

September 7, 2021 (Pre-agenda)

**MINUTES
BURKE COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
PRE-AGENDA MEETING**

The Burke County Board of Commissioners held a pre-agenda meeting on September 7, 2021 at 3:00 p.m. in the County Board Room, Burke Services Building, 110 N. Green Street in Morganton, N.C. The meeting was streamed live on the County's YouTube channel, BurkeCountyNC, and it was broadcast later on the local cable systems. The agenda, in its entirety, was posted to the County's website, www.burkenc.org, several days prior to the meeting as usual. Both Burke County and the State of North Carolina had previously declared a state of emergency which was ongoing as of September 7, 2021 due to the global COVID-19 pandemic. Those present were:

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT: Jeffrey C. Brittain, Chairman
Wayne F. Abele, Sr.
Johnnie W. Carswell
Maynard M. Taylor

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT: Scott Mulwee, Vice Chairman (Out of town.)

STAFF PRESENT: Bryan Steen, County Manager
Margaret Pierce, Deputy County Manager/Finance Director
J.R. Simpson, II, County Attorney
Kay Honeycutt Draughn, Clerk to the Board

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Brittain called the meeting to order at 3:00 p.m. and thanked everyone for complying with the County's COVID-19 safety protocols.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Motion: To approve the agenda.

RESULT:	APPROVED [UNANIMOUS]
MOVER:	Wayne F. Abele, Sr., Commissioner
AYES:	Jeffrey C. Brittain, Wayne F. Abele, Sr., Johnnie W. Carswell and Maynard M. Taylor
ABSENT:	Scott Mulwee

PRESENTATIONS

NCVRS - OCTOBER IS NATIONAL DISABILITY EMPLOYMENT AND AWARENESS MONTH

Information from the agenda packet:

October is National Disability Employment and Awareness Month, and this year's theme is "America's Recovery: Powered by Inclusion." Janet Hannah, NCDHHS, NC Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services, will present information on the importance of hiring persons with disabilities as well as some of the services and

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successes Vocational Rehabilitation has had.

Janet Hannah, NCDHHS, NC Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services, reviewed the information from the agenda and noted she brought posters regarding National Disability Employment and Awareness Month. She said the theme for 2021 is America's recovery powered by inclusion.

Commissioner Taylor requested numbers on how many people with disabilities are in the County. Ms. Hannah said she would try to find that information in addition to how many her organization serves in the County.

RESULT: MOVED WITHOUT OBJECTION TO THE REGULAR MEETING ON SEPTEMBER 21, 2021 AT 6:00 PM

BURKE RECOVERY - PROCLAMATION DECLARING SEPT. AS NATIONAL RECOVERY MONTH IN BURKE COUNTY

Kim James, Executive Director of Burke Recovery, presented a request for a proclamation proclaiming September as National Recovery Month in Burke County. She further stated that last year 93,000 Americans died from substance use overdose and noted Burke County had 556 fatal / non-fatal overdoses. Ms. James continued, in January – July of 2021, the rates of overdoses were 43 percent higher than the same period in 2020. She said while overdoses are a major concern, they are also focused on recovery, and they are asking the Commissioners to declare September 2021 as National Recovery Month in Burke County. Ms. James said while they are looking at substance use and figuring out how to address it as a community, they also need to celebrate the successes and the lives that have been saved.

RESULT: MOVED WITHOUT OBJECTION TO THE REGULAR MEETING ON SEPTEMBER 21, 2021 AT 6:00 PM

SCHEDULED PUBLIC HEARINGS

WPCOG - CDBG FIRST PUBLIC HEARING - 6:00 P.M.

Paul Teague, WPCOG Community & Economic Project Developer, said public hearings are required to receive public comment before the County can submit a CDBG (Community Development Block Grant) application and that he will go into greater detail about it at the regular meeting. This first public hearing is to assist the County in the development of CDBG projects for the coming year and he will be back in a couple months with a potential project. Further, because Burke County is a tier 1 county, matching funds are not required for any awarded CDBG projects. The three (3) programs funded yearly with CDBG funds to North Carolina are Infrastructure, Economic Development and Neighborhood Revitalization.

RESULT: MOVED WITHOUT OBJECTION TO THE REGULAR MEETING ON SEPTEMBER 21, 2021 AT 6:00 PM

CONSENT AGENDA

BOC - RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF BREAST CANCER AWARENESS MONTH

Chairman Brittain reported the National Breast Cancer Awareness Month (NBCAM) organization is a partnership of national public service organizations, professional medical associations and

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government agencies working together to promote breast cancer awareness, share information on the disease, and provide greater access to screening services. This is an annual international health campaign organized by major breast cancer charities every October. Since its inception more than two decades ago, NBCAM has been at the forefront of promoting awareness of breast cancer issues, education, and empowerment for women to increase their knowledge of the disease and to raise funds for research into its cause, prevention, diagnosis, treatment and cure.

RESULT: MOVED WITHOUT OBJECTION TO THE REGULAR MEETING ON SEPTEMBER 21, 2021 AT 6:00 PM

CLERK - REAPPOINTMENT TO JURY COMMISSION

Clerk Draughn reported Robert Love's term on the Jury Commission ends September 30th. He has served on this Commission for many years and has applied to serve for an additional term ending September 30, 2023. This item also contains a request to approve an exception to Sec. 2-88 (e), membership requirements, length of service of the Burke County Code of Ordinances.

RESULT: MOVED WITHOUT OBJECTION TO THE REGULAR MEETING ON SEPTEMBER 21, 2021 AT 6:00 PM

CLERK - REAPPOINTMENT TO PLANNING BOARD

Clerk Draughn reported Sara Chester's term on the Burke Co. Planning Board, Seat No. 4 (west) ends September 30th. She has applied to serve a second term ending in September 2023. Staff recommends her reappointment.

RESULT: MOVED WITHOUT OBJECTION TO THE REGULAR MEETING ON SEPTEMBER 21, 2021 AT 6:00 PM

CLERK - APPROVAL OF UPDATED BYLAWS FOR COUNCIL ON AGING

Clerk Draughn reported the by-laws for the Council on Aging were amended and approved by the Council on July 28, 2021. The changes must be submitted to the Burke County Board of Commissioners for review and approval in accordance with Article 2, Section 2-87 of the Burke Co. Code of Ordinances. Clerk Draughn said there are no substantive changes, mostly for formatting / clarity.

Chairman Brittain opened the floor for questions and comments from the Board. Commissioner Taylor said article 6 shows that they will provide a quarterly report to the Board and questioned if that was correct because he did not recall getting a report in months. Clerk Draughn said she did not recall receiving a recent report either, and will bring it to their attention.

Note: After the meeting, it was determined that requirements of article 6, HCCBG (Home & Community Block Grant) Advisory Function, are being met.

RESULT: MOVED WITHOUT OBJECTION TO THE REGULAR MEETING ON SEPTEMBER 21, 2021 AT 6:00 PM

BCECC - MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING BETWEEN BURKE AND CATAWBA COUNTY

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Brock Hall, 911 Operations Director, reported this item is a renewal of an MOU (Memorandum of Understanding) between Burke County and Catawba County. Catawba County is allowing Burke County to utilize 15 inches of rack space in their equipment rack at the communications tower located on Baker's Mountain. Baker's Mountain tower is the location of one of Burke County's VIPER sites as well as 1/3 of the County's Simulcast VHF communications and paging system. The term of the agreement is 5 years and there is no cost associated.

Chairman Brittain opened the floor for questions and comments from the Board. Commissioner Taylor asked if there is a rental charge for the rack space. Mr. Hall said there is no charge. Mr. Hall responded to an additional question from Commissioner Taylor concerning space on Smith Mountain. A short discussion ensued.

RESULT: MOVED WITHOUT OBJECTION TO THE REGULAR MEETING ON SEPTEMBER 21, 2021 AT 6:00 PM

BCECC - EMERGENCY FIRE DISPATCH AGREEMENT APPROVAL

Brock Hall, 911 Operations Director, presented information on the following request:

The International Academy of Emergency Dispatch and Priority Dispatch Corporation provides effective, efficient, and comprehensive emergency fire dispatch procedures for communications centers and by extension the residents of the areas they serve. These procedures standardize and prioritize the call taking and dispatch functions for fire departments as well as providing an additional level of accountability through enhanced call review and grading. The agreement in question includes training and certifying staff in the new call take and dispatch protocol as well as training the QA Manager on call grading and scoring. Additional licenses for service and support of the new protocol are also included. BCECC already utilizes the Emergency Medical Dispatch protocols for medical calls through IAED and Priority Dispatch Corporation. This will add an additional set of protocols for fire calls.

Budgetary Effect: \$125,275.50 - Includes training and implementation of Emergency Fire Dispatch Protocols for all staff and QA (Quality Assurance) Training Officer as well as licenses for protocol implementation on the current system. These monies were requested and approved in the current budget and are eligible for reimbursement from the 911 board.

Chairman Brittain opened the floor for questions and comments from the Board. Commissioner Taylor noted that the terms of the agreement list three (3) years under item six (6) and then five (5) years under item 16. He then noted that the agreement states that any dispute will be settled in Utah and asked J.R. Simpson, II, County Attorney, if that could be changed to North Carolina. Attorney Simpson said they could always ask for it to be changed. Mr. Hall advised that they have made that request and should hear back soon. Further, when they make the change from Utah to North Carolina, they will also review the number of licenses that are required for the 911 center, and it may decrease from 12 to nine (9) to comply with 911 Board regulations. If that occurs, Mr. Hall said it should reduce the cost. He then requested that the motion be changed to give the County Manager the authority to negotiate and execute the agreement on behalf of the Board instead of just executing the agreement.

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FM - APPOINTMENT TO LOCAL EMERGENCY PLANNING COMMITTEE

Mike Willis, Fire Marshal / Emergency Management Director, was unable to attend the meeting. Instead, Clerk Draughn presented the item as follows:

Seat No. 5 on the Local Emergency Planning Committee represents public health and is vacant due to the retirement of the local health director. An application was received from Emily Poteet at the Health Department. The term is to complete an unexpired term ending January 31, 2024. An exception to residency provision of the Code of Ordinances is needed.

RESULT: MOVED WITHOUT OBJECTION TO THE REGULAR MEETING ON SEPTEMBER 21, 2021 AT 6:00 PM

GENERAL SERVICES - HRC BUILDING - HVAC CONTROLS INSTALLATION UPDATES

Information from the agenda packet:

Phase 1 installation of the HVAC controls for the HRC Building was funded in the FY 2021 budget. The start of the project was delayed due to the availability of some of the components but is now close to completion. Although we plan to start the Phase 2 install immediately following the completion of Phase 1, it could also be delayed due to the availability of parts.

Mark Delehant, General Services Director, said phase 1 of the HRC HVAC controls project began in late June of this year but was delayed largely due to the availability of components. Currently, both air handlers and the chiller are being run by the new controls. Most of the other controls are connected except for the Health Department, which is being done after normal business hours to not interfere with operations. During the installation, it was discovered that several VAV boxes and dampers needed to be retrofitted and a change order was requested for that. He suspected that as they continue to go through the building, the contractor will find even more items that needs to be addressed. Although Phase 1 is not finished, they have already started Phase 2 but once again some of the parts ordered are a month out. He said he spoke to the contractor this morning and he believes the project should be completed by late October. Mr. Delehant further stated that he also spoke with the DSS Director today and, even though the contractor is far from being done, he said that they have already noticed a difference in the building. Mr. Delehant then announced that Maintenance Technician, Alston Mosteller, is in attendance today and serves as the point person on this project. Mr. Mosteller has several certifications along with a diploma in Heating, Air, and Refrigeration and teaches HVAC at Caldwell Community College.

Chairman Brittain opened the floor for questions and comments from the Board. Commissioner Taylor asked if it is possible penalize vendors for delayed fulfillment of orders. Mr. Delehant said many of the delays are out of the vendors' control and noted everything has slowed down. Although the situation is improving, he said he would pursue liquidated damages if possible. Attorney Simpson advised if the delays are related to the COVID-19 pandemic, then it will most likely fall under the "Act of God" exception which excuses performance in matters of disasters, war, etc. Chairman Brittain asked if he is hearing any positive comments out of the employees

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at the HRC building. Mr. Delehant responded in the affirmative and noted he spoke with the DSS Director, Korey Fisher-Wellman, today and they can already tell a difference.

RESULT: MOVED WITHOUT OBJECTION TO THE REGULAR MEETING ON SEPTEMBER 21, 2021 AT 6:00 PM

GENERAL SERVICES - RECLASSIFICATION OF POSITION

Information from the agenda packet:

Burke County General Services is requesting a reclassification of the "Facilities Maintenance Technician III" position #1956, which is currently vacant and in-budget, to a "Lead Facilities Maintenance Technician" to better meet the needs of the County. The current "Facilities Maintenance Technician III" position is classified as a Salary Grade 21 with a salary range of \$38,425.43 - \$59,558.06, and it is recommended that the "Lead Facilities Maintenance Technician" position remain classified as a Salary Grade 21.

Mark Delehant, General Services Director, requested the reclassification of a currently vacant Facilities Maintenance position from a "Licensed Electrician" to a "Lead Facilities Maintenance Technician". The licensed electrician position has only been filled once, for two (2) weeks since it was approved as part of the 2019 – 2020 budget. Since his arrival in March, there have only been two (2) occasions where General Services (G.S.) had to hire a licensed electrician. However, there have been several instances where the department would have benefited from not only another set of hands but also a team leader that would prioritize and assign the daily work assignments. This individual would also be able to address the daily work orders that are of an urgent nature. Basically, he said the team leader would provide day-to-day operational guidance in addition to participating in those projects. This position change, if approved, would not only give G.S. another set of hands but would also allow the department to make better use of the hands they have.

RESULT: MOVED WITHOUT OBJECTION TO THE REGULAR MEETING ON SEPTEMBER 21, 2021 AT 6:00 PM

HR - DETENTION OFFICER RECRUITMENT UPDATE

Information from the agenda packet:

The Burke County Board of Commissioners approved a request presented by Sheriff Steve Whisenant related to the recruitment and retention of Detention Officers for the Burke County Jail on March 16, 2021. This presentation is to update the Board of County Commissioners on the recruitment efforts that have been taken and progress made thus far.

Rhonda Lee, HR Director, introduced Alex Rhoney, Staff Recruitment & Development Specialist, who prepared the presentation (shown below) that Ms. Lee distributed to the Board. Ms. Lee then reviewed the presentation as follows:

Approved by the Commissioners on March 16, 2021:

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- Minimum 5% Salary Increase - Burke County Non-Sworn Detention Officers, Corporals, Sergeants and Lieutenants (New Hires and Existing Staff) Effective April 3, 2021.
- Retention Bonus – Annual Retention Bonus of \$600 to newly hired non-sworn Detention Officers and existing non-sworn Detention Officers upon the successful completion of their first year of service. \$1,200 upon the successful completion of their second year of service. Effective April 1, 2021.
- Part-Time Detention Positions – 15 part-time Detention Officer reinstated.
- Creation of Staff Recruitment and Development Specialist position to report to HR Director.

Recruitment Efforts:

- 5% Pay Increase for Detention Officers processed and pay plan updated April 3, 2021
- Retention Bonus Program for Detention Officer implemented April 1, 2021
- Part-Time Detention Officer positions reinstated – March 17, 2021
- Staff Recruitment and Development Specialist – Hired May 17, 2021 – Alex Rhoney
- Posted open Detention Officer positions to Indeed, Facebook, Burke Website, NC Works, Burke County NAACP, Olive Hill Economic Development, Chamber of Commerce, Veteran Services, WPCC, CVCC, CCCTI, AB Tech
- Coordinated and advertised a Detention Officer Job Fair held at Foothills Higher Ed Center – July 15, 2021
- Designed and mailed 2500 recruitment postcards – August 20, 2021
- Designed and placed recruitment signs at strategic county sites – August 30, 2021
- Search online applicant databases (NC Works and Indeed) and reach out to potential applicants
- Continue to research recruitment and retention strategies for detention and correctional occupations
- Staff Recruitment and Development Specialist reviews all Detention Officer applications/resumes daily, completes initial phone screenings and provides applicants with a full recruitment packet
- Provided exit interviews for Detention Officers who voluntarily resign

Recruitment Statistics:

- Approximately 300 resumes received since mid-May
- Hired 12 Detention Officers since May 2021 (3 - pending start dates in September)
- 7 resignations, 1 retirement, 1 dismissal since May 2021
- 15 Full Time Detention Officer Vacancies
- 1 Full Time Detention Officer Corporal Vacancy

Chairman Brittain asked if there has been any success with part-time positions. Ms. Lee said no.

Chairman Brittain open the floor for questions and comments from the Board. Commissioner Taylor said he never received the full impact of the multiple raises that the county gave the Sheriff's Office. Chairman Brittain asked of the 7 resignations, how many were new hires. Ms. Lee responded approximately 50 percent of new hires and existing employees. Commissioner Taylor then asked how many detention officers resigned during the period that 12 were hired. Ms. Lee said the County lost nine (9) detention officers. Commissioner Taylor also asked if 300 resumes were received, then why were so few applicants hired. Ms. Lee said often when Mr. Rhoney contacts potential applicants, they will not answer the phone and / or do not call back. Commissioner Carswell asked if the exit interviews indicate anything. Ms. Lee said the exit interviews that they have had so far indicate a lack of recognition (support from supervisors and administration) and a lack of training. Responding to follow-up questions from Commissioner Carswell on training, Ms. Lee advised that the new hires that left indicated a desire to have more one-on-one training as well as training on the operational differences between 1st and 2nd shifts. In response to an inquiry from Chairman Brittain, Ms. Lee stated the need to focus on employee retention and program development, so the new hires feel prepared to do the job. She also acknowledged that the jail is short staffed. Commissioner Carswell asked if wages are

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still at market average. Ms. Lee responded in the affirmative. She then responded to additional questions from Commissioner Carswell on the benefits packet which she said was not an area of concern. Commissioner Taylor asked what is involved in applying for a sheriff's deputy / detention officer position. Major Banks Hinceman, BCSO, said an applicant would apply for both jobs the same way, there is an application checklist that includes a Burke County application packet and a NC Sheriff's Standards F3 form (personal history statement). Major Hinceman, regarding the 300 resumes, said just because someone posts a resume on a website, does not mean they have applied for a position; however, it does allow the county to contact the potential applicant. Major Hinceman then commended Mr. Rhoney for his recruitment efforts. He then said there is a lot to the packets and that he spends a lot of time reviewing the packets and working with applicants to ensure they are completed properly. Major Hinceman further said since May, approximately three (3) people have been disqualified due to having a criminal history or poor work history; everyone else has made it through. Commissioner Taylor commiserated with the Sheriff's Office and said they have a tough job due to the condition of the world and noted the reason for his question was to help them by seeing if they need to take another look at their application process. After additional discussion on the standardized state-mandated application process, Commissioner Carswell asked what their next strategy is. Ms. Lee said they will work closely with the Sheriff's Office on the retention component, noting they were previously focusing on recruiting, but now they must focus collaboratively on retention. In response to a follow-up question from Commissioner Carswell, Ms. Lee said they will be focusing on training with the supervisors, working with the captain to ensure he understands the feedback from the exit interviews, employee recognition, and in general, the onboarding process. She noted they also must continue the recruiting process. Ms. Lee then responded to an additional question from Commissioner Carswell concerning vacancies in surrounding counties. After additional comments from Commissioner Carswell, Captain Greg Huntley, Jail Administrator, responded to a question from Chairman Brittain about possibly increasing the amount of time new hires are left on day shift before being moved to the night shift. He explained that based on 12-hour shifts, two (2) weeks means seven (7) days because they only work 14 days per month. At that rate, it takes months to complete the training. Capt. Huntley further explained that two (2) of the seven (7) days are spent in Human Resources completing paperwork and being fitted for uniforms in Hickory. The remainder of the time is spent on basic safety protocols. Next, Capt. Huntley commented that officers with more seniority are then moved to day shift, and that officers leave to work in more lucrative careers in the private industry, not other local jails. Commissioner Taylor asked if all sheriff's departments utilize 12-hour shifts for their detention officers or do some have 8-hour shifts. Captain Huntley said some of the larger facilities, like Charlotte, probably run floater shifts, but none of the counties surrounding Burke do anything other than the traditional 12-hour shifts. Chairman Brittain encouraged everyone to keep at it and thanked them for the report.

RESULT: MOVED WITHOUT OBJECTION TO THE REGULAR MEETING ON SEPTEMBER 21, 2021 AT 6:00 PM

TAX DEPT. - TAX COLLECTION REPORT FOR AUGUST 2021

Danny Isenhour, Tax Administrator, presented the tax collection report for August 2021 as follows:

Category	Annual Budget	Amount Collected YTD	% Collected	Balance to Collect
Property Tax	\$45,000,000.00	\$30,249,182.39	67.22%	\$14,750,817.61

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Motor Vehicle Tax	\$5,200,000.00	\$994,129.56	19.12%	\$4,205,870.44
Current Year Taxes	\$50,200,000.00	\$31,243,311.95	62.24%	\$18,956,688.05
Delinquent Taxes	\$700,000.00	\$201,977.27	28.85%	\$498,022.73
Late List Penalty	\$315,000.00	\$74,618.58	23.69%	\$240,381.42

The Tax Levy is the total property tax value not including motor vehicles times the tax rate. This amount changes monthly with the addition of discoveries, other changes, or corrections, and when Public Utility Values are added, typically during September.

Category	Tax Levy	Amount Collected YTD	% Collected	Balance to Collect
Property Tax	\$44,276,994.00	\$30,249,182.39	68.32%	\$14,027,811.42

RESULT: MOVED WITHOUT OBJECTION TO THE REGULAR MEETING ON SEPTEMBER 21, 2021 AT 6:00 PM

TAX DEPT. - RELEASE REFUND REPORT FOR AUGUST 2021

Danny Isenhour, Tax Administrator, presented the release refund report for August 2021 as follows:

Tax System Refunds and Releases				
	Report Amount	Rebilled Amount	Net Release	Refund Amount
Releases (TR-304)	\$1,103.78	\$8.76	\$1,095.02	\$144.87

VTS Refunds Over \$100	
	Refund Amount
VTS Adjustments	\$115.76

RESULT: MOVED WITHOUT OBJECTION TO THE REGULAR MEETING ON SEPTEMBER 21, 2021 AT 6:00 PM

ITEMS FOR DECISION

BOC - PROCLAMATION 9/11 DAY OF REMEMBRANCE - 20TH ANNIVERSARY

Information from the agenda packet:

The following proclamation proclaims September 11, 2021, as the 20th anniversary of the attacks of 9/11 and urges our citizens to recognize the heroism of firefighters, rescue and law enforcement personnel, military service members and the many volunteers who responded to these tragic events with courage, selfless compassion, determination and skill; and to remember the victims and innocent lives lost as a result of the tragic events on September 11, 2001.

The Board is asked to consider suspending its rules of procedures and approve the proclamation on September 7.

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Chairman Brittain read the proclamation (shown below) and asked the Board to consider suspending the rules of procedures and approve the proclamation. After an initial motion by Commissioner Abele, Commissioner Taylor suggested amending the motion to include a reason for why the Board is suspending their rules of procedures. Commissioner Abele concurred with the proposed amendment.

Motion: Because the 20th anniversary of the 9/11 terrorist attack proceeds the regular meeting date by 10-days, September 21, 2021, I move to suspend the rules of procedures and approve Proclamation No. 2021-04.

RESULT:	ADOPTED [UNANIMOUS]
MOVER:	Wayne F. Abele, Sr., Commissioner
AYES:	Jeffrey C. Brittain, Wayne F. Abele, Sr., Johnnie W. Carswell and Maynard M. Taylor
ABSENT:	Scott Mulwee

Proclamation No. 2021-04 reads as follows:

Proclamation
9/11 Day of Remembrance
20th Anniversary

WHEREAS, in an unprovoked and senseless act of terrorism, four civilian aircraft were hijacked on September 11, 2001, and crashed in New York City, Pennsylvania and the Pentagon, resulting in a momentous loss of innocent U.S. lives of all heritages; and,

WHEREAS, Eric A. Cranford grew up in Drexel, N.C. After graduating from college with a double major, he embarked upon a military career with the United States Navy and served two tours in the Persian Gulf as a helicopter pilot. Lt. Commander Eric Cranford was on active duty at the Pentagon in Washington, D.C. when hijacked American Airlines Flight 77 crashed into the building. Tragically, the Cranford family and Burke County citizens lost one of their own that day. His death will never be forgotten; and

WHEREAS, while we still continue to recover from the loss of innocent lives, the spirit of the U.S. has been revitalized, giving way to expressions of patriotism; and,

WHEREAS, inspired by the heroism of our nation's public service personnel, military service members and countless volunteers, our nation found unity and strength; and,

WHEREAS, from the tragedy of September 11 emerged a stronger nation, renewed by the spirit of national pride, and a true love of country; and,

WHEREAS, Americans also have fought back against terror by choosing to overcome evil with good by loving their neighbors as they would like to be loved, contributing to relief efforts, and volunteering their time to aid those in need.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that we, the Board of Commissioners of Burke County, do hereby proclaim September 11, 2021, as the 20th anniversary of the attacks of 9/11 and urge our citizens to recognize the heroism of firefighters, rescue and law enforcement personnel, military service members and the many volunteers who responded to these tragic

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events with courage, selfless compassion, determination and skill; and to remember the victims and innocent lives lost as a result of the tragic events on September 11, 2001.

Approved this 7th day of September 2021.

/s/: Jeffrey C. Brittain

Jeffrey C. Brittain, Chairman
Burke Co. Board of Commissioners

CLERK - BOARD OF HEALTH REMOVAL & APPOINTMENT

Clerk Draughn reported Adriana Morris occupied Seat No. 11 (at-large) on the Board of Health until her recent resignation; therefore, her removal is requested. At this time, two (2) applications are on file for this seat which has an unexpired term ending December 31, 2022.

RESULT: MOVED WITHOUT OBJECTION TO THE REGULAR MEETING ON SEPTEMBER 21, 2021 AT 6:00 PM

FINANCE - APPROVAL OF ARP (AMERICAN RESCUE PLAN) PURCHASES (PLACE HOLDER)

County Manager Steen said (1) staff cannot do much until the Board approves the proposed ARP projects / purchases, (2) some of the proposed projects, HVAC for example, are time sensitive, (3) the other projects the Finance Department has identified should be eligible for ARP funds, (4) he is concerned about being able to find contractors and parts in a timely manner, (5) is there anything that can be done to allow staff the flexibility to proceed with the normal procurement process along with his authority to approve contracts up to \$90,000, (6) the boiler at the Sheriff's Office and the former Burke-Catawba District Confinement Facility had issues last year and he would like to find a solution that would allow the separation of one section from another to make it more palatable for the county to move forward with a potential regional long-term substance abuse treatment facility, (7) the proposed expenditures are a small percentage of the total ARP allotment, and (8) if the Board would clarify its desire or grant staff some flexibility, he would appreciate it. Chairman Brittain said that after speaking with County Manager Steen, staff is concerned that the Board wants to see every minute detail before proceeding; however, they are asking to be allowed to acquire quotes to bring back to the Board. It is his understanding that the Board wants to have the final say before committing to spending millions of dollars. However, other entities are receiving their ARP funds and they are going to be ahead of Burke County if the Board does not allow staff to acquire quotes and bring them to the Board in a timely manner. He further stated that any contracts over \$90,000 require Board approval anyway but that the Board wanted to see the proposed projects in advance in case they decided to go in another direction. Due to labor and product shortages, Commissioner Abele advocated for moving forward whereas Commissioner Taylor advocated for holding a work session to prioritize the funds and projects. Chairman Brittain said he envisions the Board having those discussions monthly due to the large amount of money, projects, and various items the Board needs to review. He further asked Board members to notify himself or the management team if they have specific projects in mind so eligibility determinations can be made. Commissioner Taylor then commented on the need to have a fair process and said the County has capable staff to manage the process. Margaret Pierce, Deputy County Manager / Finance Director, said (1) she envisions bringing quotes to regular meeting so they can move forward with buying EMS equipment; (2) she has heard that there are going to be delays with receiving orders; (3) she would like to proceed with allowing the General Services Director to

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acquire quotes on the pump stations; (4) the Indian Hills and Island Creek pump stations need significant work / improvements and the repair process will likely take a couple years; and (5) she just needs to know if the Board is agreeable to those projects before engineers are involved and actual bids are acquired. Commissioner Taylor said over the years a lot of work has been done to the Indian Hills pump station and each time work was done the Board was told they would never have to fix it again and questioned if Ms. Pierce was saying that more work needs to be done to the station. Ms. Pierce said she is not familiar with the history of the pump station but advised there are overflows and violations that occur at the pump station whenever significant weather events occur, and the estimated cost for the repairs / improvements is \$2.9 million. County Manager Steen advised that all equipment wears out over time and while he could not remember the specific repairs, periodic repairs were made. He also mentioned the importance of having a back-up pump. In response to questions, Mark Delehant, General Services Director, advised that (1) the Indian Hills (IH) pump station is the final component of the entire sewer system; (2) the wastewater from all the other pump stations flow into IH; (3) the pump station sits right beside a creek; (4) infiltration is a problem when the creek overflows; and (5) one repair scenario is roughly estimated to cost \$2.9 million, which also includes some system improvements in the general vicinity. After Commissioner Taylor reiterated his earlier comments about never having to repair that pump station again, Mr. Delehant stated (1) this repair scenario may include a third pump and a reservoir to remove excess wastewater slowly rather than all at once; (2) engineering work will have to be done first; (3) this pump station's issues are repeatedly noted on the State's inspection reports; and (4) that staff is trying to address these issues along with other issues. After commenting on past repair failures, Commissioner Taylor said it is good that this project could be done utilizing ARP funds but questioned what other projects could be pursued if they did not have to be spent on pump station repairs / improvements. Chairman Brittain acknowledged that according to the rules, water/sewer repairs are eligible ARP expenditures. Commissioner Abele said he would like to see something done about Indian Hills pump station because it seems to have failed continually over the past 19 years. Chairman Brittain asked Mr. Delehant to create a history of where / when money was spent on the Indian Hills pump station and Mr. Delehant said he would work with the Finance Department. Ms. Pierce said (1) she is unaware of any significant expenses for Indian Hills during her tenure with the county; however, this project should increase the pump station's capacity and prevent additional repairs to the station; (2) she advised that the scope also includes line work in addition to gutting the whole pump station and starting over; (3) the State is growing more anxious for the repairs to be made; and (4) using ARP funds is better than charging system users. Chairman Brittain acknowledged the ongoing problems at IH but noted that repair money spent was spent elsewhere which likely exacerbated the problem and he asked for that information as well, citing the recent completion of the Eckard Creek pump station as an example. Mr. Delehant advised that there could be some confusion between the Indian Hills and the Island Creek pump station, and that money was spent on both pump stations. Ms. Pierce said (1) diagrams, completion date and major renovations on the sewer system could be provided; and (2) that staff wanted to get the Board's input before doing all the leg work. Commissioner Taylor advocating for providing citizens with potable water. Commissioner Carswell (1) acknowledged the sewer system problems have been known and discussed for years; (2) the pump station was built in a poor location; (3) fixing the problem will be expensive; and (4) asked if there are more concrete rules on what the ARP funds can be spent on. Ms. Pierce said no and noted that dates on when the final rules will be released are no longer provided. Commissioner Carswell said he wants to ensure that funds are set aside for other projects as identified by himself and the other Commissioners, he further said he would like to see the county pursue other grant funding

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opportunities, especially for waterline installation. Ms. Pierce said (1) that finance staff is documenting eligible items, piece by piece but it is a cumbersome process; (2) to send project ideas to her as soon as possible for evaluation; and (3) said the grant ordinance stipulates that the County cannot spend any ARP funds without Board approval and questioned if it would be appropriate, when they come back to the Board at the regular meeting, to bring new language that allows them to only come to the Board for approval of large purchases while working within the normal purchasing guidelines. Chairman Brittain said the Board wants to have some final say before funds are committed. Commissioner Abele asked if the Board could get a definitive answer on what the problems are with the Indian Hills pump station and said he would like to get it fixed so this does not keep coming up year after year. Chairman Brittain said they are going to get that information and said, going back to Ms. Pierce's question, that he believed the Board's intention was for staff to begin gathering numbers to bring back to the Board for a decision. Discussion ensued on the wording of the grant ordinance, during which Ms. Pierce gave specific examples of eligible ARP expenditures (bid advertising and hotel accommodations for positive COVID-19 patients) that per the grant ordinance cannot be paid with ARP funds unless it has Board approval. However, she stated staff can proceed with obtaining quotes for the projects that the Board wants to do. Commissioner Taylor then mentioned that having projects ranked by the Board would be advantageous to staff and would keep the process moving forward. County Manager Steen said (1) there are not many published rules on how to spend the ARP funds; (2) as the rules develop, there will be other opportunities to come back to the Board and bring up other project areas that can all fit together; (3) during the last round of funding, the rules / metrics were continuously changed; (4) staff wants to do a good job and right now, the list of potential projects are items that staff believes do qualify for the ARP funds; and (5) it is disappointing that the funds cannot be used to install new water lines, only replacing old ones. Ms. Pierce clarified that (1) new water lines can be installed, but there are a lot of stipulations required such as demonstrating a disadvantaged population and contaminated well water; (2) general water system expansion to provide additional service is not allowed; (3) it will be challenging to install new water lines, but replacing all the existing failing water lines are eligible under the ARP funds; (4) hopefully, once the water system is repaired, funding can be redirected to leverage grant opportunities like the CDBG / DEQ funds for new projects; and (5) the eligibility of all ARP expenditures is being verified to eliminate a potential pay-back issue. Commissioner Taylor, again, commented on the need for citizens to have potable drinking water. Commissioner Carswell stated it is ironic that ambulance equipment is an eligible ARP expenditure, but buying the ambulance is not, which is why he wanted some funds held in reserve. Commissioner Abele questioned the engineer's responsibility in the continuing saga of the failing pump station. In closing, Ms. Pierce reiterated that staff would provide the following information at the regular meeting: a detailed list of potential projects, clarification on the wording of the grant ordinance if needed, quotes for the big HVAC projects, and an estimate on the pump station repairs.

RESULT: MOVED WITHOUT OBJECTION TO THE REGULAR MEETING ON SEPTEMBER 21, 2021 AT 6:00 PM

REPORTS

Chairman Brittain reminded the Board to get their reports to Clerk Draughn for the regular meeting.

OTHER DISCUSSION ITEMS

Chairman Brittain reminded everyone of the following:

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- Today is County Attorney Simpson's birthday.
- Do not litter.
- Spay / neuter your pets.
- Follow the County on Facebook.

ADJOURN

Motion: To adjourn at 4:35 p.m.

RESULT:	APPROVED [UNANIMOUS]
MOVER:	Maynard M. Taylor, Commissioner
AYES:	Jeffrey C. Brittain, Wayne F. Abele, Sr., Johnnie W. Carswell and Maynard M. Taylor
ABSENT:	Scott Mulwee

Approved this 16th day of November 2021.


Jeffrey C. Brittain, Chairman
Burke Co. Board of Commissioners

Attest:


Kay Honeycutt Draughn, CMC, NCMCC
Clerk to the Board