

## March 16, 2022 Special Called

The Martin County Board of Commissioners met in a Special Called Session on Wednesday, March 16, 2022 at 7:00 p.m. in the Martin County Governmental Center, Superior Courtroom at 305 East Main Street, Williamston, North Carolina.

### ASSEMBLY

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

Chairman Smith welcomed all in attendance and called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. Commissioner Biggs led the Pledge of Allegiance and Commissioner David “Skip” Gurganus provided the invocation.

### AGENDA APPROVAL

Commissioner Biggs made a **Motion** to approve the agenda as presented with the addition of School Surplus Property, with a **Second** by Vice Chairman Bond Jr. The motion was Carried (3-2). Ayes: Chairman Smith, Vice Chairman Dempsey Bond Jr., and Commissioner Emily Biggs Nays: Commissioner Joe R. Ayers and Commissioner David “Skip” Gurganus

### CLOSED SESSION(S) – NC G.S. §143-318.11(a) (1) Confidential Information and NC G.S. §143-318.11(a)(3) Client/Attorney Privilege

Around 7:04 p.m., Commissioner Gurganus made the **Motion** to enter Closed Sessions pursuant to NC G.S. §143-318.11(a) (1) Confidential Information, NC G.S. §143-318.11(a)(3) Client/Attorney Privilege, and **Seconded** by Commissioner Biggs. The Motion was **Carried** unanimously (5-0).

At 8:33 p.m., Commissioner Biggs made the **Motion** to Exit Closed Sessions pursuant to NC G.S. §143-318.11(a) (1) Confidential Information and NC G.S. §143-318.11(a)(3) Client/Attorney Privilege with a **Second** by Vice Chairman Bond Jr. The Board **Approved** the motion unanimously (5-0).

### OPEN SESSION

#### School Surplus Property

Manager Bennett stated at the last regular meeting on February 9, 2022, three properties from the school board were discussed and the Board of Commissioners expressed interest in the East End School of Robersonville, NC. Manager Bennett asked if the board wanted to offer \$60,000 for the East End School Property. Manager Bennett stated the tax card was reviewed and showed around \$3.4 million.

Chairman Smith reported in the past, the Board bought property from the school, which was the

West Martin School located in the West of the county. Chairman Smith stated the property was then turned over to the West Martin Alumni Association for community programs such as Health screenings. Chairman Smith reported the East End Property would be turned over to an organization that wanted to use the property for community programs and not for profit. Chairman Smith reported that there would be no payments or responsibility of the East End School Property after offering \$60,000 to the School Board.

Commissioner Biggs **Motioned** to offer the Board of Education \$60,000 for the East End School Property located in Robersonville, NC with a **Second** by Vice Chairman Bond Jr. Motion was not carried as Commissioner Ayers called for a discussion

Commissioner Ayers expressed concern with giving the School Board \$60,000 for a building that was a liability to the School Board. Commissioner Ayers stated in 2017, the Board voted on purchasing the West Martin Property for \$50,000. Commissioner Ayers stated he felt \$50,000 was too much for a property the school was supposed to upkeep. Commissioner Ayers stated the Board had a discussion on the price, it was agreed that \$50,000 would be taken out of the School Boards Budget, but the agreement was not upheld. Commissioner Ayers also stated a private individual went to him about a year and a half ago about purchasing the East End Property. Commissioner Ayers stated he sent the private individual to the School Board, but he was unaware to what happened. Commissioner Ayers was concerned that the School Board would take \$60,000 from the county, which was taxpayer monies, instead of taking cash from a private individual with the correct procedures (auction). Commissioner Ayers stated he did not have an issue with an organization purchasing the property.

Commissioner Gurganus asked if there would be any liability on the county, repairs that the county would be responsible for, or if there would be any tax payments. Chairman Smith stated that there would be no repairs, tax payments, or any liability from the county.

Commissioner Ayers asked if the Board could agree to pay \$1 for the property and Commissioner Gurganus asked where the \$60,000 offer came from Chairman Smith stated that the price was based off past purchases and the property size.

Commissioner Ayers asked Commissioner Biggs if she would be receptive to amending her motion to purchase the school for \$5,000 and Commissioner Biggs agreed if there could be a negotiation of purchase from \$5,000 to \$60,000. Chairman Smith stated an offer was needed.

Commissioner Biggs **Motioned** to offer the Board of Education \$60,000 for the East End School Property located in Robersonville, NC with a **Second** by Vice Chairman Bond Jr. Motion was **Carried**.

**Ayes:** Chairman Smith, Vice Chairman Bond Jr., and Commissioner Emily Biggs.

**Nays:** Commissioner Joe R. Ayers and Commissioner David “Skip” Gurganus.

### **Dawn Carter – Ascendant Health**

Manager Bennett introduced Ms. Dawn Carter of the Ascendant Health Consulting group and asked if she could provide a summary of her consulting group. Ms. Dawn Carter stated she was a healthcare advisors and her consulting group was based in Chapel Hill with another office on the Maryland side of D.C. Ms. Carter reported the consulting group conducted strategy planning,

and feasibility work only for healthcare organizations and has been around for at least 30 years. As part of their strategy work, they conduct a form of merger and acquisition affiliation. Ms. Carter reported that the consulting group had a strong base in the Carolinas and they work with organizations of all sizes. Ms. Carter reported her consulting group being the one of the founding sponsors of the World Health Care Initiative.

Ms. Carter was thanked for her time and explanation of services.

With no further business to discuss, Vice Chairman Bond Jr. made the **Motion** to adjourn at 9:12 pm with a **Second** by Commissioner Biggs. Motion was Carried unanimously (5-0).

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Ronnie Smith, Chairman  
Martin County Board of Commissioners

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Julia S. Rease  
Clerk to the Board