

**PASQUOTANK COUNTY, NORTH CAROLINA
JULY 17, 2023**

The Pasquotank County Board of Commissioners met today in a regular meeting on Monday, July 17, 2023 in Courtroom C in the Pasquotank County Courthouse.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Charles H. Jordan, Chairman
Barry Overman, Vice-Chairman
Lloyd E. Griffin, III
Sean Lavin
Jonathan Meads
Sam Davis, III
Clifford Shaw

MEMBERS ABSENT: None

OTHERS PRESENT: Sparty Hammett, County Manager
John Shannon, Assistant County Manager
R. Michael Cox, County Attorney
Mike Barclift, Management Fellow
Sheri Small, Finance Director
Shelley Cox, Planning Director
Lynn Scott, Clerk to the Board

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 PM by Chairman Charles Jordan. Chairman Jordan welcomed those in attendance. Commissioner Lloyd Griffin gave the invocation and Commissioner Sam Davis led in the Pledge of Allegiance to the American Flag.

1. AMENDMENTS TO THE AGENDA:

Vice-Chairman Barry Overman requested that the agenda be amended to add the following items recommended by the Finance Committee to the Consent Agenda: 1) Approval of Purchasing Tax Office Software and Associated Budget Amendment; 2) Approval of Implementing Community Cat, and Trap, Neuter, Vaccinate, Return Programs; 3) Approval of SPCA Animal Shelter Service Contract and Associated Budget Amendment; and 4) Approval of Capital Funding for SPCA Animal Shelter and Associated Budget Amendment.

Motion was made by Barry Overman, seconded by Sam Davis to amend the agenda to add Items #1-4 to the Consent Agenda. The motion carried unanimously.

2. COMMENTS BY FAITH JORDAN:

Chairman Jordan called on Faith Jordan of 585 Esclip Road to address the Board. Ms. Jordan is currently working on acquiring her Master's Degree in Public Health. As part of the program, she is required to advocate for a public health policy that interests her. She said she is here today to advocate for the American Disabilities Act by recommending that there be more recreational opportunities for our county's residents with developmental and intellectual disabilities. She stated that these individuals deserve to have opportunities just like we do, such as being able to be part of a sports team or being able to go to an exercise class.

3. COMMENTS BY BONNIE HOFFMAN:

Chairman Jordan called on Bonnie Hoffman of 418 Long Lane. Ms. Hoffman said her concern is the bridge closure on Long Lane. She is unsettled that she now lives on a dead end road, and she is now a mile away from her son or first responders being able to get to her. She said it is very hard for residents and large farm equipment to exit Long Lane now because of the hairpin turn at the end. She appealed to the Board to push for the bridge to be reopened.

4. COMMENTS BY BEN BARNHILL:

Chairman Jordan called on Ben Barnhill to address the Board. Mr. Barnhill of 1355 Blindman Road said he is here tonight to discuss the Morgan's Corner intersection and potential solution for making it safer. He said Firetower Road and US 158 has also had several accidents, to include fatalities. Any solutions for Morgan's Corner needs to consider the potential of US 17 becoming I-87. For him the most obvious would be an overpass. He said there are other temporary solutions that NCDOT may discuss tonight that they have already thought about.

5. COMMENTS BY KORYE EADS:

Chairman Jordan called on Korye Eads to address the Board. Mr. Eads of 473 Crooked Run Road said with future Interstate I-87 on our minds, there will most likely be an overpass of some sort in the future, but in the meantime he suggested rumble strips, signs that flash and say red signal to let you know that you are not going to beat the light, change the algorithm on the lights, and change the approach to the intersection from 158. The majority of the accidents he has witnessed are because of the left hand turn off of 158 heading northbound on US 17.

6. COMMENTS BY RICHARD SEYMOUR:

Chairman Jordan called on Richard Seymour to address the Board. Mr. Seymour said North Road Street has become a speedway, and he is unable to enter the road safely. The Sheriff's Office recently stopped someone going 90 mph. He is also unhappy about the tax value placed on a piece of property he inherited.

7. NCDOT UPDATE ON MORGAN'S CORNER INTERSECTION:

Chairman Jordan called on Marshall Gill, NCDOT Division Maintenance Engineer to provide an update on the Morgan's Corner Intersection. Mr. Gill thanked the Board for having him, and noted that he also has Ronnie Sawyer, Deputy Division Engineer and Madison Phillips, Deputy Division Traffic Engineer with him tonight to help answer any questions the Board may have.

Mr. Gill said DOT received an e-mail from Assistant County Manager John Shannon regarding County Commissioners' concerns about a rash of recent accidents at the US 17/158 Intersection. DOT reviewed the five-year accident history and found that most of the accidents were rear-end related, as well as some left turn type accidents. They also analyzed the existing conditions and what they can do to make improvements going forward.

Mr. Gill explained the existing features of the intersection, which include: 60 mph approaches on US 17 northbound/southbound; 45 mph approach on 158; double indicated signal ahead flashers that flash 24/7; a long vehicle speed detection system (if there is any vehicle more than 22', going more than 55 mph it holds the green longer to allow the vehicle to clear the intersection); and a dynamic red extension (if any vehicle of any length is running 55 mph or greater as it is getting close to the intersection, it holds all red on all the side streets). The speed detection systems were installed in 2012.

When they looked at the existing conditions, they asked themselves what they could do to improve safety of the intersection. He said many of the things that the citizens mentioned they are already committed to do.

DOT plans to install transverse rumble strips on 17 northbound/southbound to let citizens know that they are approaching a busy intersection. They will convert the existing 24/7 signals ahead flashers to prepare to stop flashers. Instead of flashing all the time, it would only activate when a signal is about to turn yellow. Also, they will install reflective back plates on all of the signal heads to increase visibility of the signals. Another thing they plan to do is install a queue cutter loop in the northbound left turning lane onto 158. The loop would be near the end of the storage lane where people back up. If it is backed up for more than five seconds, it provides a priority to the left turn and prevents backup into the through lane, and it prioritizes the signal to let the left turn go as soon as it can. Additionally, they are going to split the side streets to reduce the conflicts and delays for the left turning traffic from 158 to 17. Right now, the side streets go at the same time and people are yielding to oncoming traffic, which puts vehicles in the middle of the intersection waiting to get that "free" left turn. The left turn from 17 is currently protected with a green arrow, but this will allow each side street to clear independently. Lastly, they are going to upgrade the cabinet controller for the signal to be able to connect to the new Elizabeth City signal system. That will allow it to be used to diagnose timing issues and report red light running statistics. It will also notify them immediately if there is fault of any kind.

Mr. Gills said hopefully those changes will address the majority of the issues the citizens mentioned.

Commissioner Lavin thanked DOT staff for their time and commitment. He said he really appreciates them doing some research and putting some thought into this. He said Long Lane Bridge is another hot topic, and it was his understanding that the County was going to try to find some money within the state budget to address the bridge, but it was subsequently closed for safety during an inspection. DOT staff said the bridge closure was part of their policy of looking

into small bridges that meet certain criteria to allow them to close it without replacing it, which allows them to use their money more efficiently and replace more bridges with more traffic volume and things of that nature that are in more critical need. Since the closure, they have done some vegetation management. They cleared some larger trees and mowed everything within the current right-of-way pretty much to the ground. They need to go back and look at the intersection and see what the sight distance is now versus the design site distance, and see if additional work needs to be done.

County Manager Hammett stated that the County put the bridge on our legislative list, but he has not heard anything regarding it at this time.

Commissioner Griffin said he does not believe that Interstate 87 is going to be built right now, because every road project has been pushed ahead of ours. He said he has continued to ask DOT to at least buy overpass right-of-ways for the intersection. He stated that we have lost four right-of-ways in the past three years in Camden and Pasquotank Counties. Politically, we are losing the battle. Three bridges have been constructed in Dare County at a cost of almost a billion dollars. Now, a \$385 million dollar Alligator River Bridge is to be built. Hopefully, the Mid County Bridge can be a public/private funded bridge. He feels Pasquotank County is not getting its share.

DOT staff said typically for a right-of-way to get purchased, it must be tied to a STIP project. He explained that if you were to break out the interchange as its own little STIP project, you could do that, but the cost would be in the \$20 million ballpark. It would have to go through the RPO process and be a STIP project assigned to that particular location as a breakout, versus the full I-87 corridor.

Commissioner Griffin said you cannot tell him that as Northeast North Carolina continues to grow and North Carolina becomes the number one business friendly state in the union that this part of the world is not going to come to light, whether it is from Norfolk or from Raleigh. Pasquotank County is going to be in the middle and we are already five years behind on getting prepared for this. The access has been on the STIP for five years, and it does not meet the criteria, even when seasonal criteria is used, because there just isn't enough traffic.

Vice-Chairman Overman thanked DOT for their work and effort, and for the update. He certainly understands that DOT has to stretch their money, and it cost money to make it happen. He said it sounds like DOT has come up with a great plan to cover the publics' concerns.

Commissioner Shaw thanked DOT for coming tonight and sharing how they were going to address the publics' concerns.

Commissioner Davis stated that we should have been acquiring right-of-ways forever, and it has not happened. He said the Board was lied to about I-87. He doesn't believe it will ever happen. He said anytime you see a stoplight being put in South Mills, in the middle of future I-87, it doesn't make sense. He thanked DOT and said he feels they have done a good job on addressing some of the issues. He asked why can't the stoplights going towards the bridge downtown be timed so that when the bridge opens they will be green going towards the bridge so as to avoid traffic jams in downtown.

Madison Miller said currently they have a contract in place with a timing firm out of Raleigh that is retiming the entire system. They just did all the hardware work. They installed the controllers and the cabinets. Behind that, comes the software part, such as timing the system and studying the actual traffic patterns in town. The hardware that was in prior to their upgrade does not work with the existing equipment that has been installed. So, right now they are dealing with what they have. It's not efficient, but it is safe. Once the engineering firm is finished with the timing plan, which he anticipates will be mid to late fall or early winter, they will implement the plan, and you should see the problems correct themselves.

Commissioner Meads said he doesn't think he can add anything, but it sounds like it is a good start. He thanked DOT for attending and listening to the concerns of the citizens.

Chairman Jordan thanked DOT for addressing the Board's concerns. He asked if they have a timetable for when the work will begin. DOT said they will submit a request for the plans. That generally will take 2-2.5 months. Once they receive the plans, it will be a matter of making sure

they have the funding allocated. Once the materials are received, they can be installed as soon as possible. Chairman Jordan said he hopes DOT continues to work on the intersection, because the accidents continue to happen and they are starting to happen pretty close together. He said he took a tour of Long Lane with a resident, and he had a chance to look at the situation. The Board is very concern about the residents and their safety. He stated that the Board will continue to push for funds.

8. CONSIDERATION OF APPOINTMENT TO BOARDS AND COMMITTEES:

Vice-Chairman Overman explained that at the June 20th meeting the Appointments Committee recommended Erin Gray be appointed to the Pasquotank County Library Board. The Board accepted the nomination. Per the Appointment Policy, new appointments must lie over for two weeks to allow for additional applications. He stated that no additional applications have been received, and the Board can give final approval.

Motion was made by Barry Overman, seconded by Lloyd Griffin to appoint Erin Gray to the Pasquotank County Library Board. The motion carried unanimously.

9. APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA:

The Board considered the following consent agenda:

a. Approval of Minutes of June 20, 2023 Commissioner Meeting

b. Approval of Amendment to March 20, 2023 Board of Commissioner Meeting Minutes

The Finance Office has recommended the following budget amendments that were approved on March 20, 2023 be struck from the minutes, because they were duplicates.

Landfill

Increase	065.0600.4930.00	Insurance Proceeds	20,545.00
Increase	065.7420.5353.00	Maintenance-Vehicles	20,545.00

Central Communications

Decrease	010.6900.5991.00	Contingency	17,720.00
Increase	010.4325.5500.00	Capital Outlay	17,720.00

c. Approval of Purchasing Tax Office Software and Associated Budget Amendment

The Finance Committee has recommended approval of purchasing BI-Tek Tax Software at a cost of \$221,864 and its associated budget amendment.

Decrease	010.6900.5991.00	Contingency	221,864.00
Increase	010.4135.5500.00	Capital Outlay (IT)	221,864.00

d. Approval of Implementing Community Cat and Trap, Neuter, Vaccinate, Return Programs

The Finance Committee has recommended approval of implementing Community Cat and Trap, Neuter, Vaccinate, Return Programs.

e. Approval of SPCA Animal Shelter Service Contract

The Finance Committee has recommended approval of a contract for Animal Shelter Services for Fiscal Year 2023-24 for \$230,000 and its associated budget amendment.

Decrease	010.6900.5991.00	Contingency	230,000.00
Increase	010.4380.5440.15	SPCA	230,000.00

f. Approval of Capital Funding for SPCA Animal Shelter

The Finance Committee has recommended approval of a one-time contribution of \$100,000 for capital needs and its associated budget amendment.

Increase	010.0991.4991.00	Fund Balance Appropriated	100,000.00
Increase	010.4380.5351.00	Maintenance-Building	100,000.00

Motion was made by Sam Davis, seconded by Sean Lavin to approve the Consent Agenda, as amended. The motion carried unanimously.

10. DESIGNATION OF VOTING DELEGATE FOR NCACC ANNUAL CONFERENCE:

Chairman Jordan stated that the NCACC's 116th Annual Conference Business Session will be held in Wake County on Saturday, August 26, at 2pm. Each County has the option to select one person to serve as the voting delegate and one person as an alternate.

Motion was made by Barry Overman, seconded by Sean Lavin to designate Chairman Jordan as the voting delegate and Clifford Shaw as the alternate voting delegate for the 2023 NCACC Annual Conference Business Session. The motion carried unanimously.

11. APPROVAL OF AMENDED SUBDIVISION PLAT – TANGLEWOOD PARK, SECTION E-1:

Planning Director Shelley Cox explained that Godfrey Construction has applied for an Amended Subdivision Plat for Tanglewood Industrial Park. The property requested for subdivision was platted as a 3 acre commercial lot when Tanglewood Industrial Park, Section E-1 was originally recorded in 2005. At that time, the developer felt like the market was leaning towards larger commercial parcels. The market has changed a lot since that time, and Mr. Godfrey wants to divide the property. The applicant is requesting to divide the property into two lots that are 1.44 acres and 1.56 acres in size. She said his intention is to develop one for his construction business. She said Jason Mizelle, with the Timmons Group, is their representative and she is sure that he can tell the Board more about the proposed use if interested.

Ms. Cox said if the amended subdivision plat is approved, the applicant will also have to go through a Site Plan Review, with stormwater design and health department approvals once they decide to develop the property for commercial use.

Ms. Cox stated that the property requested for division is currently vacant. Access for the proposed parcels will be provided on Lewis Drive. Both lots meet the current subdivision standards, including the minimum 43,000 square foot lot size and 140' width requirements. Future commercial development on the proposed parcels will require an engineered site specific drainage plan that meets the requirements within the Pasquotank County Drainage Manual. She said this request meets all the requirements for a subdivision and she recommends approval.

Commissioner Griffin asked if there are intended uses for the properties. Jason Mizelle said as far as he knows Mr. Godfrey has plans for building a shop/warehouse for himself. Mr. Godfrey has had a lot of interest in similar facilities in the Elizabeth City area. He said what they are seeing is gravitation toward two acres or less. There are similar properties along the same stretch. He said nothing is concrete yet as far as specific use. Commissioner Griffin asked how this would impact the propane business adjacent to the property. Mr. Mizelle said the property is zoned commercial so there are no buffers required. Ms. Cox stated that is the purpose of the Technical Review Committee. They will make sure that they do not divert stormwater onto the lot next door and that the drain fields function properly. Mr. Mizelle noted that there is an existing stormwater permit for this entire park. In fact, that is why one lot is a little larger. It encumbers a drainage easement that covers one of the basins in the southeast corner. The ditch that runs along their property line is already a fiscal buffer.

Commissioner Griffin asked if the impervious surface will change when the lots are divided. Mr. Mizelle said the overall impervious surface that is allowed by permit will not change. There is a built upon/impervious cover calculation for the entire development and each lot was assigned a certain amount. This lot will still have that amount, but will be split between the two lots.

Commissioner Davis asked if the laws have changed on stormwater runoff. Mr. Mizelle said the rules have not changed. He explained that the rule is 10,000 sf of built upon land kicks in the requirement for a state stormwater permit and one acre of disturbance for erosion sediment control. If you have to have an erosion sediment control permit from the state, you must have a stormwater permit as well. Since 2005, the County has had pretty extensive drainage requirements.

Motion was made by Barry Overman, seconded by Sam Davis to approve the Amended Subdivision Plat at 104 Lewis Drive, in the Tanglewood Industrial Park. The motion carried unanimously.

12. REPORTS FROM COMMISSIONERS:

Commissioner Shaw attended a recognition banquet at Mid Atlantic Christian University for the Honorable Ula Reid, Reverend Alvin Boone, Dr. Jimmy Jenkins, and Dr. Lindsey White on June 24th. On July 1st, he attended the Fireworks Celebration at Waterfront Park. He said everything was well organized by Parks & Recreation and he was very impressed at how the roads were blocked off, making the event remain safe. A few streets away the Elizabeth City Police Department responded to gunshots in the area. It appears that someone may have been firing rounds in the air. On July 12th, he attended the SPCA meeting.

Commissioner Davis attended the Elizabeth City State Drone Ribbon Cutting on June 29th. He stated that it was a very nice event. Chief Buffalo spoke at the event and did a very nice job. On July 7th, he attended a retirement ceremony for one of the captains at the Coast Guard Base. On July 10th, he attended the DSS meeting and the "Dream Big" event put on by the Elizabeth City Pasquotank County Schools. On July 13, he attended a ribbon cutting for the Boathouse. On July 14, the Chairman and he went to the Change of Command at the Coast Guard Station. He said he also attended the Neon Lemon Ribbon Cutting. He explained that the Neon Lemon is a new lemonade truck that has really good lemonade.

Commissioner Meads attended the RC&D Board meeting in Edenton. In January, the makeup of the board will be changing. Each county will appoint one member, because they are trying to shrink the board, so they can have a quorum when they meet. He attended the EMS Board meeting, the Boathouse Ribbon Cutting, and the Executive Health Board meeting. He attended the inaugural Emergency Management Camp, which had 29 graduates. He looks forward to next year's camp. They will probably be coming to the Board for some funding. The campers visited the Fire Department, the Coast Guard Base, and EMS. He attended the Fireworks Celebration. While there, he witnessed the chaos. He thanked the Sheriff's Office for stepping up and filling the void that the City has left. He said unfortunately there have been a lot of shootings in our City. He thanked the Elizabeth City Police Department for stepping up regardless of the obstacles that they have had to overcome. They are still doing the job that they were sworn to do. He thinks it is time to stop giving lip service to our citizens of this County and start standing up. Additionally, he thinks it's time for the Board to start giving a little bit of heat to the LGC. He talked to the District Attorney a couple of weeks ago and he said he is going to do everything he can to make sure the laws are enforced in our County. He stated that we need citizens to come forward and say something about what they see during these shootings.

Commissioner Lavin said he had the pleasure of attending a lot of the same meetings that his colleagues attended. He is going to try to get to more ribbon cuttings in the near future. He attended the Economic Development Commission meeting. He also attended the Fireworks Celebration. He shares some of the same sentiments as Commissioner Meads regarding patterns that are emerging right now, and we need to get a little tough. He appreciates what our Sheriff's Office does to help enforce the law. He can't imagine what it is like to be understaffed on the Police Department side, but he appreciates their efforts as well. He was glad to see some comments from other members of the community, including men's groups, wanting to step up and mentor some of the youth that are having these issues.

Commissioner Griffin attended the Fireworks Celebration. They were pretty impressive and they gave the community a time to come together and reflect for the year. It was a very large crowd. He said when you look around downtown there is a lot of activity.

Vice-Chairman Overman attended several Visit Elizabeth City Downtown meetings. The Search Committee has narrowed their search down. It has been a long process, but they want to make sure they get the right person for the job. He attended four fireworks shows, because he was inspecting for the state. He was able to sit for College of the Albemarle's Board orientation with Dr. Bagwell and their Chair, and spend some time on the campus. He attended the EMS Board meeting. He reported that EMS responds to almost 1,100 calls a month. He said guns are violent and they are killing people, but drinking and driving is killing people at a much higher rate than guns are. His son was in a wreck last night. A drunk driver hit him and could have killed him. It totaled his wife's car. His son was able to walk away, but he could not be here tonight because he would be mourning the loss of his son because of someone that drank too much and decided to drive. Unfortunately, in the world we live in, it is acceptable, because people enjoy drinking and apparently the few that drive make it look bad on everybody else. He said we are at an intersection with a lot of things, including gun violence, abuse of alcohol, and drugs. We have to keep pushing. Drug overdoses in our County are at an all-time high. Being

in the fire service for 35 years, he never thought that he would run more drug overdose calls than fire alarm activations, but we are there, and it's a hard place to be. He said together we can still push through and make some things happen. We just have to do it together.

Chairman Jordan stated that he attended some of the same meetings and ribbon cuttings as his fellow Board members. He attended the Regional Library Board meeting. The Regional Library Director Jonathan Wark has decided that he is going to retire in August. He said we are very fortunate because our relatively new Librarian Kim Perry will become the new Regional Director. He said we are fortunate to have someone on board who is capable of taking his place. He reported that there are six Trillium type organizations in North Carolina, but the legislators in Raleigh are trying to reduce that number to four. Trillium currently covers 28 counties. Two of the Trillium type organizations in North Carolina could not get ready for the new plan, and because of that the legislators have decreed that all six have to be ready before the new plan is started. Two are having problems, so the legislators have decided to reduce the number to four. Until they figure out all of the things that need to be done to reduce it to four, they are not allowing the new plans to start. It could also change the number of members who serve on the regional boards. He said there are a lot of things that are hanging out there until the legislators in Raleigh determine exactly what they are going to do. The new plans have been on hold since prior to the pandemic if not longer, and they are still going to be on hold.

Chairman Jordan attended the Petco Ribbon Cutting. He also attended the July 4th Fireworks Celebration and kickoff. He attended the Food Bank of the Albemarle Ribbon Cutting. They opened a new pantry where citizens can go in and shop at no cost. He attended the ECPPS Strategic meeting. The young people really did a great job presenting at the meeting. He attended the Boathouse Ribbon Cutting. Lastly, he attended the USCG Change of Command Ceremony.

Motion was made by Sean Lavin, seconded by Sam Davis to adjourn the meeting.
The motion carried and the meeting was adjourned at 7:10 PM.

CHAIRMAN

CLERK TO THE BOARD