



# Chatham County, NC

## Meeting Minutes

### Board of Commissioners

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Tuesday, November 16, 2021

9:00 AM

Agriculture and Conference Center

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#### Capital Improvements Plan Work Session

#### **CALL TO ORDER**

*Chair Dasher called the meeting to order at 9:09 am.*

**Present:** 5 - Chair Mike Dasher, Vice Chair Diana Hales, Commissioner Franklin Gomez Flores, Commissioner Jim Crawford and Commissioner Karen Howard

#### **APPROVAL OF AGENDA and CONSENT AGENDA**

A motion was made by Commissioner Howard, seconded by Commissioner Gomez Flores, that the agenda and consent agenda be approved. The motion carried by the following vote:

**Aye:** 5 - Chair Dasher, Vice Chair Hales, Commissioner Gomez Flores, Commissioner Crawford and Commissioner Howard

#### **21-4098**

Vote on a request to approve Pyrotechnic display at The Bradford wedding venue located at 75 The Bradford Ln. New Hill NC 27562 during a wedding celebration on December 3, 2021

**Attachments:**    [Attachment A-N.C.G.S 14-410 and 14-413](#)  
[Attachment B - Pyrotechnics Request](#)  
[Attachment C-NC Pyrotechnic Display Operators License](#)  
[Attachment D- Ledford Certificate of Insurance 2021](#)  
[Attachment E- Ledford ATF License 2021](#)  
[Attachment F-Floor Plan The Bradford 12/3/2021](#)

A motion was made by Commissioner Howard, seconded by Commissioner Gomez Flores, that this Agenda Item be approved. The motion carried by the following vote:

**Aye:** 5 - Chair Dasher, Vice Chair Hales, Commissioner Gomez Flores, Commissioner Crawford and Commissioner Howard

#### **End of Consent Agenda**

#### **BOARD PRIORITIES**

#### **21-4088**

Review the Process

**Attachments:**     [FY 2023-2029 CIP Work Session Final.pptx](#)

*Budget Director Darrell Butts reviewed the CIP process.*

[21-4089](#)

Overview of CIP

*Mr. Butts gave an overview of the CIP.*

[21-4090](#)

Funding Sources & Strategy

[21-4091](#)

Operating Effect

[21-4092](#)

Completed Projects

[21-4093](#)

Schools Projects

*Chatham County Schools Chief Operations Officer Chris Blice stated the school system lost five mobile units to fire and there was damage to the Pre-K playground. The current insurance policy provides for full replacement but the investigation is ongoing. They recommend moving from five mobile units to a six classroom pod. The school believes they can get through until the summer before having to replace anything. That gives them time to have the pod custom built. It may be possible to get some temporary mobile units until the summer if needed.*

*Vice Chair Hales asked what is happening to the students who were using those mobile units. Mr. Blice said music has been moved to a cart classroom. Two units were basically being used as storage and art had already moved to the cafeteria. ESL was moved to a different location after the fire. The fifth unit was being used primarily for storage as well. This has actually created an opportunity to plan for increased capacity over the next ten years.*

*Commissioner Crawford complimented the new traffic flow at Northwood High School.*

*Commissioner Crawford stated that he would like to move up the gym replacements at Bennett, Silk Hope, and Bonlee schools, as he has stated before. Commissioner Gomez Flores agreed. Chatham County Schools Director of Maintenance Randy Drumheller stated they are working on a feasibility study to determine the best course of action for these facilities. Commissioner Gomez Flores asked how quickly the turn around would be for renovating the facilities compared to building a new facility. Mr. Drumheller stated that renovations would take about a year because the gymnasiums are occupied. Building a new facility would also take about a year for construction and about six months for design. The feasibility study should be done by the end of this month.*

*Commissioner Howard asked if there was a political component to updating these facilities. These schools have resisted moving to the K-5 and 6-8 middle school model and it may be wise to think about having those conversations. Mr. Blice stated they are doing a study on adding HVAC to the existing systems in the county gymnasiums as well.*

*Chair Dasher questions about the COVID funding the schools received. There was an*

article last week looking at the funding in the state overall. He asked where Chatham County Schools is spending those funds. Chatham County Schools Superintendent Dr. Anthony Jackson stated the funds are distributed over a three year period. To get the funds they had to have a detailed plan so all the funds are already allocated and if anything changes they have to go back for additional approval. There were certain amounts mandated to be set aside for certain things. The total allocation was approximately \$18 million. Chatham County Schools Chief Finance Officer Tony Messer said getting a HVAC project completed in three years is just about impossible when 100 counties may be trying to do that same thing with the same vendors.

Commissioner Howard stated there was just recently an update on lottery capital funds. She will get more info from NC Association of County Commissioners.

Vice Chair Hales asked if there any conversations about some kind of refresh of Jordan Matthews High School. Mr. Blice stated the refresh of facilities is ongoing in the form of small projects. Doing an entire school renovation as one big project would really just be for aesthetics. A technology refresh is much more important to make sure instruction is keeping up with the times and students have access to the best technology.

Vice Chair Hales noted there are no lockers at Seaforth High School. Mr. Blice stated they are taking them out of other schools gradually because students no longer use them.

Dr. Jackson stated they will be having some of these conversations with the Board of Education in January but he would love school programming to drive the district's capital needs.

Commissioner Gomez Flores asked how substitute teachers are paid. Mr. Messer stated that when a teacher takes annual leave, they have to pay \$50 towards the payment of the substitute. It is a state policy, not a county policy. It does not apply when a teacher takes sick leave.

## 21-4094

### General Fund Projects

County Manager Dan LaMontagne gave an update on CCCC Business Campus in Siler City. A developer wants to know how they can connect from behind the gas station over to Progress Blvd. so they can develop that parcel. This is very positive news, especially when there is still a need for a sign for the campus.

Chair Dasher asked if there have been discussions about a master plan for that campus. Mr. LaMontagne said there will be a health campus there. Affordable housing is also going in behind the hospital. Chair Dasher also suggested there still could be an advantage to trying to have a plan to look at possible future uses instead of waiting for things to come to us.

Chair Dasher stated that the Veranda at Briar Chapel removed their charging stations. He asked if the stations were part of the site plan, can they remove it without coming to the Board with a revised site plan. Mr. LaMontagne believes putting the charging stations at the Veranda was voluntary and isn't a significant change to make the developer change the site plan.

Assistant County Manager Carolyn Miller said the EV charging station will be going in next week at the Chatham County Agriculture and Conference Center.

*The Board also discussed the A/V project for the Historic Courthouse and Justice Center. The Administrative Office of the Courts has committed to upgrading one courtroom in each county. In order to keep the technology consistent in the other three courtrooms in the Justice Center and the Historic Courthouse courtroom, MIS is working with AOC's vendor to start gathering information on what the potential costs and timeline would be to update the remaining four courtrooms. Clerk to the Board Lindsay Ray will also work with MIS to make sure the Board of Commissioners' needs are addressed and met with the A/V in the Historic Courthouse.*

#### 21-4095

#### Enterprise Fund Projects

*Mr. LaMontagne said the original partners for the future western intake on Jordan Lake were OWASA, Durham, Pittsboro, and Chatham County. OWASA has decided not to continue in the partnership. The Town of Pittsboro has said they will not continue with the project but will participate in the governance piece. Chatham County is a partner but not a huge partner. Durham is still 100% committed for their 16.5 million gallons per day. Staff needs to go through the process of looking at alternatives.*

*Vice Chair Hales asked whether the Town of Cary is partner. Mr. LaMontagne said Cary doesn't need to be a partner because they already have their own intake.*

*Commissioner Crawford asked if it is Mr. LaMontagne's understanding that Durham will build this facility regardless of what the other partners do. Mr. LaMontagne said yes, it is being built in our backyard so it makes sense to continue with it. Durham has been a great partner. Financing is difficult for the Town of Pittsboro right now. The County did convince Pittsboro to participate in the governance piece with the expectation that they will join eventually.*

#### 21-4096

#### Future Projects

*Chair Dasher said his understanding is no one asked the contractor if the CCCC Career and Technical Education Building could be scaled back. He asked if there is a way to use ARPA funds for the facility. Assistant County Manager Bryan Thompson said on its face it seems like staff could connect the dots to use ARPA, trying to use the guidance given and plug it in where it will fit. He is not sure this would meet the concept of reasonable use of the funds. Staff could probably argue renovations to an existing building would qualify but construction of a new building would probably not qualify.*

*Mr. Thompson said the community college is expecting an allocation from the state budget but the college Board of Trustees would then have to distribute those funds among the three locations.*

*Mr. LaMontagne said staff just didn't have a lot of time to discuss it before having to get final recommended CIP document. Mr. Thompson said the reason something is a future project may be a small issue that can be resolved but not in time to be included in the recommended CIP.*

*Mr. Butts said he and Budget Analyst Lisa West met with a UNC Capstone team currently working with Council on Aging Director Dennis Streets on a new senior center project. Vice Chair Hales asked if they are looking at a new building or the expansion of an existing building. Mr. Butts said they are looking at both options as well as other options Mr. Streets may not have considered.*

*Ms. Miller said they are waiting on an economic analysis for the expansion at the Agriculture and Conference Center. Vice Chair Hales asked if there will be any equestrian additions. Ms. Miller said a big part of this is covering the arena and that plan includes many features so staff can identify which ones are most feasible.*

*Commissioner Howard asked if there is a timeline for doing a county complex master plan.*

*Mr. LaMontagne said a wastewater plant for county facilities on Renaissance Drive is something being looked into. Renaissance Drive will, more than likely, eventually be in Pittsboro's jurisdiction.*

*Commissioner Crawford said another component is that Pittsboro was supposed to build a town hall and the County would be able to lease space but that project has stalled. Mr. LaMontagne said he would like to work out agreement with the Town of Pittsboro for leasing space in town hall with a commitment the Town would allocate wastewater for the new county complex on Renaissance Drive.*

*Chair Dasher suggested it may be time for a joint meeting with Pittsboro Town Board.*

*Mr. LaMontagne said staff can look at the possibility of doing a feasibility study on a county complex master plan with operating funds. The Board agreed by consensus to move forward.*

*Vice Chair Hales said county prefers to own the land and county facilities. The County doesn't lease property if it doesn't have to. She asked if a 15 year lease for a library in the northeast would be possible? Commissioner Crawford stated the issue is finding the space in the northeast part of the county that is adequate. It is hard to find even a small business space right now. Mr. LaMontagne stated the Town of Goldston and the Town of Siler City provide the space for the libraries. The County does not lease those buildings.*

*Mr. Thompson asked if the latest Library Assessment look into space needs. Staff will look into that. Public Information Officer Kara Lusk Dudley said the County is currently conducting the biennial feedback survey and staff will have some feedback on this topic at the January retreat.*

*Commissioner Crawford said McDougal Elementary in Carboro has a shared library facility for the school and the county. He asked if this model could be possible in Chatham. Mr. LaMontagne said there has been some discussion about doing that at the new school at Chatham Park when it is built.*

*Ms. Miller pulled up the library needs assessment. Some suggestions were boosting WiFi, building a branch in northeast or northwest Chatham, and different library kiosks (like Red Box kiosks) at different retailers.*

*Vice Chair Hales said Chatham has a large population over 55 years of age. Libraries are transitioning to more digital media.*

*Commissioner Howard stated it is easy to think of the northeast as the wealthy part of the county but there are a lot of young families and people in poverty in that section of the county as well. There isn't convenient access to library programming in that part of the county.*

*Ms. Miller said it is a good time for staff to explore a variety of options like having library programming at the new recreation center at Chatham Grove Elementary.*

*Commissioner Crawford remembered some discussion about a library at the new CCCC Health Sciences Building. Mr. LaMontagne said there is a 10,000 sq ft footprint for a future library. The Library Advisory Committee is not pushing to move forward with that facility at this time. Library staff should be coming forward with their needs based on what they see and experience.*

*Ms. Miller pointed out that the libraries have retained the curbside service at the libraries that was created in response to the pandemic.*

*Vice Chair Hales asked if it is possible to have a boat storage for the Sheriff at Seaforth High School. Mr. LaMontagne said North Chatham Fire Department is there by the lake and the water treatment plant is also close by and are possible options for the boat storage.*

*Mr. LaMontagne stated there were a lot of moving pieces with this. There is a Rural Digital Opportunity Fund through the FCC. It was not known at the local level that this was happening. There are areas called CCO holdings that companies could bid on and get low bandwidth areas that they would serve. They are committed to doing it within 6 years.*

*Vice Chair Hales asked if this is happening nationwide. Mr. LaMontagne stated it is.*

*Mr. LaMontagne has been having discussions with Randolph Communications about another federal program called NTIA. They have to make sure the different federal and state programs they utilize do not interfere with one another. Mr. LaMontagne will dig into the budget to figure out where the county is on that and who can help the county figure out where the gaps are. He has been unable to reach the state broadband office.*

*Vice Chair Hales asked for the status of the broadband project for the schools. Mr. LaMontagne said the connection to the schools is almost complete. That is a federal program just for education and federal services. The County can't necessarily lease that fiber space out to anyone right now. There may be some new things in the state budget that will address this and allow more flexibility. Mr. Thompson said whatever work done by the County will have to be done through ISPs (internet service providers).*

*Chair Dasher asked if there are consultants that can do some of this broadband leg work for the County. Mr. LaMontagne said not yet. In other states counties can use ARP funds for broadband but counties in North Carolina are not allowed to use the funds for that purpose.*

*Vice Chair Hales asked if the County has any ARP funds set aside for this. Mr. Thompson said there are funds set aside so if the County is eventually allowed to do something with broadband the funds will already be allocated and available.*

*Chair Dasher said the schools will be done with their central services building in December of 2022. He asked if the County plans to talk with the Town of Pittsboro about possible uses of the current school central services building.*

*Commissioner Crawford also asked if there are any possible uses of the current EOC*

*and Sheriff's office buildings. Mr. LaMontagne said the Sheriff's Office investigations unit is going to move in to the current EOC building. Chair Dasher said the school central services building would be a great location for a community center.*

*Mr. LaMontagne said staff would look into having a joint meeting with the Town of Pittsboro in February 2022.*

*Mr. Butts thanked the commissioners for their time and for working with staff during this process. The approval of the CIP will be on the December 20th agenda.*

*Mr. LaMontagne thanked Finance Officer Hope Tally for her service to Chatham County and wished her well on her future endeavors. He also thanked all of staff for their work on the CIP.*

## **ADJOURNMENT**

**A motion was made by Commissioner Crawford, seconded by Commissioner Gomez Flores, that this meeting be adjourned. The motion carried by the following vote:**

**Aye:** 5 - Chair Dasher, Vice Chair Hales, Commissioner Gomez Flores, Commissioner Crawford and Commissioner Howard