

September 8, 2021

The Martin County Board of Commissioners met in a Regular Session on Wednesday, September, 8 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, County Clerk to the Board Julia S. Rease, Finance Officer Cindy Ange, Chief Deputy Drew Robinson, and IT Director Jeb Gardner and Austin Keel.

Others in Attendance: Martin County DSS Director Angela Ellis, Transit Administrative Officer Frank Halsey, Martin County Economic Development President and CEO Jason Semple

Present via Cisco WebEx: Domtar Plymouth Mill General Manager Todd Rogers, Domtar Senior Manager for Public Affairs & Communications Jan Martin, Martin County Tax Assessor Elisha Hardison, NC weeklies and Enterprise Leslie Beachboard, Steven Burns, Todd Rodgers.

Chairman Smith called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. Commissioner Gurganus led the Pledge of Allegiance. Transit Officer Administrator and Pastor Frank Halsey of Jamesville First Baptist Church provided the invocation. Chairman Smith extended a welcome to all.

AGENDA APPROVAL

Commissioner Ayers mad a Motion that the Bertie Martin Regional Jail Board Appointment under Item 9 of New Business to be removed from the agenda and that the August 30th, 2021 minutes are pulled for corrections.

Vice Chairman Bond made a MOTION to approve the agenda as revised to table the Bertie Martin Regional Jail Board Appointment, with a SECOND from Commissioner Biggs. The Board APPROVED the motion unanimously. (5-0)

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Real Estate Public Comments

Mr. Paul Roberson, Ms. Angela Waters, Mr. Mike Councilmon, Mr. Devin Onks, and Ms. Mandy Bullock all made public comments to the Board of Commissioners regarding real estate concerns. All public comments were stated from real estate personnel, current home owners, and new home owners who have concerns that there were improper tax assessments and increases on the taxes on their homes.

Chairman Smith asked that all concerns from the Public Comments section are addressed with County Manager U. James Bennett, the Tax Assessors office, and the citizens that made a public comment. Chairman Smith also stated that this would be an agenda item for the October Regular Meeting.

CONSENT AGENDA

Commissioner Ayers asked that the August 30th, 2021 Special Call Meeting Minutes are amended to reflect changes discussed. Vice Chair Bond Jr. MOTIONED to approve the August 30th, 2021 Special Call Meeting Minutes with changes as stated by Commissioner Joe R. Ayers, with a SECOND by Commissioner Ayers. The Board APPROVED the motion unanimously (5-0)

1. Minutes Approval

Minutes – August 18, 2021 Regular & Closed Sessions

Minutes – August 25, 2021 Special Session

Minutes – August 30, 2021 Special Session

2. Financial Report – August 2021 for August 2021

3. Tax Assessor – Tax Refund Request – August 2021 - None

4. Tax Assessor – Tax Relief Orders – August 2021

Year Levy	Lname	Fname	Reason	Value	Total
2021	Beach	Jimmy W. Heirs	Clerk Error	500	4.45
2020	Bullock	James Thomas	Sold Vehicle	4,813	42.12
2021	Bullock	James Thomas	Sold Vehicle	4,620	40.42
2021	Bunting	Cynthia C Etals	Double Listed	1,800	17.43
2021	Carr	Shirley Stokes	Error in Landfill FE		182.00
2021	Bank	Crescom	Double Listed	90,193	803.62
2021	Funding LP	Dell Equipment	Error in Listing		2.03
2021	Hardison	Terry H	Double List	11,600	146.16
2021	Hargett	Jack Levern	Sold Vehicle	7,575	67.50
2021	Hurst	Jeffrey Morton	Sold Vehicle	7,252	61.64
2021	Joyner	George C	Double Billed		302.95
2021	MDPA INC.	Katherine McNeese	Error in Listing		230.80
2021	Lilley	Brian J.	Error in Landfill FE	0	182.00
2021	LLC.	Little Express	Sold Vehicle	6,636	59.06
2021	Matthewson	Steven Dale	Error in Value	18,980	468.60
2021	Mobley	Ervin E.	Error in Landfill FE		182.00
2021	Moore	Anthony Antonio	Error in Landfill LE		182.00
2021	Robinson	Maurice Ledrew	Bill of Sale	15,070	131.11
2021	Rogers	Artie Carlyle	Error in Value	4,000	34.00
2021	Sitterson	Louis Leroy Jr.	Sold Vehicle	500	4.38
2021	Wynne	Brian Augustus	Sold Vehicle	6,698	58.94
2016	Transportation	Department of	Advert Advertising		3.00
2017	Transportation	Department of	Advert Advertising		3.00
2018	Transportation	Department of	Advert Advertising		3.00
2019	Transportation	Department of	Advert Advertising		3.00
2021	LLC	Strata Master Lessee 2	Solar Panel	536,430	4,774.22
2021	Etals Ore	Shirley M Jtros	Elderly Exemption	29,970	266.72

2021	LLC.	Argos USA	Bill of Sale	13,463	110.51
			<i>Total Real & Personal Releases</i>		8,366.66
					0.00
			<i>Total VTS Refunds</i>		\$ 0.00
			<i>Total Tax Relief Orders</i>		\$8,366.66

5. Tax Collector's Report – August 2021

	Category	21-Aug	August - 21 Y - T - D
Real Property	20	\$ 1,602,713.96	\$ 1,729,055.76
Personal Property	25	\$ 404,228.32	\$ 410,427.75
Total		\$ 2,006,942.28	\$ 2,139,483.51
Motor Vehicle	30	\$ 48.75	\$ 172.65
Total MV		\$ 2,006,991.03	\$ 2,139,656.16
All Total		\$ 2,006,991.03	\$ 2,139,656.16

6. Board Appointments/Reappointments

a. Tourism Development Authority Board

The Martin County Tourism Development Authority Board of Directors recommends the appointments/reappointments of the following TDA Board of Directors.

Susan Tyre – (At Large)	3 Years	06/30/21
Don Torrence– (At Large)	3 Years	06/30/21
David “Skip” Gurganus – (Commissioner Rep.)	1 Year	06/30/21
Evan Brothers, Manager – Holiday Inn Express – (Hotel Rep.)	3 years	06/30/21
Lemmie Uzzell – (Chamber of Commerce Rep.)	3 Years	06/30/21

All three year terms would expired 6/30/24. In accordance to state statute, Commissioner Representative would be up for appointment in one year. The Board was asked to approve these appointments/reappointments as part of the Consent Agenda.

The above listed resignation was **Approved** and **Accepted** as part of the consent agenda.

7. NC DOT Project R-2511 US 17

NC DOT John Able Jr. reported the proposed improvement of US 17 was scheduled to be LET to contract on December 21, 2021, with construction beginning around May 1, 2022. The construction of the project will require the relocation and adjustment of certain water and/or sewer lines owned by Martin County. The design for the relocation work will be handled by engineers from the NC Department of Transportation and the construction would be included in the Roadway Contract. This work will be done at the expense of the Department of Transportation in accordance with General Statute 136-27.1.

Special Provisions and Plans showing proposed water and sewer line relocations were given to the Board of Commissioners to review. In accordance with State and Federal Regulations, it will be necessary for Martin County and the Department of Transportation to agree in writing as to the terms of use and

occupancy for the water and/or sewer lines to remain within the highway right of way and these conditions were provided to the Board of Commissioners for approval.

The above item was **Approved** and **Accepted** as part of the consent agenda.

8. **Clerk Report** included for informational purposes.

INTRODUCTION OF NEW EMPLOYEE(S)

Finance Office – Corrinne Heartley

Finance Officer Cindy Ange introduced Mrs. Corrinne Heartley to the Board and Staff. Finance Officer Ange stated that Ms. Heartley's was the new Finance Specialist and Mrs. Heartley has a degree from Davidson County Community College. Finance Officer Ange stated that Mrs. Heartley was hired at a busy time, but has worked diligently.

Veterans Office – Shareka Alexander

County Manager U. James Bennett introduced Ms. Shareka Alexander. County Manager Bennett stated that Ms. Alexander was formerly working in Pasquotank County as the Veterans Services Officer for 11 years, is fully trained, and has worked with the former Veterans Services Officer before. Ms. Alexander expressed her concerns and passion for veterans, their families, and their needs. Ms. Alexander welcomed any veterans and veteran families to visit the Veterans services office to receive services.

Water Department- Mr. Cody Cratt

Supervisor of the Water Department, Ed Warren introduced his new employee, Mr. Cody Cratt. Supervisor Warren stated that Mr. Cratt is from Martin County graduated from bear grass charter school, has worked with Martin County before, and has worked with a neighboring utility company before coming back to Martin County. Mr. Cratt stated that his goal was to be a successor of Water supervisor Warren when he retires.

PRESENTATION (S)

North Carolina Forest Service of Martin County

North Carolina's forest land is one of the greatest influences on the state, providing economic value and adding immeasurably to the quality of life for its residents. The forest products industry is the largest manufacturing business sector in the state, contributing approximately \$34.9 billion annually to the state's economy and providing around 148,000 jobs for North Carolinians. The NC Forest Service's primary purpose is to ensure adequate and quality forest resources for the state to meet its present and future needs. The NC Forest Service of Martin County was invited to make a presentation.

NC Forest Service – Martin County - Staff

Martin County Forest Ranger Dan Glazewski stated that he was one of the newest rangers, he attended Stevens's University, and attained a Bachelor's degree in Environmental Sciences.

Ms. Avery Owens announced herself as the new Martin County Assistant County Ranger and she recently graduated from the University of North Carolina – Wilmington MAJORING IN Environmental Sciences and GIS.

NC Forest Service – Martin County – Staff (continued)

Mr. Johnathan Stalls introduced himself as the Forest Fire Equipment Operator and has worked with the NC Forest Service for 4 years. Protect Manage and Promote

Mr. Mike Petruncio introduced himself as the District 7 Forester and conducts operations for the 9 counties in district 7, which includes Martin County.

County Cooperation for Service delivery

District 7 Forester Mike Petruncio stated that the NC Forest Services has an annual Cooperative budget in all 100 counties and the NC Forest Service County budget is negotiated each year with the county share being 30-40% based on the tax base. District 7 Forester Petruncio reported that the county is billed monthly based on actual expenditures.

North Carolina Cost Share Programs

NC District 7 Forester Petruncio reported Martin County had around 223,000 acres of forest land and that makes up about 77% of the land in Martin County. NC District 7 Forester Petruncio stated that the Cost share programs help to defray the cost of reforestation and shared some examples of Cost Share Programs:

- Forest Development Program – FDP

NC District 7 Forester Petruncio stated that the Forest Development Program was administered by the NC Forest Service and the objective of the program is to assure forest productivity and provide environmental protection to the state woodlands through cost sharing with eligible landowners. As funds are available, this program would assist in site preparation, tree planting, stand release and prescribed burning

- Southern Pine Beetle Prevention Program – SPBPP

District 7 Forester Petruncio reported that this program was administered by the NC Forest Service and uses forest management practices to minimize future Southern Pine Beetle outbreaks. NC Forester Petruncio stated that Pre-commercial thinning is used to prevent an attack from the beetles and trees are planted or thinned 10-12 feet apart to give them space to grow with a \$100 flat rate per acre and up to \$10,000. This graph shows the amounts of cost share funds that have been released to citizens in Martin County.

Martin County Cost-Share				
Year	FDP Base fund	FDP Plant Only	SPBPP	Total
21-22	\$28,298.00	N/A	N/A	\$28,298.00
20-21	N/A	\$13,086.00	N/A	\$13,086.00
19-20	\$20,026.00	N/A	\$4,400.00	\$24,426.00
18-19	\$36,242.00	N/A	N/A	\$36,242.00

Protecting the County Resources, Forest Fire Equipment Ranger, Johnathan Stalls

Forest Fire Equipment Ranger Stalls stated that the NC Forest Services goal was to protect life and property and it has prevented over 4,000 wildfires annually over the state. Forest Fire Equipment Ranger Stalls stated that the service has a local response to every brush and woods fire to prevent wildfire suppression. Forest Ranger Stalls reported 30 fires in Martin County in the past year and 59 acres damaged after suppression. Forest Ranger Stalls also reported over the last 5 years, Martin County had an average of 32 fires per year with 37 acres damaged per year. NC Forest Ranger Stalls stated that the goal was to prevent the fires and the amount of acreage damage down.

Initial Attack Equipment, Forest Fire Equipment Ranger, Johnathan Stalls

Next NC Forest Fire Ranger Stalls explained and listed the fire control equipment. NC Forester Stalls stated that Martin County had access to Type 6 Engine trucks and a Dozier (Tractor Plow) which is specialized for fire control. NC Forest Fire Equipment Ranger Stalls stated that UH-1H (helicopters) reused as well. The UH-1H (Huey Helicopter) can be for fast initial attack on wildfires. The helicopters are able to quickly deliver a nine-person fire crew wherever needed as well as battle fires with water/foam drops. The helicopters are also used for medical evacuations, backfiring operations on wildland fires, to ignite prescribed burns using either a helitorch or a ping-pong ball machine - Chemical Ignition Device System (CIDS), cargo transport (internal and external loads), re-seeding operations, infra-red mapping of incidents, and numerous nonfire emergency missions. NC Forester Stalls reported that some parks, national forests, and other land areas may have the inability or laws preventing heavy equipment on the property and Hand Crews are utilized to put out fires. There is also a Hauling Unit & Dozer which includes a road tractor and trailer, a D5 high track Dozier that pulls the Fire Plow and a Single Engine Air Tanker (SEAT) located out of Kinston that can carry 800 gallons of water or retardant.

Managing the County Resources NC District 7 Forester, Mike Petruncio

NC Forest Service District 7 Forester Mike Petruncio announced that the Forest Service provides written forest management plans, which affects 365,000 acres per year. NC Forester Petruncio also reported that 30-40 plans were written for Martin County last year and the staff in Elizabeth City helps with the more technical plans. These plans assist landowners in obtaining necessary management services, and carrying out practices including:

- Site Preparation for Planting
- Tree Planting
- Herbicide Treatments
- Forest Fertilization
- Intermediate Timber Harvest
- Final Harvest Advice
- Nearly 2,500 harvest plans were referred to private forestry consultants
- Working with loggers and harvesters on Best Management Practices to protect water quality and to make sure that they are complying with forest practice guidelines.
- Martin County has a lot of markets to sell their wood and this employees the loggers as well.
- Providing Forest Inventory for the entire state on a 5-7 year rotation.

Promoting Forest Resources

NC Forest Service Forester Mike Petruncio educated the Board and Staff of educational programs that the NC Forest Service provides with schools and civic organizations such as Smokey the Bear, 200,000 visits to the NC Forest Services Educational State Forests, and 150,000 visitors to DuPont Recreational State Forest.

The NC Forest Service staff was thanked for their presentation, services, and cautioned to be safe. *Questions were asked and have been added for informational purposes.*

Commissioner Bond asked if there was an air tanker that could be filled by the airport fire hydrant. NC Forest Fire Equipment Ranger stated that the fire hydrant was so far down the line that it does not pump the appropriate pressure to load equipment in adequate time to do a drop and return. NC Forester Stalls stated that the Greenville, Beaufort, Hertford-Tri County, and Edenton - Chowan airports or loading statins were being used to load and return just because it takes so long for the Martin County Airport to load. NC Forest Fire Equipment Ranger Stalls stated if there was a way to increase pressure, then Martin County Airport would be utilized. NC Forester Stalls discussed a fire in Bertie County that needed to be put out and the Martin County Airport was used to fill the retardant and or water, the pressure was not high enough to fuel in a timely manner for the emergency of a fire with a 4-5 minute turnaround. NC Forest Fire Equipment Ranger stressed the important of a quick turnaround especially in a hot and or humid season and there are hand crews holding back the fire until the load of retardant or water comes back.

Commissioner Gurganus asked if there a method to use a fire tanker trunk in the event it was needed. NC Forest Fire Equipment Ranger Johnathan Stalls responded that some aviation training has been conducted, but training would be needed after COVID. NC Forester Stalls stated he as a volunteer Fire Fighter has spoken to the officials with the fire departments for training between fire stations and the forest services. NC Forester Stalls stated that if they would use the same drop tanks as the fire department have in the county, a fire tanker trunk can be set up outside the fenced in area so the trucks don't go the same route as the aircraft, have a tanker drop into the drop tank, and the engine would pump to the air tankers from an actual structure engine.

Commissioner Gurganus asked about thinning and crowded stands enticing the Southern Pine Beetle and if there was a method for areas that loggers won't go into? Mike Petruncio stated that this was a problem for a smaller logger whereas a bigger logging company has the appropriate equipment. Johnathan Stalls stated that the areas are sometimes added together and a logging company will be there at the sight k 8-20 acres a piece within a 5 mile area.

The Forest Service was thanked for their presentation and responses.

PUBLIC HEARING- TRANSIT

Motion to enter Public Hearing – Transit made by Vice Chair Commissioner Bond Jr. and **Seconded** by Commissioner Biggs. Motion was **Carried** unanimously.

Section 5311 Funds through the Community Transportation Program (CTP) for Martin County Transit.

Martin County DSS Director Angela Ellis and Martin County Transit Administrative Officer Frank Halsey explained that Martin County Transit is a public transportation agency and receives outside funding from multiple sources, including:

- The Community Transportation Program (CTP)
- Rural Operating Assistance Program (ROAP)
- Medicaid Transportation
- Medicare Transportation

Martin County Transit is also supported financially through the collection of customer fares, sale of disposed transit vehicles, and county funding.

Martin County Transit Administrative Officer Frank Halsey stated that Martin County submits applications and holds the required public hearings annually for the CTP program. The Board of Commissioners is being asked to hold a public hearing on Martin County's Community Transportation Program 5311 grant application for **2022-2023**. Martin County Transit Administrative Officer explained the Community Transportation Program and asked that the board approve the attached Public Transportation Program Resolution, approve the grant application and authorization of the submittal of the application, as presented, adopt the Annual Conflict of Interest Policy pertaining to grants and procurement, as presented, individually sign a copy of the Annual Conflict of Interest Policy the Board adopts pertaining to grants and procurement, and designate the delegation of authority to sign these grant application documents.

Community Transportation Program:

MC Transit Administrative Officer explained that the Community Transportation Program (CTP), is a combination of federal and state funds, and provides the majority of funding for North Carolina's rural transportation systems. The CTP application incorporates the following three programs into a single program / application:

- Non-urbanized Area Formula Program (FTA Section 5311)
- Rural Capital Program (Composed of three programs that have been consolidated and entitled "Consolidate Capital Call for Projects Program")
- Human Service Transportation Management Program

Martin County Transit Administrative Officer Halsey reported NCDOT was accepting CTP applications from designated sub-recipients. In preparation for submitting an application, each applicant must hold a Public Hearing on the proposed project to allow members of the community the opportunity to comment on public transportation needs and the grant application. The Martin County Transit (MCT) 5311 grant application has two parts:

1. The **Administrative Budget** covers salaries and fringe benefits of management and office staff, drug and alcohol testing, first aid supplies, office materials, travel expenses, telephone and internet service, marketing, and other expenses associated with the running of an office. These administration dollars are 80% Federal, 5% State and 15% local share. The total amount requested for **FY 23** is **\$140,676** of which the **local share is \$21,101**.

2. The **Capital Budget** request includes:

- Replacement of one MCT bus that has high mileage. The new vehicle will be a 25 foot LTV bus with an ADA lift platform for wheelchair accessibility.
- One color printer/scanner.
- Four computers with dual monitors.

Martin County Transit Administrative Officer Halsey reported these capital dollars are 80% Federal, 10% State and 10% local share. The total capital amount requested for **FY 23** is **\$95,760** of which the **local share is \$9,576**. The total estimated amount requested for the period **July 1, 2022 through June 30, 2023** is:

<u>PROJECT</u>	<u>AMOUNT REQUESTED</u>	<u>LOCAL SHARE</u>
ADMINISTRATIVE	\$140,676	\$21,101 (15%)
CAPITAL	\$95,760	\$9,576 (10%)
TOTAL PROJECT	<u>\$236,436</u>	<u>\$30,677</u>

The Resolution and Public Hearing Notice have been attached for informational purposes

PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE

Section 5311 (ADTAP), 5310, 5339, 5307 and applicable State funding, or combination thereof.

This is to inform the public that a public hearing will be held on the proposed FY 2023 5311 Community Transportation Program Application to be submitted to the North Carolina Department of Transportation no later than October 8, 2021. The public hearing will be held on September 8, 2021 at 7 pm before the Martin County Board of Commissioners.

Those interested in attending the public hearing and needing either auxiliary aids and services under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) or a language translator should contact the County Manager's Office on or before September 8, 2021 at telephone number 252-789-4301 or via email at jrease@martincountyncgov.com

The Community Transportation Program provides assistance to coordinate existing transportation programs operating in Martin County as well as provides transportation options and services for the communities within this service area. These services are currently provided using Martin County Transit. Services are rendered by Martin County Transit.

The total estimated amount requested for the period **July 1, 2022 through June 30, 2023**. This application may be inspected at the County Manager's Office from August 30, 2021 to September 8, 2021. Written comments should be directed to Angela Ellis before September 8, 2021.

End of Notice

Note: AN ORIGINAL COPY of the published Public Hearing Notice must be attached to a signed Affidavit of Publication. **Both the Public Hearing Notice and the Affidavit of Publication** must be submitted with the grant application.

Public Transportation Program Resolution

PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION PROGRAM RESOLUTION

FY 2023 RESOLUTION

Section 5311 (including ADTAP), 5310, 5339, 5307 and applicable State funding, or combination thereof.

Applicant seeking permission to apply for Public Transportation Program funding, enter into agreement with the North Carolina Department of Transportation, provide the necessary assurances and the required local match.

A motion was made by Vice Chair Dempsey Bond Jr. and seconded by Commissioner Biggs for the adoption of the following resolution, and upon being put to a vote was duly adopted.

WHEREAS, Article 2B of Chapter 136 of the North Carolina General Statutes and the Governor of North Carolina have designated the North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) as the agency responsible for administering federal and state public transportation funds; and

WHEREAS, the North Carolina Department of Transportation will apply for a grant from the US Department of Transportation, Federal Transit Administration and receives funds from the North Carolina General Assembly to provide assistance for rural public transportation projects; and

WHEREAS, the purpose of these transportation funds is to provide grant monies to local agencies for the provision of rural, small urban, and urban public transportation services consistent with the policy requirements of each funding source for planning, community and agency involvement, service design, service alternatives, training and conference participation, reporting and other requirements (drug and alcohol testing policy and program, disadvantaged business enterprise program, and fully allocated costs analysis); and

WHEREAS, the funds applied for may be Administrative, Operating, Planning, or Capital funds and will have different percentages of federal, state, and local funds.

WHEREAS, non-Community Transportation applicants may apply for funding for “purchase-of-service” projects under the Capital Purchase of Service budget, Section 5310 program.

WHEREAS, Martin County Transit hereby assures and certifies that it will provide the required local matching funds; that its staff has the technical capacity to implement and manage the project(s), prepare required reports, obtain required training, attend meetings and conferences; and agrees to comply with the federal and state statutes, regulations, executive orders, Section 5333 (b) Warranty, and all administrative requirements related to the applications made to and grants received from the Federal Transit Administration, as well as the provisions of Section 1001 of Title 18, U. S. C.

WHEREAS, the applicant has or will provide all annual certifications and assurances to the State of North Carolina required for the project;

NOW, THEREFORE, be it resolved that the (Authorized Official’s Title)* of Martin County Board of Commissioners is hereby authorized to submit grant application (s) for federal and state funding in response to NCDOT’s calls for projects, make the necessary assurances and

certifications and be empowered to enter into an agreement with the NCDOT to provide rural, small urban, and urban public transportation services.

I (Certifying Official's Name)* Ronnie Smith (Certifying Official's Title) Chairman of the Martin County Board of Commissioners do hereby certify that the above is a true and correct copy of an excerpt from the minutes of a meeting of the Martin County Board of Commissioners duly held on the 8th day of September, 2021.

Signature of Certifying Official

*Note that the authorized official, certifying official, and notary public should be three separate individuals.

Seal Subscribed and sworn to me:

Date

Notary Public

Printed Name and Address

My commission expires (date)

Motion to exit Public Hearing – Transit made by Vice Chair Bond Jr. and **Seconded** by Commissioner Gurganus. Motion **Carried** unanimously.

OPEN SESSION

Vice Chairman Bond Jr. made the **Motion** to approve the attached Public Transportation Program Resolution, approve the grant application and authorization of the submittal of the application, as presented, adopt the Annual Conflict of Interest Policy pertaining to grants and procurement, as presented, Individually sign a copy of the Annual Conflict of Interest Policy the Board adopts pertaining to grants and procurement, and Designate the delegation of authority to sign these grant application documents with a **Second** by Commissioner Biggs. Motion was **Carried** unanimously.

DSS Director Ellis and Transit Administrative Officer Halsey were thanked for their time and services.

PUBLIC HEARING- ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Motion to Enter Public Hearing- Economic Development by Commissioner Biggs and **Seconded** by Commissioner Gurganus. Motion **Carried** unanimously.

Project Bonfire –Domtar -Economic Development Council CEO and President Jason Semple CEO and President of the Martin County Economic Development Council reported after an advertisement for public hearing appeared in the December 14, 2018 and December 21, 2018 editions of *The Enterprise*, the Board of Commissioners held a public hearing pursuant of NC G.S. § 158-7. In this hearing, the Commissioners adopted a resolution Authorizing Martin County to

enter an Economic Development Incentive Agreement with Domtar (a.k.a. Project Bonfire), where the County would contribute up to seventy percent (70%) of net new real and personal property tax revenues generated by the Company to the Company for a duration of up to the next eight (8) years. This incentive would offset the Company's costs of its taxable investment in the County of Martin, should the Company choose Martin County instead of competing locations in Ohio and South Carolina for its expansion.

MC Economic Development Council President and CEO Semple reported that in a meeting held August 14, 2019, the Board of Commissioners approved and executed a subsequent Economic Development Agreement with Domtar, which agreed to retain 300 full-time jobs and invest at least \$90,745,283 by January 1, 2023.

MC Economic Development Council President and CEO Semple stated Domtar requested an extension of the January 1, 2023 deadline to January 1, 2026 due to COVID-19 and other factors. The grant payout period was not requested to be extended, but merely the amount of time for Domtar to meet its investment obligations under the grant. Because this represents a material change to the original grant, the County Attorney advised staff that the public hearing process is required. Therefore, a public hearing advertisement appeared in the August 26, 2021 edition of *The Enterprise*.

The Public Hearing Notice has been attached for informational purposes

Notice of Public Hearing

NOTICE is hereby given that the Martin County Board of Commissioners will hold a public hearing in the Board Room, Martin County Governmental Center, 305 East Main Street, Williamston, NC, Wednesday, September 8, 2021 at 7 p.m. or as soon thereafter as may be heard on the following:

In accordance with North Carolina General Statute §158-7.1(c) the purpose of the hearing will be to receive public comments on a material change to an existing economic development investment policy previously granted to Domtar, also known as Project Bonfire. The economic development investment policy grant consists of expansion assistance of up to two million eight hundred sixty four thousand two hundred twenty eight dollars (\$2,864,228.00), a specific term of years, not to exceed eight (8) years. The project is expected to (1) create a significant investment in real and tangible taxable personal property of up to ninety million seven hundred forty five thousand two hundred eighty three dollars (\$90,745,283.00) and (2) retain 300 full-time jobs. The County will recover the cost and the public will benefit through future property and business taxes, stimulation of the economy, promotion of business and the retention of jobs in Martin County. All interested citizens will have the opportunity to give written and/or oral comments at this hearing.

Julia Rease
Clerk, Martin County Board of Commissioners
August 26, 2021

Motion to exit Public Hearing- Economic Development made by Commissioner Ayers and **Seconded** by Vice Chairman Bond Jr. Motion was **Carried** unanimously.

OPEN SESSION

OLD BUSINESS

Oak City EMS, Fire, and Rescue

County Manager Bennett introduced Mr. Ricky Cannon as the speaker on the subject matter. County Manager Bennett also stated that Mr. Canon and he had a conversation after the last Board meeting to discuss solutions. The agreement was in fact that the fire agencies would be willing to ask for a 1% fire tax and if the county was approving of paying \$20,000 to each of these 5 stations, totaling to \$100,000 and hire 5 individuals to assist ems. Mr. Canon was able to speak with the fire chief and he was in agreeance, but it is also up to the board to approve the payment of \$100,000. 1% can generate \$118,000 in Jamesville Roanoke Robersonville Williamston goose neck oak city griffin bear grass and Hamilton, each town can go up to .15 and the highest is .8 as far as fire tax expansion. Ricky Canon agreed and stated that he was not advocating a tax increase, but this was the easiest and fair to raise funds for EMS needs. And this is strictly ems and he would like the funds to be marked for ems only, so the funds cannot be used for anything else. County Manager Bennett stated that the item had to be voted on first and Mr. Canon agreed.

Chairman Smith stated that if all department heads and chiefs were in agreement there would be a vote. Chief Ricky Cannon agreed that all chiefs and department heads were contacted and in agreeance.

Commissioner Ayers stated, "In lieu of the EMS having a hard time keeping staff in this county particularly as a volunteer department, with this being in mind, in order to keep these five departments in the county staffed, I make a **Motion** to dedicate \$ 100,000 to be divided amongst the 5 departments, dedicate 1% fire tax increase, and as Mr. Canon requested that the all the funds are dedicated strictly to EMS, no other use, earmarked to EMS." Commissioner Biggs **Seconded** the motion. Motion was **Carried** unanimously.

Commissioner Ayers **Motioned** to dedicate \$ 100,000 to be divided amongst the 5 departments, dedicate 1% fire tax increase, and as Mr. Canon requested, that the all the funds are dedicated strictly to EMS, no other use, earmarked to EMS. Commissioner Biggs **Seconded** the motion. Motion was **Carried** unanimously.

Appreciation was given to the EMS and Fire Departments for their services.

NEW BUSINESS

Contract Approval-Amended Local Incentives- Project Bonfire

Martin County Economic Development Council CEO and President Jason Semple asked for approval of the amended contract discussed in the Public Hearing for Economic Development, which includes an extension performance period for January 1, 2026.

Motion to approve of amended contract that includes the extension of the performance period to January 1, 2026 by Commissioner Gurganus with a **Second** by Commissioner Biggs. Motion was **Carried** unanimously.

The Domtar staff and Mr. Semple were thanked for their time and services.

Budget Admendment

Finance Officer Cindy Ange stated that 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 this year, however work was not complete and therefore the remaining funds needed to be re-appropriated in the current year. NCDOT has reimbursed Martin County for these funds.

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, 2022.

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

	Increase	Decrease
Operations		
Professional Fees	\$ 2,821	

This will result in an increase of \$2,821 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	\$ 2,821
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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 Biggs and **Seconded** by Commissioner Gurganus to adopt the above budget ordinance amendment this 8th day of September 2021. Motion **Carried** unanimously.

Chairman Smith recessed the meeting for 5 minutes before making a motion to go into closed session.

CLOSED SESSION

Around 8:37pm Commissioner Biggs **Motioned** to enter Closed Session NC G.S. § 143-318.11(a) (4) – Economic Development with a **Second** by Commissioner Ayers. Motion was **Carried** unanimously.

Around 9:30p.m. Vice Chairman Bond Jr. **Motioned** to adjourn with a **Second** by Commissioner Ayers. Motion was **Carried** unanimously.

BOARD REPORTS/COMMISSIONERS' COMMENTS- NONE

ADJOURNMENT

Around 9:30p.m. Commissioner Gurganus **Motioned** to adjourn with a **Second** by Vice Chairman Bond Jr. Motion was **Carried** unanimously.