

Minutes
Richmond County Board of Commissioners
105 W. Franklin Street, Courtroom C, Rockingham, NC
REGULAR MEETING
Monday, April 3, 2023

The Richmond County Board of Commissioners met for a Regular Monthly Meeting on Monday, April 3, 2023 at 5:30 P.M. with the following in attendance: Commissioner Jason Gainey, Commissioner Andy Grooms, Commissioner Toni Maples, Commissioner Robin Roberts, Commissioner Rick Watkins, Vice Chairperson Justin Dawkins and Chairperson Jeff Smart

ITEM NO. 1 Invocation by Robert Gainey

Invocation was given by Pastor Robert Gainey of Shining Light Free Will Baptist Church

ITEM NO. 2 Pledge of Allegiance

Pledge of Allegiance was lead by Commissioner Robin Roberts

ITEM NO. 3 Approval of Agenda - Decision

Commissioner Watkins asked to amend the agenda to include agend item # 04P on the Consent Agenda

By a motion of Commissioner Dawkins, seconded by Commissioner Gainey and by unanimous vote. Motion carried

**ITEM NO. 4 Consent Agenda - Decision
(Amend to Add Item 4P to the Consent Agenda)**

**A) Approval of Draft Minutes of Regular Meeting on March 7, 2023,
and Special Meeting on March 14, 2023 as Submitted by the
Clerk for Review**

**B) Approval of Tax Releases And Tax Refunds for Month of
February, 2023**

**C) Approval of North Carolina Vehicle Tax System Refund Report
for the Month of February**

D) Approval of Budget Amendment for CIP

E) Approval of Draft Minutes from Board of Health Meeting

**F) Approval of Request for Volunteer Fire Departments and Rescue
Squad Billing**

G)Approval of Budget Amendment for LIHWAP

H)Approval of Budget Amendment for Share the Light

I)Approval of Agreement with LKC Engineering, PLLC

J)Approval of Budget Amendment for Motorsports Grant

K)Approval of Budget Amendment for Opioid Settlement Funds

**L)Approval of Budget Amendment for Air Curtain Burner Loan
Proceeds for Solid Waste**

**M)Approval of Budget Amendment for Riot Gear Grant for Sheriff's
Office**

**N)Approval of Budget Amendment for Duke Energy Grant for
Emergency Services**

**O)Approval of Resolution of Support for NCDOT Proposed Road
Widening**

**P)Approval of Water Purchase Contract With the Town of Ellerbe
(Amended)**

By a motion of Commissioner Grooms, seconded by Commissioner Roberts and by unanimous vote. Motion carried

ITEM NO. 5 Open Forum for Public Comments - 5:30 - 6:00 PM

David Travis-Richmond County citizen spoke to the Board regarding a request of consideration. He asked the Board to consider changing from a spoken prayer to an inclusive prayer. He feels that it would be more appropriate and not make people feel uncomfortable. An inclusive prayer would be like a silent prayer.

**ITEM NO. 6 Request for Board Consideration of Approval of the Resolution
From Vulcan Materials - Susanne Todd and Denise Hallett, Vulcan
Lands LLC - Decision**

By a motion of Commissioner Grooms, seconded by Commissioner Gainey and by unanimous vote. Motion carried

**ITEM NO. 7 Request for Board Consideration of Approval of Surplus Property
Auctioned by Iron Horse - Vagas Jackson, Tax Administrator -
Decision**

By a motion of Commissioner Watkins, seconded by Commissioner Roberts and by unanimous vote. Motion carried

ITEM NO. 8 Monthly Report by County Manager Bryan Land

This afternoon, I will veer away from my typical monthly report outline and just highlight a few topics and updates going on around our County. Then Martie and I will highlight some of our Current Economic Development Projects.

As Vegas Jackson, our Tax Administrator brought to your attention a few minutes ago. Our surplus property auction hosted by Ironhorse Auction ended Thursday afternoon and the results were phenomenal. I was concerned that our net from this sale wouldn't be as strong as previous sales due to the quality and condition of most of the properties. However, I am pleased to say I was wrong. We moved thirty-six properties at a net of 365K! The vast majority of these properties were dilapidated, uninhabitable sites that were a few years in arrears on tax payments. As a recap, over the last five years, We have netted over 1.2 million dollars and placed 240 dormant properties back on our tax books through surplus property auctions through Ironhorse Auction, gov deals and through court ordered auctions hosted by Zachieus Tax Service. We are hopeful the majority of these properties will close prior to the end of our budget year. Hats off to our Tax Department staff and our local auction company Ironhorse for a great sale.

Tax collection continues to be a bright spot, As of this morning, we stand at a 96.08 collection %. We are tracking higher than in previous years as at the end of March last year we stood at a 95.69%.

If you recall, last year we achieved our highest tax collection rate ever at 97.43% excluding vehicles, this year we have set an internal goal of 97.50%. Our team in tax including Vagas Jackson and Michelle Holden continue to do an outstanding job.

Lastly, on Thursday March 30th our team in Emergency Services was able to put some of their extensive training to use as our team had to cover for Scotland County for over seven hours. The 911 center in Scotland County had an equipment failure in the electrical room which caused the center to shut down completely. All calls from Scotland County were diverted to our center most of the day and the entire process went extremely smooth. Hats off to our Emergency Service Director Bob Smith and his dedicated team.

Next, Martie and I do have a few quick pictures and stats on current economic development projects we would like to highlight,

You will hear Martie and I mention almost monthly our Economic Development activity and our current project list. These projects are truly the bread and butter for our County and are undoubtedly one of our main focuses as we try to grow our industrial tax base in our County. Another good barometer we like to track is our building permit volume which has increased this year by almost 30%. Don't get me wrong, being a rural tier 1 county in NC certainly has its challenges but in Richmond County our future is bright and we have a tremendous amount to be proud of.

The first site is American Woodmark at our Hwy 74 Industrial Park outside of Hamlet. This project has a value of 40 million in investment, consist of a 250k sf expansio and 130 new jobs associated with it. Governor Cooper was in town a few weeks ago to highlight this project and celebrate with a ground breaking.

Item # 1

Next, we have our Impact South Project which is located at their facility on County Home Road . It has a project value of 15 million, consist of a 50k sf expansion and adds ten new jobs.

Item #2

Next up is CAI ink in our Rockingham West IP, CAI is taking a phased approach for their project with the first stage consisting of a new tank farm and a loading station. CAI hasn't released projected job and investment figures yet but we feel confident the expansion will breach three million

Item # 3

Fifty eight million in investments from American Woodmark, Impact South and CAI is the equivalent to two hundred-twenty-five homes at 250k in Pine Lakes, Watherstone, and Woodmark all being built at once!

Lastly, we had two specialized projects with the Dragway and speedway upgrades. The Dragway received 485k in funding to resurface the track and also upgrade their timing system. The speedway repaved the track as well as many other upgrades to the facility. The two facilities combined will invest well over six million into the tracks.

Item #4

We purposefully didn't mention Direct Pack and our 40k sf shell building as neither of those projects have broken ground yet. However, both will add substantially to our tax base with Direct Pack adding 250k sf and over one hundred new jobs, as well as investment over 15 million.

Additionally, we didn't mention the considerable amount of commercial development along the Hwy 74 corridor we have witnessed over the last year. Hwy 55, IHOP, Goshen Medical Clinic, Hampton Inn, Starbucks, Jersey Mikes, T Mobile, and the Rockingham storage complex to name a few.

We should all be excited about the future of Richmond County!

A few more important reminders,

Springfest is Saturday, April 22 from 11:00am-4:00pm at Harrington Square in downtown Rockingham. Richmond County is sponsoring the Kids Zone. There will be a BBQ Cookoff, beer garden, craft vendors and live music from Bucky Covington and a guest performance from Erik Hawks, both Rockingham natives.

One additional reminder, our annual household hazardous waste day will be held Saturday, April 15th from 9:00am-12:00pm at our Human Services Building parking lot

Please remember we will be closed this Friday, April 7th in observance of Good Friday.

ITEM NO. 9 Adjournment - Decision

By a motion of Commissioner Dawkins, seconded by Commissioner Maples and by unanimous vote. Motion carried

Meeting adjourned at 6:30 P.M.

Respectfully Submitted by the Clerk

Dena R. Cook, NCCCC

Clerk to the Board

Richmond County Board of Commissioners

**Request for Board Consideration of Approval of Memorandum of
Opioid Litigation - Bryan Land, Co**