

## August 17, 2022 Regular

The Martin County Board of Commissioners met in a Regular Session on Wednesday, August, 17 2022 at 7:00 p.m. in the Superior Courtroom at the Martin County Governmental Center, 305 East Main Street, Williamston, North Carolina.

### ASSEMBLY

Present in the Boardroom: Chairman Ronnie Smith, Vice Chairman Dempsey Bond, Jr., Commissioner Joe R. Ayers, Commissioner Emily Biggs, Commissioner David “Skip” Gurganus, County Manager U. James Bennett, Clerk to the Board Julia S. Rease, County Attorney Benjamin Eisner, Finance Officer Cindy Ange, Sheriff Tim Manning.

Chairman Smith called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m. Commissioner Biggs led the Pledge of Allegiance, and Pastor Irvin Brown provided the invocation.

Others Present: Mayor of Robersonville Tina Brown and Mayor of Bear Grass Charlotte Griffin

Chairman Smith extended a welcome to all.

### AGENDA APPROVAL

**Motion** to approve the agenda as stated was made by Vice Chairman Bond Jr. with a **Second** by Commissioner Biggs. Motion was **Carried** unanimously.

### PUBLIC COMMENTS

#### Martin General Hospital

Ms. Frankie Biggs made a public comment regarding Martin General Hospital, “According to your mission statement, you have been elected to provide leadership and promote businesses in Martin County. The hospital is not a business, but it is essential to Martin County. I do believe it is in the best interest of the citizens of Martin County to have a hospital. When it comes to the hospital, I don't believe you acted with its best interest in mind. You now have no one interested and formed a committee to find the entity to assume the hospital lease. I can't imagine they will have much success. Martin General is currently limited to only six inpatients at a time. They cannot continue for long. No hospital is the state sustain itself with this limited income. We are in great danger of losing our doctors and the hospital closing. The Affinity Corporation had wanted to assume the lease from the current lessor. They were going to make improvements in the hospital, bring new doctors, and new specialties. It is my understanding the county commissioners drugged their feet to the point that Affinity withdrew their offer. The county commissioners needs to be transparent with the citizens of Martin County and explain why you drug your feet and why you are not interested in working with Affinity Corporation. Without Affinity's Corporation's interest, I am afraid we will not have a hospital in the near future. Thank you for your time and I await your explanation for not working with Affinity.”

Ms. Biggs was thanked for her public comment and Chairman Smith stated a response would be given to this public comment at the meeting due to the high volume of concern regarding the

hospital. Chairman Smith asked if County Manager Bennett could provide an update to the public regarding efforts to save the hospital.

Manager Bennett stated he understood the concerns of Ms. Biggs and the citizens of Martin County. Manager Bennett reported that everything could not be discussed because the subject matter was an ongoing discussion for closed session. Manager Bennett stated Affinity did make an offer to take over the operations at Martin General Hospital (MGH) as well as the Washington Regional Medical Center (WRMC). Manager Bennett reported receiving letters and Board members receiving communications from workers at Washington Regional Medical Center after Affinity attained the operations of WRMC. Manager Bennett added that as of late last week, he was notified that an electric company was going to cut the power at WRMC due to a non-payment.

Next, Manager Bennett stated the Board had the citizens and Martin General in its best interest. Manager Bennett stated the Board was looking for an operator that was a good fit for needs of Martin County Citizens. Manager Bennett explained that Martin General was built around six years ago, when the population was about 44,500. Manager Bennett stated the current population was roughly about 22,500 noting the difference in the population and its effects on Martin General operations. Manager Bennett stated the Hospital Committee was comprised of the Chief of Staff and former Human Resources personnel of Martin General, Commissioners, and lead citizens of the community. Manager Bennett stated the committee had been busy trying to find an operator within the four biggest hospitals in NC, smaller hospitals, and even out of state hospitals. Manager Bennett stated an attorney with expertise in hospitals was hired by the Board to give advice in navigating the contractual arrangements with the current operators of MGH. Then, Manager Bennett responded that MGH was needed for the citizen's health and economic development in Martin County. Manager Bennett stated future businesses would not want to come to Martin General without the hospital, therefore stunting economic development. Lastly Manager Bennett reported discussions with potential providers that made presentations, but were found to lack experience and the financial wherewithal. In these cases, Manager Bennett stated it was decided that the providers would not be a good choice for Martin County. Manager Bennett reported that efforts were made with the CEO of Vidant physically at least on two occasions in person and numerous corresponding letters were sent. Manager Bennett stated these efforts were answered by Vidant responding that they were not currently in position to look at MGH. Manager Bennett offered to show the efforts made once the matter was completed. Manager Bennett stated the Chief of Staff, Dr. Chawla, and his brother were supportive of the efforts being conducted by the Board and had the best interest of the staff at MGH.

Commissioner Gurganus assured Ms. Biggs that what she commented was correct in regards to the Board's mission statement and that the Board was doing the best for the citizens.

Chairman Smith encouraged all citizens to attend the meetings to make a public comment or to ask questions, to contact Manager Bennett for questions and concerns for him to convey to the Board. Chairman Smith stated the board may have information that the public didn't know about, but he guaranteed that there was nothing the Board was trying to hide. Chairman Smith stated that Board wanted to be transparent.

Martin County Voting Sites

Mr. Lon Moore made a public comment regarding the voting sites in Martin County stating,

“... What I want to come forward with this afternoon is about the Board of Elections that we had a meeting with on August 15. We spoke to them about extending the voting hours in Martin County. I understand that they only had one early voting place to vote and that was in Williamston, so we recommended Robersonville for our next early voting station. We also asked them to extend the voting hours. One of the things said was that they [Board of Elections] didn’t have enough money. Mr. Lon Moore then stated the problem with getting another voting station in Robersonville was due to finances and not that the Board of Elections refused to extend voting hours or create a voting station in Robersonville. Mr. Lon Moore stated that he and other citizens would like for there to be a voting station in Robersonville and extended voting hours on the future.

Chairman Smith stated that matter would be given to Manager Bennett to look into and contact would be mad with Mr. Moore in a few days.

Mayor Tina Brown of Robersonville made a public comment, “I just want to reiterate what Mr. Moore was saying about extending the hours, especially to the Robersonville area. It's imperative that we extend those hours and make sure that we have the early voting available in Robersonville. Because for one reason, we have a transportation issue in our part of the county, especially Robersonville. It’s a little inconvenient and hard to get down to Williamston just asking of behalf of the town the purpose of will and as the mayor that you please extend the time available. The extended hours in Robersonville make it a little more convenient for the citizens of the town. Thank you.”

Chairman Smith asked if there were any further questions or comments. There were no further comments.

**CONSENT AGENDA**

Commissioner Ayers made a Motion to approve the consent agenda as presented, with a Second by Commissioner Gurganus. The motion was **Carried** unanimously.

1. **Minutes** – June 08, 2022 Closed, June 28, 2022 Special, and July 13, 2022 Regular.
2. **Financial Report for July 2022**
3. **Tax Assessor – Tax Refund Requests – July 2022 – None**
4. **Tax Assessor – Tax Relief Orders – July 2022 - \$1,358.61**

| Year | Lname | Fname      | Reason           | Value   | Total   |
|------|-------|------------|------------------|---------|---------|
| 2021 | Higgs | Alfonza J. | Sold Mobile Home | \$4,700 | \$43.95 |

|      |         |                  |   |          |            |
|------|---------|------------------|---|----------|------------|
| 2022 | America | United States of | Error in Listing                          | \$38,750 | \$592.88   |
| 2022 | America | United States of | Error in Listing                          | \$47,800 | \$721.78   |
|      |         |                  | <i>Total Real &amp; Personal Releases</i> |          | \$1,358.61 |
| 0000 | -----   | -----            | -----                                     | 0        | \$ 0.00    |
|      |         |                  | <i>Total VTS Refund Requests</i>          |          | \$ 0.00    |

**5. Tax Collector's Report – July 2022**

|                          | <b>Category</b> | <b>June</b>               | <b>6-21 Y-T-D</b>         |
|--------------------------|-----------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| <b>Real Property</b>     | <b>20</b>       | <b>\$6,958.31</b>         | <b>\$6,958.31</b>         |
| <b>Personal Property</b> | <b>25</b>       | <b>\$5,274.69</b>         | <b>\$5,274.69</b>         |
| <b>Total</b>             |                 | <b><u>\$12,233.00</u></b> | <b><u>\$12,233.00</u></b> |
| <b>Motor Vehicle</b>     | <b>30</b>       | <b>\$67.56</b>            | <b>\$67.56</b>            |
| <b>Total MV</b>          |                 | <b><u>\$67.56</u></b>     | <b><u>\$67.56</u></b>     |
|                          |                 |                           |                           |
| <b>All Total</b>         |                 | <b>\$12,300.56</b>        | <b>\$12,300.56</b>        |

**6. Board Appointments/Reappointments**

**a. Airport Commission**

On behalf of the Airport Commission, it has been requested that the Board of Commissioners reappoint Mr. Larry Biggs and Mr. Mitch Manning for an additional four-year term ending on January 31st, 2027.

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

**b. Southern Albemarle Delegates**

Included on the consent agenda was a list of names submitted by the Southern Albemarle Association as delegates from Martin County for 2021. Mr. Mitch Manning presented this list to the Board with information from their past meeting.

**2022 Southern Albemarle Delegates**

|                          |                                      |                            |
|--------------------------|--------------------------------------|----------------------------|
| Ms. Charlotte B. Griffin | Mr. & Mrs. Jerry Harrell             | Mr. Ronnie Smith, Co. Comm |
| Ms. Lula Council         | Ms. Emily Biggs, Co. Comm.           | Mr. James Bennett          |
| Ms. Tonya Leggett        | Mr. Wesley Beddard, President        | Mayor Ray Deans            |
| Mayor Tina Brown         | Mr. David 'Skip' Gurganus, Co. Comm. | Ms. Barbara Council        |
| Mrs. Beulah Bennett      | Mayor Ray Deans                      | Mr. Joe Ayers, Co. Comm    |
| Mr. & Mrs. Don Grady     | Mr. Milton Bennett, Jr               | Ms. Jamie Heath            |

|                            |                                  |                               |
|----------------------------|----------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Mayor Eddie Brown          | Mr. Dempsey Bond, Co. Comm       | Mr. Curtis Willet             |
| Mr. Tim Manning            | Mayor Craig Tucker               | Mr. Chase Conner              |
| Mr. Jason Semple           | Mr. Vann Rogerson                | Mr. John Chaffee              |
| Ms. Kim Griffin            | Mayor Joyce Whichard-Brown       | Mayor Jerry McCrary           |
| Mr. Ben Jones              | Mr. Win Bridgers, NCDOTPE        | Mayor Ervin Williams          |
| NC Rep. Shelly Willingham  | Ms. Gretchen Byrum, NCDOTD PDE   | Mr. Mitch Manning             |
| Mr. Eric Pierce, Town Adm. | Mr. Marshall Gill, NCDOTD Eng.   | NC Senator Ernestine Bazemore |
| Mr. Bryant Buck, Director  | Mr. Brooks Braswell, NCDOTR Eng. | Mr. David Wiseman             |
| Mr. Sam Singleton          | Mr. Reginald Speight             | Ms. Betty Jo Shephard         |
| Dr. Tom Daly, Supt.        | Mr. Trey Lewis                   | Mayor Michelle Davis          |

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

**c. Rivers East Workforce Development Board**

Currently Jaret Warren of Metcore Industrial Solutions and Tanisha Baker of Penco Products serve as private sector board members on the Rivers East Workforce Development Board. Both seats expired on June 30, 2022. It was recommended that Mr. Warren be reappointed for another 2 year term. Contact was made with Ms. Baker and she is not interested in being reappointed as other work commitments conflict with meeting schedules.

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

**7. Tax Assessor – New Road Name**

Melissa Phillips For the purposes of this item, a road or roadway is a public or private one-way or multiple-lane route that is used for ingress or egress or route of transportation between specific points and/or areas".

Martin County approved an ordinance on July 12th 2006 to better help the efforts of the E-911 Emergency response team to serve our county citizens most effectively in an emergency situation. The Martin County Road Naming and Addressing Ordinance allows the Tax Assessor's Office to request an approval of a new road name when there are three (3) or more residences that use the same ingress/egress to their occupied dwelling.

Taxpayers DG Matthews & Sons Inc. are requesting a new road name to be assigned to the passageway that they own. There are three (6) parcels that use the path as a right a way to their property. As per the Martin County Road Naming and Addressing Ordinance, this passageway needs to be assigned an official name. DG Matthews & Son, Inc. own right away of the path and have submitted a request of suggested names for the new road. Also included is a map to show the area of interest and the approval of all the necessary officials prior to submittal to the Board of Commissioners.

This Board **Approved** this item as part of the Consent Agenda.

**8. Tax Assessor – Present Use Value Program Application**

Maple Brach LLC, requested the approval of a late application for continued use in the PUV program. The owner of Maple Branch LLC., was mailed a letter in February from the Tax

Assessors Office. The reasoning for the lateness of the application was reportedly due to the owner waiting for a forestry management plan and the owner became busy with crop preparation. Tax Assessor Phillips spoke with Mr. Edmondson (owner) via phone call and was informed that Mr. Edmondson signed an affidavit when he purchased the property. Tax Assessor Phillips stated that this affidavit did not take place of the Present Use Value Program application required by statute.

Commissioner Ayers asked for clarification on Item 8 of the Consent Agenda regarding the late present use value program application from Maple Brach, LLC. Commissioner Ayers asked if the Board was in agreement with the item being accepted in the consent agenda, the Board would be accepting of the late application. Chairman Smith asked Tax Assessor Phillips to explain the item.

Tax Assessor Phillips stated late applications had to come before the board for approval and an explanation of good cause to the reason the application was late would be needed. Tax Assessor Phillips explained that the item could be pulled from the consent agenda to allow discussion and questions to be presented between the Board and the taxpayer. Tax Assessor Phillips stated if the Board approved of the late PUV application, the deferred taxes will not be billed. Tax Assessor Phillips stated if the late PUV application was not approved or a good explanation for the late application was not found, the taxpayer would be billed for this deferred taxes. Tax Assessor Phillips further explained that the tax bills from the current year and the past three years would be billed to the tax payer.

The Board **Approved** of this item as part of the Consent Agenda

## **9. Tax Collector – 2022 Annual Settlement and Order to Collect Taxes**

Tax Assessor Melissa Phillips explained NC G. S. § 105-321 stated that before delivering the tax receipts to the Tax Collector in any year, the Board of County Commissioners or municipal governing body shall adopt and enter in its minutes an order directing the tax collector to collect taxes charged in the tax records and receipts. A copy of this order shall be delivered to the Tax Collector at the time the tax receipts are delivered to him, but the failure to do so shall not affect the Tax Collector's rights and duties to employ the means of collecting taxes provided by this Subchapter. The Board was asked to approve this item as part of the Consent Agenda.

The Board **Approved** of this item as part of the Consent Agenda

## **INTRODUCTION OF NEW EMPLOYEE(S)**

Every month, new employees are invited, introduced, and welcomed to Martin County by the Board of Commissioners. MC Department of Social Services Administrative Assistant Barbie Casper introduced the following employees:

1. Lasharia Hocutt - Social Worker II - DSS
2. Stacy Harrington - Public Information Assistant IV – DSS

Ms. Lanita Garrett, Ms. Amie Bryant, and Ms. Temeshia Davender were not introduced as they were not able to attend the meeting this month.

The Board members expressed their warm welcome and appreciation to the new employees.

## **PRESENTATIONS**

### **Jamesville 10U All Star Softball Team- Babe Ruth State Champions**

Human Resources Donna Zube introduced the Babe Ruth Champions, the Jamesville 10 U All Star Softball Team. HR Zube then gave each team member and coach a certificate and metals. The Jamesville 10 U All Star and Babe Ruth Champions are listed as:

Reavis Turner, Ashlyn Roberson, Saylor Hoggard, Liliana Reason, Kalyn Jones, Jesse Brown, Madison Winstead, Brielle Rountree, Payge Morgan, Abby Hayes and Haleigh Brickhouse, Coaches Charles Winstead, Coach Josh Copeland, and Coach Brandon Hayes.

The Board congratulated the Babe Ruth Champions and took a picture with the team. Coach Winstead thanked the team for their hard work and the team's parents for their time to make sure the team players attended practices and games.

### **Jamesville 14U All Star Softball Team- Babe Ruth State Champions and Babe Ruth World Series Champions**

Human Resources Donna Zube also introduced the Babe Ruth State Champions and the Babe Ruth World Series Champions, the Jamesville 14 U All Star Softball Team. HR Zube stated the Jamesville 14 U Softball team became the Babe Ruth State Champions and continued on the Treasure Coast of Florida. HR Zube reported the Jamesville 14 U team participated in the Babe Ruth World Series and won the Babe Ruth World Series Champion title. HR Zube presented each team member and coach with a certificate and metal. The Babe Ruth State Champions and Babe Ruth World Series Champions are:

Chloe Clifton, Ella Hayes, Hannah Lilley, Olivia Hogge, Lane Gregory, Isabelle Williams, Callee Perry, Hylee Jarrett, Chloe Ferebee, Clair Ferebee, Juju Woods, Coach Eric Kirby, Coach Wayne Lilley, and Coach Eric Ferebee.

The Board members each gave encouraging statements and congratulated the team, the parents, and the coaches on their hard work and success. Parents and coaches also congratulated the team and each other on the hard work and success achieved.

### **4H Youth Voice Presentation – Martin County 4H Youth Voice Delegate Katelyn Davis**

Chairman Smith introduced Ms. Katelyn Davis as the 4 H Youth Voice Delegate and explained the youth delegate's attendance at the annual North Carolina Association of County Commissioners. Chairman Smith reported that the delegates were invited to represent their home counties and would be provided with exercises and simulations. Chairman Smith reported one of the activities was a budget preparation simulation and Katelyn Davis had the opportunity to speak with elected officials at a breakfast.

Kayla Dickerson introduced herself as a former (2013) 4H Youth Voice Delegate and also the Interim 4H Agent. Interim 4H Agent Dickerson reported that she also attended the NCACC Conference in support of Ms. Katelyn Davis. Ms. Dickerson explained the 4H Youth Delegate program. Ms. Davis stated the program had 19 day camps with well over 200 students enrolled over the summer. Ms. Dickerson stated that she was impacted by the program and has seen the impact on others such as Ms. Katelyn Davis.

Current 4H Youth Voice Delegate Katelyn Davis was formally introduced and asked to give a presentation on her experience. Ms. Davis stated that she was given the honor to represent Martin County for the 4H Youth Voice, in which she participating in multiple activities. Ms. Davis stated these activities allowed her become more familiar with team building skills that she believed were crucial to success. Ms. Davis stated that she was given a personality color test with her peers that helped her learn more about human behaviors, how to communicate with others based on their personality traits, the value of communication, and adaptability when working with a team. Ms. Davis stated on the second day of the program, the group played a game in which they used the previously learned skills and also gain a better understanding of what county governments do. Ms. Davis stated she was educated in the roles of commissioners as the governing body, she inquired knowledge that would guide her into her career, she made real connections and friendships with people in her age group, and she made connections with county officials. Ms. Davis stated that she would recommend the 4H Youth Voice program to any teen looking to improve their social, problem solving, and leadership skills.

The Board thanked Ms. Davis for her representation as the Martin County 4H Youth Voice Delegate and wished her success in her future endeavors.

### **Emergency Services Review – NCACC Outreach Associate Neil Emory**

Chairman Smith introduced the Outreach Associate Neil Emory from the North Carolina Association of County Commissioners (NCACC) to present options to the board regarding Emergency Medical Services. NCACC Outreach Associate Emory oversees the eastern border of the North Carolina he works with Counties as the NCACC provides different resources for counties without requiring payment.

NCACC Outreach Associate Emory stated the NCACC wanted to assist counties as they face challenges of serving their citizens by bringing knowledge of other counties and entities into draw upon. NCACC Outreach Associate Emory stated an example of this method was a peer review which involved a team going to a county to help assist with department (s), to review at operations, and how they serve their citizens better. NCACC Outreach Associate Emory stated this would cost no charge to the county. NCACC Outreach Associate Emory further explained that a team of peers would be developed from across the state, the team would go to the county in need to look at the operations, make recommendations to improve the quality of service, and recommend what was needed to improve.

Secondly NCACC Outreach Associate Emory stated that the association (NCACC) would look at issues outside departments such as volunteers and or contractors. In that case, the association dealt recently with some Emergency Medical Services (EMS) issues such as the inability to retain



needed volunteers. NCACC Outreach Associate Emory reported some causes to this issue was the amount of training and or state requirements, challenges upgrading the level of service, response time restraints and coverage issues, and some volunteers needing to work outside of their county. NCACC Associate Emory stated a portion of American Rescue Plan funding with an addition of a small county contribution could be used to conduct an assessment. This assessment would include a conjunction with a contracting group to review the existing structure of an EMS squad (s) including collecting data from speaking with the each EMS squad. The existing structure includes the hospital, response times based on the level of care, speaking with the medical director regarding the flow of services. NCACC Outreach Associate Emory stated the assessment would also include collecting data from the 911 database to monitor how many calls were received, the type of calls received, the level of care required for the calls, and the areas not being responded to in a timely manner, and what it would take to bring the level of care up. NCACC Outreach Associate Emory stated after this was completed, development recommendations would be given to be considered.

Lastly, NCACC Outreach Associate Emory stated the Board submitted a request to the association to explain ways that the association (NCACC) could help Martin County. NCACC Outreach Associate Emory reported an assessment would cost around \$20,000. NCACC Outreach Associate Emory also stated that the contracted group used in this assessment by the association was called CrisisTEC. CrisisTEC was composed of retired EMS personnel that started their own business. NCACC Outreach Associate Emory stated that CrisisTEC would understand where current EMS personnel are coming from, know their language, know what their issues were, and has respect for what the current EMS personnel does.

Manager James Bennett stated that this assessment would cost \$75,000 - \$10,000. Manager Bennett reported speaking with the Emergency Management Director Jody Griffin and Fire Marshall Michael Peaks who were in agreeance of this assessment and ready to participate. Manager Bennett stated a county wide EMS system may be an undertaking financially as of now. Manager Bennett also agreed with NCACC Outreach Associate Emory regarding extensive training hours and the struggle to complete these hours with balancing a family and or job (s).

Commissioner Gurganus commented as he has experience in EMS and agreed that the training was extensive. Commissioner Gurganus stated he attending EMT training at Martin Community College around 1980 and the training required 81 hours. Commissioner Gurganus stated now the requirements for training were over 200 hours for an EMT certificate, which was a big commitment. Commissioner Gurganus expressed his concern that the struggles that EMS is going through could snowball. Commissioner Gurganus reported speaking with most of the EMS personnel, they would like to move forward with this assessment, and would be happy to see that the commissioners were going to listen to come up with a solution to this issue. Commissioner Gurganus stated that he was in favor of the EMS assessment as it is a service the county needed to have.

Vice Chairman Bond Jr. was in agreeance with Commissioner Gurganus and of the assessment stating that most counties had to change over to a different model due to the lack of volunteers and Martin County was one of the only counties that depended on them.

Commissioner Ayers stated that he was also in agency with the EMS assessment as there was obviously a problem. Commissioner Ayers stated that a change in operations would be helpful and the assessment would be a good step in that direction.

Commissioner Biggs commented that EMS was needed and needed to be worked on before the problem became crucial. Commissioner Biggs stated that EMS was something the county should make sure is available for the citizens.

**Motion** to proceed with the assessment regarding EMS made by Commissioner Gurganus with a **Second** by Vice Chairman Bond Jr. Motion was **Carried** unanimously.

Chairman Smith added that the county would partner with the North Carolina Association of County Commissioners on the cost for the assessment.

NCACC Outreach Associate Emory asked if the county could appoint a committee to help facilitate the process. NCACC Outreach Associate Emory recommended the county ask the representatives from the Hospital, Community College, Chiefs Association, Medical Director, or anyone else deemed appropriate for the committee and reasoning of the assessment.

Commissioner Gurganus stated he would like the committee to have equal representation of the EMS and Fire squads.

Chairman Smith asked County Manager Bennett to make a committee for the assessment with the Emergency Management Director.

Manager Bennett asked after the committee was formed, how long this assessment would take.

NCACC Outreach Associate responded that past assessments have not gone past 6 months of completion. NCACC Outreach Associate was thanked for his time and services.

## **OLD BUSINESS**

### **Tax Assessors Revised 2025 Reevaluation Schedule- Tax Assessor Melissa Phillips**

Tax Assessor Melisa Phillips presented a revised schedule for the upcoming tax reevaluation process in 2025. According to N.C.G.S. § 105-317. Appraisal of real property; adoption of schedules, standards, and rules:

(a) Whenever any real property is appraised it shall be the duty of the persons making appraisals:

( 1) In determining the true value of land, to consider as to each tract, parcel, or lot separately listed at least its advantages and disadvantages as to location; zoning; quality of soil; waterpower; water privileges; dedication as a nature preserve; conservation or preservation agreements; mineral, quarry, or other valuable deposits; fertility; adaptability for agricultural, timber-producing, commercial, industrial, or other uses; past income; probable future income; and any other factors that may affect its value except growing crops of a seasonal or annual nature.

(2) In determining the true value of a building or other improvement, to consider at least its location; type of construction; age; replacement cost; cost; adaptability for residence, commercial, industrial, or other uses; past income; probable future income; and any other factors that may affect its value.

(3) To appraise partially completed buildings in accordance with the degree of completion on January 1.

Tax Assessor Melissa Phillips stated that the revised version of the schedule and reported speaking with Interim Tax Assessor Johnny Edmondson about the walk around method of reevaluation. Tax Assessor Phillips stated that the walk around method was used previously and entailed a walkthrough of properties. Tax Assessor Phillips also mentioned the consideration of a bid for a measurement list method where properties would be measured accurately. Tax Assessor Phillips reported \$280,000 was budgeted for the reevaluation and the cost for the walk around method of reevaluation was around \$26/ a parcel (\$420,000 in total). Tax Assessor Phillips reported the measuring list method of reevaluation would cost \$30/parcel (over \$500,000).

Board members expressed their concern for all Martin County citizens especially the elder population that may not be able to pay their taxes if the measuring list method of reevaluation raises their taxes. Board members were also concern with the population that is on a fixed income and the tax increases that may arise.

Tax Assessor Phillips stated that there were tax exemption for certain population such as the elder citizens. Tax Assessor Phillips was asked about the reactions the measuring list method would cause from the citizens. Tax Assessor Phillips stated that she felt there would be a mixed review of the method, with some citizens being happy that they are paying the accurate taxes for their property especially if they were paying a higher and incorrect tax rate. Tax Assessor Phillips stated that there would be some property owners upset if their property was reevaluated at an incorrect tax rate in the past and the property was founded in need of a higher tax rate in the future reevaluation. Tax Assessor Phillips stated that the measuring listing method of reevaluation was more throughout and would provide an accurate listing of Martin County properties.

The Board agreed to table this item for a future board meeting for further discussion.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

### **Proclamation Honoring August as Child Support Awareness Month – Martin County Department of Social Services Director Angela Ellis**

Martin County Director of Social Services Angela Ellis presented a proclamation for approval regarding August as Child Support Awareness month. Child Support Awareness Month is observed annually in the month of August. Child Support is a family law that requires a parent to provide periodic financial aid to their child till the time they become legal adults. This month is important to highlight the significance of child support in the development of a child. A periodic payment made by a parent, child support is mandated after a marital separation, annulment, or other unforeseen factors. The specifics of the child support plan would vary from jurisdiction to jurisdiction as each state has its own laws. However, the safety and well-being of the child remain

of paramount importance, and under no circumstances should a child suffer and be prohibited from reaching their maximum potential. Therefore, child support is essential in the overall well-being of a child and there are child support laws and services that ensure the proper functioning of this system and that each child is well looked after.

In lieu of the same, it was the former president of the United States of America, Bill Clinton, who in 1995 recognized August as the National Child Support Awareness Month in the United States of America, on the 20th anniversary of the Child Support Enforcement Program. From thereon, every summer, the child support organizations recognize and celebrate the vital role of child support and social service communities that provide financial aid to American families. It also seeks to create an awareness of the importance of child support, motivate social service groups, and encourage people to lend a helping hand to children in need.

### **State of North Carolina County of Martin Proclamation Child Support Awareness Month August 2022**

**WHEREAS** Martin County is recognizing August as Child Support Awareness Month, and reaffirms its commitment to strengthening Martin Counties families by providing child support services to improve the economic stability and well-being of children; and

**WHEREAS**, in State Fiscal Year 2021-22, more than \$2.7 million in child support was collected from parents of Martin County children, and

**WHEREAS**, there are nearly 1721 child support orders in place, working to ensure that more than 1496 children receive financial support from their parents: and

**WHEREAS**, the court must order either parent to obtain and maintain medical health insurance coverage for a child if it is actually and currently available to the parent at a reasonable cost.

**WHEREAS**, Child Support Awareness Month salutes the diligent working parents who spend time with their child and who make regular child support payments, to safeguard their children's future: and

**WHEREAS**, strengthening individuals and families promotes the safety and well-being of children, provides stability, improves the lives of children, and provides opportunities for families to be able to enhance their children's futures; and

**WHEREAS**, children who do not receive adequate financial and emotional support from their parents may experience greater difficulty in becoming healthy, happy, and productive citizens; and

**WHEREAS**, many concerned and dedicated judges, district attorneys, clerks of court, sheriffs' personnel, and child support professionals work to establish and enforce child support orders for Martin County children, one of our counties most vital resources.

**NOW, THEREFORE**, We, the Martin County Board of Commissioners, do hereby proclaim August 2022, as "CHILD SUPPORT AWARENESS MONTH" in Martin County, and commend its observance to all citizens.

**IN WITNESS WHEREOF,**

Martin County Board of Commissioners

\_\_\_\_\_  
Chairman

Attest:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Deputy Clerk to the Board

Commissioner Gurganus made the **Motion** to approve of the Proclamation Honoring August as Child Support Awareness Month, with a **Second** by Vice Chairman Bond Jr. **Motion** was carried unanimously.

**Budget Amendment(s)**

***Budget Amendment #1***

Finance Officer explained that in the last fiscal year, the NC Department of Health and Human Services awarded Martin County Department of Social Services \$12,276 from the Adoption Promotion Program Fund. Legislation regarding these funds requires the funds to be used to enhance adoption services promotion. These funds were not expended in the prior fiscal years, and therefore need to be re-appropriated to be used in fiscal year 2023.

Finance Officer Ange further explained that the NC Department of Health and Human Services awarded \$2,615.00 of State ARPA funds to Martin County Department of Social Services for Adult Protective Services. The remaining funds of \$2,573 for this grant also need to be re-budgeted in order for DSS to spend the funds. In July DSS was awarded \$3,500 from DHHS to support seven foster children.

Lastly, Finance Officer Ange reported an error in the 2023 budget in the finance department. The line for equipment repairs and maintenance was left out of the budget.

**BUDGET ORDINANCE AMENDMENT- 1**

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 |
|--------------------|-----------|----------|
| Human Services     |           |          |
| Social Services    | \$ 18,549 |          |
| General Government |           |          |
| Finance            | \$ 2,300  |          |

This will result in an increase of \$20,849 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 Appropriation   | \$ 14,776 |
| Restricted Intergovernmental | \$ 6,073  |

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 17th day of August 2022. Motion was **Carried** unanimously.

**CLOSED SESSION – NC G.S. § 143-318.11. (a)(5) - Contracts and Agreements and NC G.S. §143-318.11(a) (4) Industry/Economic Development**

At 8:55 p.m., Commissioner Biggs **Motioned** to Enter Closed Sessions pursuant to: NC G.S. § 143-318.11. (a)(5) - Contracts and Agreements 2. NC G.S. §143-318.11(a) (4) Industry/Economic Development with a **Second** by Vice Chairman Bond Jr. Motion was **Carried** unanimously.

At 10:17 p.m., Commissioner Gurganus made the **Motion** to Exit Closed Sessions pursuant to: NC G.S. § 143-318.11. (a)(5) - Contracts and Agreements 2. NC G.S. §143-318.11(a) (4) Industry/Economic Development with a **Second** by Vice Chairman Bond Jr. Motion was **Carried** unanimously.

**OPEN SESSION**

ABC Announcement

Manager Bennett made announcements regarding the ABC Board making a profit soon of \$69,554. Manager Bennett stated that this would be the largest deposit and \$85,000 was budgeted to be received this fiscal year. This deposit would be more than two thirds of what was budgeted. Manager Bennett reported that the parking lot at the Williamston ABC store was also paved.

Second Round of Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) Funding

Next, Manager Bennett announced Martin County would apply for the second round of funding through the DEQ. Next month, Manager Bennett stated that there would be a resolution to be approved by the Board. Manager Bennett reported that he and Martin County officials were in a meeting and were told that the county would be able to receive more funding in the second allocation. Manager Bennett reported Robersonville received over \$6 million, Jamesville received over \$11 million, Williamston received over \$ 900,000, and Martin County received no funding during the first allocation of funding. Manager Bennett reported speaking with the Wooten Engineering Company and automatic meter readers were added to the application for Water Districts I & II. Manager Bennett stated Emily Miller was as a grant writer with the McAdams Associates and worked with the Wooten Company. Manager Bennett stated the Wooten Company would pay Ms. Miller for her services with Martin County. Manager Bennett reported Ms. Miller felt Martin County did not receive funding due to the automatic meter readers being added to the application. Manager Bennett stated that automatic meter readers were suggested by the consulting

firm, but the automatic meter readers would be taken out in the new application. Then, Manager Bennett reported learning that “regionalization” was not a good word to use for this project and “partnership” should be used. Manager Bennett stated the partnership between the county and the towns needed an entity of leadership. Manager Bennett reported Julius Patrick being the leadership delegate for the partnership as he represented the Water Authority without being an official of a town or the county. Mr. Patrick was reported to present a resolution to the Board on next Wednesday and a rate study for the county was submitted today.

Manager Bennett explained that the first part of this project was the Asset Inventory Assessment (AIA) Study in which companies would need to be requested by a Request for Qualifications (RFQ). The engineering group chosen would conduct an assessment on water lines for a cost of \$150,000 that was allocated earlier in the year. Secondly, a group application would be submitted for the second allocation of funding (around \$4.8 million), in which each town and the county can request what they need conducted. Manager Bennett mentioned speaking with Finance Officer Cindy Ange regarding compensation as she would take on additional tasks during this project as the MCRWASA Treasurer. Manager Bennett stated all monies received during this project would also be funded to MCRWASA as the authority is not associated with any towns or the county. Manager Bennett asked the Board for approval to release the RFQ to request engineering service.

**Motion** to send out the Request for Qualifications (RFQ) was made by Vice Chairman Bond Jr., with a **Second** by Commissioner Biggs. Motion **Carried** unanimously.

Commissioner Gurganus asked if the county needed to match for the grant of \$4.8 million and Manager Bennett stated that the \$4.8 million grant would not require a match from the county.

## **BOARD REPORTS / COMMISSIONERS’ COMMENTS**

### **ADJOURNMENT**

With no further business to discuss, Commissioner Gurganus made a **Motion** at 10:45 p.m., to adjourn the meeting, with a **Second** from Vice Chairman Bond Jr. Motion was **Carried** unanimously.

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Ronnie Smith, Chairman  
Martin County Board of County Commissioners

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Julia S. Rease, Clerk to the Board