shown below, with a SECOND by Commissioner Biggs. The Board APPROVED the motion unanimously. (5-0)

State of North Carolina  
County of Martin

Amendment of the Contract made between Martin County, NC and Waste Industries, LLC dated August 10<sup>th</sup> 2016:

**Section 8. Adjustments**

1. The CPI increase will be effective for the July 1, 2021- June 30, 2022 period and on the anniversary of the Contract. The CPI increase per the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics for 2021 is 1.4%.

**Section 2. Services**

b. Previous amendment had the residents being issued 65-gallon carts. This has been cancelled. Residents will continue to use 18-gallon bins for recycling.

**All other terms and conditions remain the same.** In witness whereof, Martin County, NC and Waste Industries, LLC have executed this contract amendment as of this day and year first written:

Waste Industries, LLC

Martin County, NC

By: \_\_\_\_\_  
Rodney Rosebrough-Regional V.P.

By: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

This instrument has been preaudited in the manner required by the Local Government Budget and Fiscal Control Act.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Finance Officer

**Building Reuse Grant Contracts – The Jay Group – Project Shoelace/Mid-East Commission**

In a special called meeting on January 5, 2021, the Martin County Board of Commissioners approved a resolution of support and subsequent N.C. Department of Commerce Building Reuse Program application on behalf of The Jay Group, Ltd., known as Project Shoelace. In the same meeting, the Board approved the Mid-East Commission to administer and write the grant on behalf

of the County and its recruitment of the Company, which was considering locations in Nevada and Kentucky. The grant application deadline was January 7<sup>th</sup>, 2021.

On February 18<sup>th</sup>, 2021, Governor Roy Cooper announced a building reuse grant award of \$130,000 in support of the project. On February 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2021 The Jay Group announced its commitment to Martin County with its pending purchase of the building at 1321 Third Street Extension in Robersonville, where it planned to invest \$2,825,000 in the next two years and create 22 full-time jobs. While varying by position, the average annual wage of the new jobs will be \$38,913, well above the Martin County average of \$32,137.

President/CEO Jason Semple, accompanied by Jack Pendergrah of Mid-East Commission reported that upon receiving confirmation of The Jay Group's control of the property, on April 5<sup>th</sup>, 2021 the NC Department of Commerce issued the contract already signed by Commerce for execution by Martin County and The Jay Group. The County Attorney reviewed the building reuse contract and recommended that the County execute the contract to include a Deed of Trust and Promissory Note so that the project can move forward.

President/CEO Semple continued to say the grant would require a 5 percent match by the County. NC Department of Commerce deemed professional grant consulting and administration fees as an acceptable match for expenditures. The Mid-East Commission fees of \$15,000 exceed the required threshold, so the match requirement was satisfied.

Commissioner Gurganus made the MOTION to approve the execution (*the following documents with the Jay Group & Mid-East Commission were entered into these minutes by reference.*) of the NC Department of Commerce Building Reuse Grant Program Contract, the Mid East Commission Grant Fee Contract, and the Deed of Trust and Promissory Note, with a SECOND by Commissioner Ayers. The Board APPROVED the motion unanimously. (5-0)

## **Budget Amendment(s)**

### **Budget Amendment #31**

Finance Officer Cindy Ange explained North Carolina General Statute §161-11.3 requires counties to set aside 10% of the fees collected pursuant to GS §161-10 in a non-reverting Automation Enhancement fund. These funds shall be expended on computer and imaging technology in the Office of the Register of Deeds. At June 30, 2020, Martin County had \$30,308 in the Automation Enhancement fund, which is part of the County's fund balance.

Martin County Register of Deeds, Kim Griffin requested an appropriation of \$8,300 from this fund for computer indexing, computer scanning and secure remote access.

### **BUDGET ORDINANCE AMENDMENT-31**

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, 2021.

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

	Increase	Decrease
General Government		
Register of Deeds	\$8,300	

This will result in an increase of \$8,300 in the expenditures of the General Fund. To provide an increase in the revenues for the above, the following revenues will be changed.

Fund Balance	\$8,300
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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 and SECONDED by Commissioner Gurganus to adopt the above budget ordinance amendment this 14th day of April 2021.

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For your information

		INC	DEC
Automation Enhancement	1141800 549900	\$8,300	
Fund Balance	1100090 499099	\$8,300	

### **Budget Amendment #32**

Finance Officer Ange stated Martin County receives funding each year from the Office of Juvenile Justice for several programs and for administration/certification. Certification funds are generally used for JCPC monthly meetings and bookkeeping expenses. Unspent funds must be returned to the State each year, which generally the County does not have. However, last year the County had \$743 of unspent funds that needed to be re-appropriated and returned to the State.

### BUDGET ORDINANCE AMENDMENT-32

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, 2021.

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

	Increase	Decrease
Human Services		
OJJ - Certification	\$743	

This will result in an increase of \$743 in the expenditures of the General Fund. To provide an increase in the revenues for the above, the following revenues will be changed.

Fund Balance \$743

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 and SECONDED by Commissioner Biggs to adopt the above budget ordinance amendment this 14th day of April 2021.

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For your information

		INC	DEC
OJJ Certification	1158350 569902	\$743	
Fund Balance	1100090 499099	\$743	

**Budget Amendment #33**

Finance Officer Ange stated last fiscal year the Martin County Board of Commissioners approved an engineering services agreement with the Wooten Company pertaining to the NCDOT project to upgrade Prison Camp Road.

The Wooten Company began work on these year, however work was not complete and therefore the remaining funds (\$11,282) must be re-appropriated in the current year. NCDOT would be reimbursing Martin County for these funds.

**BUDGET ORDINANCE AMENDMENT-33**

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, 2021.

Section 1. To amend Water District #2, the expenditures are to be changed as follows.

	Increase	Decrease
Operations		
Professional Fees	\$ 11,282	

This will result in an increase of \$11,282 in the expenditures of Water District #2. To provide an increase in the revenues for the above, the following revenues will be changed.

Reimbursement from DOT	\$ 11,282
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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 to adopt the above budget ordinance amendment this 14th day of April 2021.

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For your information

		INC	DEC
Professional Fees	6271300 559752	\$ 11,282	
DOT	6200025 445236	\$ 11,282	

**Budget Amendment #34**

Finance Officer Ange reported on April 6, 2021, a SCADA computer board at the Ed’s Grocery Road well site was discovered to be inoperable. It appeared the board was effected by a power surge during a power outage. The board had been replaced and the system was running. The replacement part was estimated to cost \$7,000.

After an evaluation, an insurance claim would be filed to cover the cost of the new board.

**BUDGET ORDINANCE AMENDMENT-34**

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, 2021.

Section 1. To amend Water District #2, the expenditures are to be changed as follows.

	Increase	Decrease
Operations		
Repairs and Maintenance	\$ 7,000	

This will result in an increase of \$7,000 in the expenditures of Water District #2. To provide an increase in the revenues for the above, the following revenues will be changed.

Insurance Proceeds	\$ 7,000
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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 Gurganus and SECONDED by Commissioner Biggs to adopt the above budget ordinance amendment this 14th day of April 2021.

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For your information

		INC	DEC
Repairs and Maintenance	6271300 535200	\$ 7,000	
Miscellaneous	6200050 483990	\$ 7,000	

**BOARD REPORTS / COMMISSIONERS' COMMENTS**

Water

Commissioner Gurganus stated the County was in conversations about some good things that he felt would help in terms of our water situation. However, Commissioner Gurganus thought there were some issues that needed addressing. Commissioner Gurganus stated he felt honored that people trusted him to help them and he would try to give it his very best every time.

Commissioner Gurganus commented most of the calls received were problems with their water bill. Commissioner Gurganus stated he has had the opportunity to be involved in eleven (11) water bill problems, since December 2020. Personal involvement in three (3) of the issues turned out to be some typos or keying in errors, which were resolved. Commissioner Gurganus stated he advised seven of the water customers to go talk to the Water Department and they would get it straight. Unfortunately, Commissioner Gurganus added those people never really got satisfied. Commissioner Gurganus commented that on a very consistent basis, someone in the water department told individuals the water went somewhere.

Lastly, Commissioner Gurganus spoke of an individual whose water bill normally average \$70 a month for 53 months. It would go to \$109 to \$110 sometimes, dropping down for time to time. For the month of March, the water bill went to about \$400. The water usage went from an average of 6,500 gallons to 7,500 gallons a month to 47,000 gallons in one month. The individual Commissioner Gurganus was referring to was himself.

Commissioner Gurganus said he hired two (2) plumbers who gave the same results. There was one commode with a slight leak. Commissioner Gurganus stated the Water Department told him to write a letter stating there had been a leak and that it was fixed. Commissioner Gurganus stated he felt he would be lying, if he wrote the letter. Commissioner Gurganus commented he would bring the invoices by the Water Department. Commissioner Gurganus also stated he would pay the water bill because he was a good citizen but if it happened again, he would put down a \$7,500 well and water softener, and encourage everyone to do the same.

Chairman Smith stated so many things can cause these issues but logic should come first. Chairman Smith also asked for the names of the seven individuals Commissioner Gurganus mentioned that were not completely satisfied.

Pre-65 Retirees Insurance

Commissioner Ayers inquired about letters sent to pre-65 retirees regarding proposed changes to their insurance.

County Manager Bennett explained that the letters were only a prerequisite to determine potential ways to reduce cost for pre-65 retirees insurance. Currently, insurance for each active employee cost about \$7,000/yr. For each pre-65 retiree individual, the insurance costs up to \$22,500/yr.

County Manager Bennett stated Martin County elected to join the State Health Insurance Plan several year ago. The plan did not allow the inclusion of retirees. Pre-65 retirees (Approximately 14) have been acquiring insurance on the marketplace. Retirees 65 and older have been on a separate plan with Blue Cross Blue Shield and must acquire Medicare Part A and pay the cost of Medicare Part B to join the plan.

#### Salaried Employees Compensatory Time

Commissioner Ayers questioned the proposed discontinuation of compensatory time for employees.

County Manager Bennett explained the reasoning behind the proposed change for salaried/exempt employees in depth. Those salaried employees could take time off, with the County Manager's approval but should not get comp time. County Manager expressed concern that salaried/exempt employees acquiring comp time could become a liability for the County. County Manager Bennett noted the Board would make the final decision on the proposed changes.

Commissioner Gurganus suggested salaried staff, who are required to work during emergencies or to meet deadlines, should receive some type of compensation. Whether it be call comp or something else.

#### NCACC 2021 Annual Conference

Chairman Smith stated the 2021 NC Association of County Commissioners Annual Conference was scheduled for August 12<sup>th</sup> -14<sup>th</sup>, 2021 in Wilmington, NC.

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

At 9:47 p.m., Vice Chairman Bond made a MOTION to enter Closed Session for NC G.S. 143-318.11(a)(6) – Personnel, with a SECOND from Commissioner Gurganus. The Board APPROVED the motion unanimously (5-0).

Due to personal obligations, Commissioner Gurganus left the meeting during Closed Session.

At 11:10 p.m., Commissioner Biggs made a MOTION to go out of Closed Session NC G.S. 143-318.11(a)(6) – Personnel, with a SECOND from Vice Chairman Bond. The Board APPROVED the motion unanimously (4-0).

#### **OPEN SESSION**

Commissioner Biggs made the MOTION to hire Ms. Julia Rease as Martin County Clerk to the Board/Executive Assistant, with a SECOND Vice Chairman Bond. The Board APPROVED the motion unanimously (4-0).

## **ADJOURNMENT**

With no further business to discuss, Commissioner Ayers made a MOTION to adjourn the meeting, with a SECOND from Commissioner Biggs. Chairman Smith adjourned the meeting at 11:17 p.m. The next regular meeting was scheduled for Wednesday, May 12, 2021 at 7:00 p.m. in the Commissioners Boardroom.

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Ronnie Smith, Chairman

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Marion B. Thompson  
Deputy Clerk to the Board