



# Rutherford County

## Meeting Minutes - Draft - Outline Board of Commissioners

Tuesday, September 3, 2024

6:00 PM 289 N. Main St. Rutherfordton NC 28139 Commission  
Chambers

### I. Call to Order

*Chairman King called the September 3, 2024 meeting of the Rutherford County Board of Commissioners to order.*

**Present:** 5 - Commissioner Bryan King, Commissioner Alan Toney, Commissioner Michael Benfield, Commissioner Greg Lovelace and Commissioner David Hunt

#### A. Pledge of Allegiance

*Mr. Benjamin Roach led in the Pledge of Allegiance.*

#### B. Agenda Approval

**Commissioner Hunt moved to approve the agenda. Commissioner Benfield seconded the motion. The vote on the motion was:**

**Aye:** 5 - Commissioner King, Commissioner Toney, Commissioner Benfield, Commissioner Lovelace and Commissioner Hunt

**Nay:** 0

### II. Public Comments

*Mr. David Hurley who said he spoke on behalf of the people of Rutherford County through the Justice, Accountability, and Transparency Initiative of Rutherford County presented the results of a 24-hour poll which he had taken of citizens of Rutherford County to collect their thoughts and feelings of the different aspects of the County. He received almost 200 responses, and he shared some of those. Mr. Hurley presented four (4) demands for action for which he expected an update at the October 7th County Commissioners' meeting.*

*Mr. Eric Gorney who lives in Henrietta asked that the Board begin looking at the budget for next year as his taxes had increased. The biggest portion of the budget is salaries so he asked that the number of employees be reduced in order to reduce taxes.*

### III. Consent Agenda

**Commissioner Benfield moved to approve the Consent Agenda. Vice Chairman Toney seconded the motion. The vote on the motion was:**

**Aye:** 5 - Commissioner King, Commissioner Toney, Commissioner Benfield, Commissioner Lovelace and Commissioner Hunt

**Nay:** 0

- A. [ID 24-3887](#) Minutes of August 5, 2024 County Commissioners' Meeting

**Attachments:** [20240805 Minutes.pdf](#)

- B. [ID 24-3886](#) Tax Refunds and Releases - September, 2024

**Attachments:** [Tax Refunds Releases September 2024.pdf](#)

#### IV. Commissioners/Appointments

- A. [ID 24-3889](#) Appointments to Airport Appeals Board

*The term of office for Mr. Wiley Thomas on the Airport Appeals Board is due to expire on September 30. This vacancy had been advertised, and applications had been accepted. No additional applications were received. Mr. Thomas is willing to serve an additional term.*

**Vice Chairman Toney moved to re-appoint Mr. Thomas to the Airport Appeals Board to a term ending September 30, 2027. Commissioner Lovelace seconded the motion. The vote on the motion was:**

**Aye:** 5 - Commissioner King, Commissioner Toney, Commissioner Benfield, Commissioner Lovelace and Commissioner Hunt

**Nay:** 0

#### V. Commissioner Reports

- A. [ID 24-3893](#) North Carolina Association of County Commissioners Youth Voice 2024

**Attachments:** [NCACC Youth Voice 2024.pdf](#)

*Mr. Benjamin Roach appeared before the Board to report on Youth Voice 2024 activities in which he participated during the week of August 9-10. Youth Voice 2024 which is sponsored by the NCACC, 4-H Youth Development and Boys and Girls Clubs of North Carolina was held in conjunction with the NCACC's Annual Conference in Forsyth County.*

- B. [ID 24-3892](#) Fund Balance Presentation

**Attachments:** [DEC Financial Planning and Policy Update.pdf](#)

*Mr. Doug Carter of DEC Associates, Rutherford County's financial advisor provided a presentation regarding the County's fund balance. He explained that a healthy fund balance is very important as it*

- *Provides protection from future economic changes – recession as example.*
- *Provides ability to potentially meet unforeseen one-time financial events.*
- *Provides "cash liquidity" to meet expenses that are not in sync with revenue collections.*
- *Demonstrates a focus on sound financial management.*
- *LGC focuses on fund balance levels and peer comparisons.*
- *Essential to maintaining high credit rating – 30% of rating based on fund balance levels and can be offset to other criteria – economy as an example.*

*The adoption of a fund balance policy is considered a credit and a positive by the Local*

*Government Commission. It could be adopted as part of an annual budget and could be reviewed and confirmed annually. Most counties have a range of 45% to 55%. Mr. Carter stressed that fund balance should only be used for one-time purposes – capital or extraordinary other costs.*

**C.**     [ID 24-3891](#)     Farmland Preservation Plan

**Attachments:**     [Farmland Protection Plan Presentation.pdf](#)  
                              [Rutherford County Farmland Plan FINAL.pdf](#)

*Soil and Water Conservation Director Brandon Higgins told the Board that it had been almost a year since the Board approved the Rutherford County Farmland Preservation Plan. He provided some information regarding the farms in Rutherford County.*

*Only 69% have internet access  
Only 8% sell directly to consumers  
Only 17% hire farm labor  
98% are family farms*

*Preserving farmland within Rutherford County is important as the number one threat to this is growth. The Piedmont Atlantic is the fastest growing megaregion in the United States. Director Higgins listed short term, near-term, and long-term timelines for implementation of the Farm Land Preservation Plan. Education is an important part as it will help farmers understand about trusts so that their farmland can be passed on to future generations; however, these trusts and trust planning is expensive. Issues for consideration are:*

- Education*
- Number of permanent easements*
- Cost associated with farm/family planning*
- Infrastructure/Coordination/Staffing*

## **VI. Old Business**

**A.**     [ID 24-3898](#)     Cliffside Sanitary District Board

**Attachments:**     [Resolution Cliffside Sanitary District.pdf](#)

*County Manager Steve Garrison advised that the operation of the Cliffside Sanitary sewer service is to be managed by the Cliffside Sanitary District Board whose members are elected; however, members who have served on the board have resigned and no one has filed for election to the governing board. Due to deficiencies, the North Carolina Local Government Commission assumed control of the financial affairs of the district. The deficiencies have been addressed and corrected and the Commission staff has recommended that the Commission return financial control to the District. Since there is no active governing board, the County Commissioners must fill the district board vacancies until the next election. The Board had taken action at the August 5, 2024 meeting to advertise vacancies on the Cliffside Sanitary District Board and request applications for the Board. The request for applications is listed on the County's website, and individual letters with an application form attached were mailed to residents living in the district. No applications have been received.*

## **VII. New Business**

**A.** [ID 24-3896](#) Budget Amendments - September, 2024

**Attachments:** [Budget Amendments 9-3-24.pdf](#)

*Finance Director Paula Roach presented budget amendments for the Board's consideration.*

**Commissioner Benfield moved to approve the budget amendments.**

**Commissioner Hunt seconded the motion. The vote on the motion was:**

**Aye:** 5 - Commissioner King, Commissioner Toney, Commissioner Benfield, Commissioner Lovelace and Commissioner Hunt

**Nay:** 0

**B.** [ID 24-3897](#) GOVDEAL Auction for Rutherford County Property

**Attachments:** [Cedar St Property Summary 2024.pdf](#)

[Cedar St Lot 20 Street View.pdf](#)

[Cedar St Lot 20.pdf](#)

[Cedar St. Aerial 2024.pdf](#)

[Cedar St Deed Book 2076 PG 903 - 904.pdf](#)

[Cedar St Gov Deals Plat 7-24.pdf](#)

[Cedar St Property Record Card.pdf](#)

[Resolution Cedar St GOV Deals 2024.pdf](#)

*Public Works and Planning Director Danny Searcy presented a resolution for the Board's consideration that would authorize the electronic auction of Parcel Number 1204078, 0 Cedar Street, Rutherfordton, NC, as described more fully in Plat recorded in Plat Book 7, Page 24, ("the Plat"), Rutherford County Registry and being the same and identical property conveyed to Rutherford County by Commissioners' Deed recorded in Deed Book 2076, Page 903-904 Rutherford County Registry.*

**Commissioner Benfield moved to approve the resolution. Commissioner Hunt seconded the motion. The vote on the motion was:**

**Aye:** 5 - Commissioner King, Commissioner Toney, Commissioner Benfield, Commissioner Lovelace and Commissioner Hunt

**Nay:** 0

Enactment No: RES 24-023

**C.** [ID 24-3842](#) San Pure Maintenance Contract 3-Year Renewal

*Information Technology Director Jai Doherty requested that the Board approve a three-year hardware maintenance contract renewal with SHI for maintenance of the 911 San Pure storage.*

**Commissioner Hunt moved to authorize the County Manager and the County Attorney to negotiate terms of contract with SHI and authorize the County Manager, Finance Director, Clerk to the Board, and other County officials to sign and execute all documents in support of this action. Commissioner Benfield seconded the motion. The vote on the motion was:**

**Aye:** 5 - Commissioner King, Commissioner Toney, Commissioner Benfield, Commissioner Lovelace and Commissioner Hunt

**Nay:** 0

**D.** [ID 24-3890](#) Rutherford County Community Child Protection/Child Fatality Prevention Team Annual Report to the Board of Commissioners

**Attachments:** [CHILD FATALITY PREVENTION TASKFORCE ANNUAL REPORT.8.28.24.pdf](#)

*Social Services Director Delores Hunt said the Rutherford County Community Child Protection Team/Child Fatality Prevention Team is required by NC GS 7B 1406(a)(2) to report annually to the Board of County Commissioners on the activities of the team. She presented a copy of the report. The composition of the Team is mandated by NC GS 7B 1407(b)(1)-(10) and (c)(1)-(5). In addition, section (d) of 1407 states the board of county commissioners may appoint a maximum of five additional members to represent county agencies or the community at large. A list of the current membership was included in the report showing the organization or CCPT/CFPT position that each member represents and those who have been appointed by the county commissioners. Historically, the team has appointed members to these five positions as needed and then presented the list to the Board annually for approval, or to make changes as the Board may deem necessary. There is no term limit on the appointments. Director Hunt asked that the Board accept the report and approve appointments to the Team.*

**Commissioner Hunt moved to accept the report and to appoint Dr. Paul Holden, Ms. Heather Kennedy, Ms. Anitra McKinney, Ms. Kayla Fox, and Ms. Jamie Hill to the Community Child Protection Team/ Community Fatality Protection Team. Commissioner Benfield seconded the motion. The vote on the motion was:**

**Aye:** 5 - Commissioner King, Commissioner Toney, Commissioner Benfield, Commissioner Lovelace and Commissioner Hunt

**Nay:** 0

**VIII. Information**

**A.** [ID 24-3888](#) Tax Collector’s Report - September, 2024

**Attachments:** [Tax Collector Report September 2024.pdf](#)

**IX. Adjournment**

**At 7:19 P.M. Commissioner Lovelace made a motion to adjourn. Commissioner Hunt seconded the motion. The vote on the motion was:**

**Aye:** 5 - Commissioner King, Commissioner Toney, Commissioner Benfield, Commissioner Lovelace and Commissioner Hunt

**Nay:** 0