

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA

COUNTY OF VANCE

The Vance County Board of Commissioners met in regular session on Monday, July 1, 2024 at 6:00 p.m. in the commissioners' conference room, Vance County Administration Building, 122 Young Street, Henderson, NC. Those commissioners present were as follows: Chair R. Dan Brummitt, Vice-Chair Leo Kelly, Jr., Commissioners Sean A. Alston, Sr., Carolyn Faines, Yolanda J. Feimster, Thomas S. Hester, Jr., and Archie B. Taylor, Jr.

Absent: None

Also present were County Manager C. Renee Perry, Finance Director Stephanie Williams, County Attorney Jonathan S. Care, and Clerk to the Board Kelly H. Grissom.

Rev. Joseph Ratliff, Shiloh Baptist Church, gave the invocation.

The first item on the agenda was the annual meeting of the ABC Composite Board consisting of the Board of Commissioners, the Chair of the Board of Education, and the Mayor of the City of Henderson. Board of Education Chair Randy Oxendine was present. Mayor Melissa Elliott was absent. Mr. Arnold Bullock and Judge Henry Banks had submitted letters seeking reappointment to the Vance County ABC Board for a three-year term. Applications were received from Pam Hester and Ralph Nevils requesting to be appointed.

Motion was made by Commissioner Leo Kelly, Jr. to reappoint Arnold Bullock and Henry Banks to the Vance County ABC Board for three-year terms. This motion was seconded by Commissioner Sean A. Alston, Sr. and unanimously approved.

Mr. Frankie Nobles, Vance County Employee Engagement Team Chair, appeared before the board to recognize the new employee of the month. He noted that employees are nominated by their peers, and this month's recognition goes to Erin McGhee with the Vance County Tax Office. Her peers noted that she is always willing to lend a helping hand, has a proactive approach to improving daily operations, and is a great asset to the tax office. Ms. McGhee will receive a \$100 gift card and a designated parking space for the month. She was presented with a plaque and the board congratulated her on receiving this recognition.

As advertised, a public hearing was held to gain citizen input on a rezoning request for a parcel located at 705 Finch Road (Parcel 0537 01014). Craig Falkner and Lisa Royster are the owners of the property and Thomas H. Johnson, Jr., Attorney with Williams Mullen is the applicant. Planning Director Sherry Moss stated that the request is to amend the zoning map and

to rezone the 44.05 acre parcel from Residential Low Density (R-30) to Agricultural Residential (A-R), which is consistent with adjacent property to the north. As part of the request, the applicant will be seeking to lease a portion of the property for a wireless communications tower, which is a permitted use within the A-R general use zoning district subject to the submittal and approval of a special use permit. Ms. Moss noted that the planning board reviewed this request at its June 2024 regular meeting and recommends approval. The board determined the request was reasonable and in the public interest by promoting additional rural residential and economic development activities and conserving, protecting, and encouraging the use of natural and cultural resources within the county, allowing for the logical expansion of existing agricultural development activities in the area, and will continue to promote a diverse rural economic tax base consistent with the permitted uses within the A-R general use zoning district.

As there was no one from the public who wished to speak on this matter, Chair R. Dan Brummitt declared the public hearing closed.

Motion was made by Commissioner Thomas S. Hester, Jr., seconded by Commissioner Sean A. Alston, Sr., vote unanimous, to approve the rezoning on the basis that it is reasonable and consistent with the county's land use plan and is in the public interest.

As advertised, a public hearing was held to gain citizen input on a rezoning request for two parcels off Bullocksville Park Road (Parcels 0586 03037 and 0589 01028). SJ White Property Management LLC/Stephen White is the owner/applicant of the property. Planning Director Sherry Moss stated that the request is to amend the zoning map and to rezone the 48.6 acre and 25.3 acre parcels from Residential Low Density (R-30) to Agricultural Residential (A-R), which is consistent with adjacent property to the east and south. Ms. Moss noted that the planning board reviewed this request at its June 2024 regular meeting and recommends approval. The board determined the request was reasonable and in the public interest by promoting additional rural residential and economic development activities and conserving, protecting, and encouraging the use of natural and cultural resources within the county, allowing for the logical expansion of existing agricultural development activities in the area, and will continue to promote a diverse rural economic tax base consistent with the permitted uses within the A-R general use zoning district.

As there was no one from the public who wished to speak on this matter, Chair R. Dan Brummitt declared the public hearing closed.

Motion was made by Commissioner Thomas S. Hester, Jr., seconded by Commissioner Carolyn Faines, vote unanimous, to approve the rezoning on the basis that it is reasonable and consistent with the county’s land use plan and is in the public interest.

*Revaluation Appeals.* The board heard from the following persons, continued from the May 6 and June 3 meetings, concerning the value of their property which they felt was in excess of fair market value:

<u>Continued from May 6, 2024 and June 3, 2024</u>	
<u>Name</u>	<u>Property Address</u>
1. Benjamin and Kay Hicks	318 Pinecrest Road Parcel: 0037A02009
2. Angela Crudup Taylor	1514 S. Williams Street Parcel: 0086 01004A
3. Brenda Watkins	271 South Lake Lodge Ext. Rd. Parcel: 0462A01003

*Benjamin and Kay Hicks.* Value under appeal: \$158,571 lowered to \$130,220 through informal appeal process. Tax Administrator Porcha Brooks noted that Mr. Hicks was unable to attend the meeting due to illness. The board continued this matter until the August meeting.

*Angela Crudup Taylor.* Value under appeal: \$106,864 lowered to \$103,266 through informal appeal process. Ms. Leanne Daniel, representing Ms. Taylor, stated that she is a licensed broker and can provide a comparative market analysis. She provided information on a 1,300 sq ft home that sold in July 2022 for \$49.77 per sq ft. Based on this formula, she stated that Ms. Crudup’s 1,260 sq ft home (if calculated at \$49.77 per sq ft) should be valued at \$62,710. She also stated that homes in her area decrease the value of her property. Ms. Crudup feels her property should be valued at \$42,000.

Mr. Ryan Vincent, Vincent Valuations, provided four comps valued between \$25,000 and \$175,000. He noted that the comp for \$25,000 sold without a floor.

Following lengthy discussion, motion was made by Commissioner Thomas S. Hester, Jr. to follow the assessor’s recommendation to uphold the value of \$103,266. This motion was seconded by Commissioner Sean A. Alston, Sr. and vote was ayes – four (4); noes – three (3), with the dissenting votes being cast by Commissioners Carolyn Faines, Yolanda J. Feimster and Leo Kelly, Jr.

*Brenda Watkins.* Ms. Watkins was not in attendance. Tax Administrator Porcha Brooks stated that the tax office tried several times to reach Ms. Watkins by phone but was unsuccessful. The board instructed Ms. Brooks to mail a letter to Ms. Watkins informing her that this will be continued until the August meeting.

The following new appeals were heard next:

<u>New Appeals</u>	
<u>Name</u>	<u>Property Address</u>
1. Teresa Choplin	547 Sagefield Drive Parcel: 0108 03004
2. Ruth Kearney	104 Carolyn Court Parcel: 0070 01066
3. Harold and Bettie Tucker	941 Buckhorn Street Parcel: 0029 03006
4. Wayne and Monika Reid heirs	120 Norwood Street Parcel: 0034 01001

*Teresa Choplin.* Value under appeal: \$176,815 lowered to \$176,165. Ms. Choplin's son, Brian Choplin, spoke on her behalf and stated that the current value is too high and feels the value should be \$100,000. He stated that the house is outdated and in need of repair. It has cracks in the bricks and does not have central heating or air. He noted that he has not had a chance to meet with the tax appraiser to discuss these issues.

Without sufficient evidence presented, the board continued this matter until the August meeting in order to allow Ms. Choplin to obtain sales comps and/or an appraisal. The board asked Vincent Valuations to take another look at the property.

*Ruth Kearney.* Value under appeal: \$231,552 lowered to \$211,069 through informal appeal process. Ms. Kearney was not in attendance. Tax Administrator Porcha Brooks recommended that the value remain at \$211,069.

Motion was made by Commissioner Thomas S. Hester, Jr., seconded by Commissioner Archie B. Taylor, Jr., vote unanimous, to uphold the value of \$211,069.

*Harold and Bettie Tucker.* Value under appeal: \$148,657 lowered to \$113,762 through the informal appeal process. Ms. Brooks stated that the property owners are no longer disputing the value.

Motion was made by Commissioner Thomas S. Hester, Jr., seconded by Commissioner Carolyn Faines, vote unanimous, to uphold the value of \$113,762.

*Monika and Wayne Reid.* Value under appeal: \$83,975 lowered to \$63,999 through the informal appeal process. Ms. Brooks stated that the property owners are no longer disputing the value.

Motion was made by Commissioner Carolyn Faines, seconded by Commissioner Thomas S. Hester, Jr., vote unanimous, to uphold the value of \$63,999.

Tax Administrator Porcha Brooks then presented the following untimely exemption applications for approval. She stated that if the applications had been submitted by the deadline, she would have approved them at the staff level.

**Untimely Exemptions**

Name	Exemption Requested	Tax Administrator's Recommendation
Benjamin and Kay Hicks 318 Pinecrest Road Parcel 0037A02009	Circuit Breaker	Approve Application
Moorish Holy Temple of Science 912 E. Andrews Avenue Parcel 0077 01001	Religious Exemption	Approve Application
Kevin Ayscue 2130 Warrenton Road Parcel 0525 01008	Present Use Agricultural	Approve Application

Ms. Brooks noted that Benjamin and Kay Hicks are no longer seeking the Circuit Breaker exemption.

Motion was made by Commissioner Thomas S. Hester, Jr., seconded by Commissioner Carolyn Faines, vote unanimous, to approve the other two exemptions as requested.

Mr. Jeffrey Brooks, NC Department of Information Technology, appeared before the board to provide an update on broadband in the county. He distributed a map of Vance County highlighting the state of broadband throughout the county. He provided information on his technology and infrastructure team and what they do as well as information on current and future broadband funding. He also provided information on the CAB program, the Digital Champion Grant Program, and BEAD funding. He noted that Brightspeed was awarded a GREAT grant in 2023 and plans to serve 662 residential locations in the county. To date, 74% of the design work has been completed, with a target date of June 2025 to complete the project. Following a brief question and answer session, the board thanked Mr. Brooks for his report.

Mr. Elliot Clark, Vaya Health, appeared before the board to provide an activities update. He noted that Vaya's Tailored Plan for Medicaid members went live today and will provide physical health care services, pharmacy benefits, mental health services, substance use recovery services, intellectual/developmental disabilities services, etc. He noted that Medicaid has expanded to 2,600 individuals in Vance County. Total Medicaid enrollment in Vance County is approximately 22,000. Other services provided by Vaya include post hospitalization meal delivery, WW (formerly Weight Watchers), GED support, breast pump and lactation courses, vaccine gift cards, and non-emergency, non-medical transportation. Mr. Elliot also provided

information on Vaya's faith and mental health initiative and is partnering with Representative Frank Sossamon, NC DHHS, Granville-Vance Public Health, and local churches. He noted that Vaya is still in the planning phase of an adult diversion center and is actively looking for a location for this center. They are also planning on a child crisis center at a separate location. Following a question and answer session, the board thanked Mr. Elliot for his report.

#### Water District Board

Chair R. Dan Brummitt called the Water District Board to order.

The May 2024 monthly operations report was presented to the board for information.

Chair Brummitt adjourned the Water District Board.

#### Finance Director's Report

*Fire Tax Fund Balance.* Finance Director Stephanie Williams reported that at the June 13<sup>th</sup> budget work session, there was a consensus to equally disburse approximately one half of the Fire Tax Fund Balance amongst the nine volunteer fire departments. At the time of the discussion, the fund balance was estimated to be around \$600,000. The actual balance as of June 30, 2023 was \$592,432. During the budget preparation process, \$203,588 of the Fire Tax Fund Balance was appropriated to fund the increase of \$30,000 per fire department and to balance revenues to expenses thereby reducing the amount of the Fire Tax Fund Balance to \$388,844. Ms. Williams stated that after the completion of FY 23-24 audit review and she has confirmed an updated Fire Tax Fund Balance amount, equal disbursement of one half of the unappropriated Fund Balance to the nine volunteer fire departments may be made. She noted that she will bring this back to the board for final approval, with a likely timeframe of November or December of this year.

#### Committee Reports and Recommendations

*Properties Committee.* County Manager C. Renee Perry stated that the committee (Alston, Brummitt & Taylor) met Monday, June 17, 2024 to discuss the following items:

*Real Estate Leases.* The committee reviewed the list of county leases and advised the county manager and staff to move forward with reviewing each lease to see if they are in compliance with the lease/contract terms. Staff will bring back an update once the list is reviewed.

*Eaton Johnson Gym.* Ms. Perry advised the committee of the much-needed maintenance of the Eaton Johnson gym. The committee recommends moving forward with an RFP process for HVAC and getting costs on shower upgrades. The county manager also advised the committee that a MOU is needed for the City of Henderson to use the facilities moving forward. Staff will

bring back an update. Recommendation: Authorize the county manager to engage in an RFP process for the HVAC system and find a contractor to assist with shower upgrades.

Motion was made by Commissioner Archie B. Taylor, Jr. to authorize the county manager to engage in the RFP process for the HVAC system and find a contractor to assist with shower upgrades. This motion was seconded by Commissioner Sean A. Alston, Sr. and unanimously approved.

*REO Properties.* The committee reviewed a request from the City of Henderson to purchase several county properties as they have done in the past. The committee requested more information from the City of Henderson on how they intend to use the properties. Update: Information received from the assistant city manager stated that the city expects to bundle the properties for work force housing. A builder has taken a group they offered near Main Street, and they are getting additional inquiries. A map was provided to the board showing where those properties are located. This matter was referred back to the committee for further review.

*Kerr Lake Sub-Station.* Ms. Perry noted that the station currently has a septic tank, but no drain field. Staff must pump the tank every 30 days which costs between \$4,000 and \$7,000 annually. There was a doublewide and drain field on the property before the fire department was built. The fire department was built on top of the drain field for septic tank. The health department tested several spots for a new drain field but there were no subtitles found for a new field. The health department gave a pump and haul permit for the septic system. The recommendation is to contract with a soil consultant to test the soil. Recommendation: Approve the recommendation of using a soil consultant or keeping the pump as is. If it is kept as is, the cost would remain between \$4,000 and \$7,000 annually compared to a one-time fee of about \$7,000 to install a drain field.

Motion was made by Commissioner Thomas S. Hester, Jr., seconded by Commissioner Sean A. Alston, Sr., vote unanimous, to contract with a soil consultant to test the soil for a possible drain field.

*Sally Port – Sheriff's Office.* The committee was informed of issues with the sally port door and repeated damage. Staff recommend extending the height of the door to 113 inches to accommodate a transport van. This will include installing a slide gate to allow the vehicles in and out of the sally port. A light will be programmed to come on when the gate is in motion and stop when the gate stops. There is also a recommendation of signage that is very visible in the sally port stating low ceiling height. The total cost is \$26,500.

Motion was made by Commissioner Archie B. Taylor, Jr. to approve the repairs to the sally port door at the Sheriff's Office. This motion was seconded by Commissioner Leo Kelly, Jr. and unanimously approved.

*Northern EMS Station Land Purchase Agreement.* The committee agreed to allow County Attorney Jonathan Care to send the contract to the landowner to see if they will accept the \$20,000 offer and allow 180 days for the county to get a survey and soil consultant to the property to see if land will perk.

Motion was made by Commissioner Carolyn Faines to authorize a survey and obtain a soil consultant for the property. This motion was seconded by Commissioner Thomas S. Hester, Jr. and unanimously approved.

#### County Manager's Report

*City of Henderson – Request for Reimbursement.* County Manager C. Renee Perry stated that on Monday, June 3, 2024 at a special budget meeting, the Henderson City Council unanimously agreed to provide financial support in the amount of \$2,000 to each of the twenty-two (22) remaining families still awaiting housing due to their displacement resulting from the shutdown of the 121 Motel in Henderson. In total, the city appropriated \$44,000 to assist these families with the funds to be used for rental deposits, extended hotel stays and other related housing expenses as they transition to more stable, long-term housing. In approving these payments, the Henderson City Council also included in its motion that the city manager request that the county commissioners consider sharing in the cost of assisting the 22 families by reimbursing the City of Henderson fifty percent (50%) of the expenses incurred by the city to assist these families. This would equate to \$22,000.

Ms. Perry noted that the county incurred the following costs associated with the shelter:

Category	Cost
Shelter Maintenance	\$4,225.86
Credit Card Charges for Hotel	\$3,743.32
Staffing	\$17,436.49
Increased utilities	\$1,500.00
Total	\$26,905.67

Recommendation: If the Board chooses to reimburse the City of Henderson, there should be an offset for the cost incurred by the county.

The board expressed its displeasure with the city's request since the county also incurred expenses from the shelter. No action was taken on this matter.



*KARTS Around Town Shuttle 24-25 Appropriation.* Ms. Perry noted that during budget deliberations, the board agreed to fund the KARTS Around Town Shuttle for six months with an appropriation of \$37,500. An email was received from KARTS Director Randy Cantor showing appreciation for the appropriation but requested a one-year commitment with a contract due to the amount of time it has taken to prepare for the termination and the possibility of having to do this again in six months. They feel there are better options to offer the citizens of Henderson. Recommendation: Approve or deny the request for additional funding to keep the shuttle open for 12 months instead of six months.

During discussion, it was noted that the city has not appropriated any funding for this project. Since it is primarily a city function, the county should not pay for a full year. If the city decides to fund part of the project, then the county will fund its part (\$37,500).

Motion was made by Commissioner Archie B. Taylor, Jr. to freeze the \$37,500 in the current budget for this project unless the city agrees to fund its portion. This motion was seconded by Commissioner Leo Kelly, Jr. and unanimously approved.

*Fire Department Freeze.* Ms. Perry stated that during the board's June 14, 2023 meeting, a motion was made by Commissioner Dan Brummitt to freeze all vacant positions at the Vance County Fire Department, freeze the fire department budget except for salaries, operating expenses and debt that is due; any equipment or other spending will come before the board for approval until the fire study is complete; freeze the four new part time positions included in the budget's fire fund; and no increase in the capital contribution to volunteer departments until after the fire study is complete. This motion was seconded by Commissioner Carolyn Faines and vote was ayes – five (5); noes – two (2), with the dissenting votes being cast by Commissioner Archie B. Taylor, Jr. and Commissioner Thomas S. Hester, Jr. Recommendation: Approve or deny the continuance of the freeze. The motion reads “after fire study is complete”. Ms. Perry noted that the actual study is complete; no actions have been taken by the board of commissioners, but the study is complete. She stated that Fire Chief Chris Wright is struggling with staffing because he has not been able to hire part-time staff, and he is working to cover shifts. Exempt staff members are not compensated for additional hours worked.

Chairman R. Dan Brummitt advised that the motion did not freeze existing part-time positions at the county fire department; it froze four new part-time positions for the volunteer

departments, so the fire chief has the authority to fill his part-time positions. He also stated that he would like capital purchases to continue to require board approval.

*GPS - Sheriff's Office Vehicles.* Ms. Perry noted that Sheriff Brame is in support of installing GPS on all sheriff vehicles except for his vehicle, investigators, and undercover. She noted that this will be installed soon.

*Henderson-Vance Industrial Park Roadway Improvements.* Ms. Perry informed the board that the road improvements at the industrial park are now complete as of June 26, 2024.

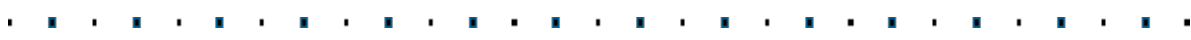
Consent Agenda

Motion was made by Commissioner Sean A. Alston, Sr., seconded by Commissioner Carolyn Faines, vote unanimous, to approve the following consent agenda items as presented: May 2024 Tax Refunds and Releases, departmental monthly reports, tax revaluation appeals, and the minutes of the June 17, 2024 special meeting and the June 24, 2024 special meeting.



**TAX REFUND AND RELEASE REPORT FOR MAY 2024**

TAXPAYER NAME	YEAR	REAL	REASON
BULLOCK SHERRY	2024	\$ 32.48	CORRECT VALUE
JESSICA HAIR & CO LLC	2024	\$ 136.69	ADD LATE LIST PE
JESSICA HAIR & CO LLC	2024	\$ 164.03	PERS PROP BILLED
JESSICA HAIR & CO LLC	2024	\$ 528.83	PERS PROP BILLED
JESSICA HAIR & CO LLC	2024	\$ 2.89	PERS PROP BILLED
JESSICA HAIR & CO LLC	2024	\$ 2.72	PERS PROP BILLED
JESSICA HAIR & CO LLC	2024	\$ 153.93	PERS PROP BILLED
JESSICA HAIR & CO LLC	2024	\$ 441.13	PERS PROP BILLED
		\$ 1,462.70	



MONTHLY REPORTS: 911 Emergency Operations, Administrative Ambulance Charge-Offs, Cooperative Extension, EMS, Fire Department, Human Resources, Information Technology, Parks and Recreation, Planning and Development, Tax Collections, Tax Revaluation Appeals, and Veterans Service.



Miscellaneous

*Appointments.* The following appointments were presented to the board for consideration:

Airport Authority – 1 year term  
Reappoint Brian Boyd

KARTS Board – 4 year term

Appoint Tydelia Hunt, Senior Center Director, to fill vacant position

Library Board of Trustees – 3 year term

Reappoint Emily Abbott, Cynthia Walker and Barbara Foster

Research Triangle Regional Partnership – 2 year term

Reappoint Dan Brummitt – appointed 08/2023

Motion was made by Commissioner Leo Kelly, Jr. to approve the reappointments and appointment as presented. This motion was seconded by Commissioner Carolyn Faines and unanimously approved.

*Appointment of NCACC Voting Delegate and Alternate.* Motion was made by Commissioner Carolyn Faines to appoint Sean A. Alston, Sr. as the voting delegate for the NCACC Annual Conference and Carolyn Faines as the alternate. This motion was seconded by Commissioner Sean A. Alston, Sr. and unanimously approved.

As there was no further business, at 9:00 p.m., motion was made by Commissioner Leo Kelly, Jr., seconded by Commissioner Carolyn Faines, vote unanimous, that the meeting be adjourned.

**Approved and signed August 5, 2024.**

**R. Dan Brummitt (signed)**  
**R. Dan Brummitt, Chair**