BRUNSWICK COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
OFFICIAL MINUTES
REGULAR MEETING
December 2, 2024
3:00 P.M.

The Brunswick County Board of Commissioners met in Regular Session on the above date at 3:00 p.m., Commissioners' Chambers, David R. Sandifer Administration Building, County Government Center, Bolivia, North Carolina.

PRESENT:	Commissioner Mike Forte, Chairman Commissioner J. Martin Cooke Vice-Chairman Commissioner Randy Thompson Commissioner Pat Sykes Commissioner Frank Williams
STAFF:	Steve Stone, County Manager Bryan Batton, County Attorney David Stanley, Deputy County Manager Aaron Smith, Finance Director Daralyn Spivey, Clerk to the Board LeAnn Weigand, Executive Assistant Meagan Kascsak, Communications Director Jim Hartsell, IT Lt. Hester, Sheriff's Office

Board Action, containing all items in this set of minutes, is filed within the Clerk to the Board's office.

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Thompson called the meeting to order at 3:00 p.m.

II. INVOCATION/PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Commissioner Cooke gave the Invocation and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

III. ADJUSTMENTS/APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Chairman Thompson asked for adjustments to the agenda.

Mr. Batton, County Attorney, advised there would be a need for a Closed Session.

Commissioner Cooke made the motion to approve the agenda with the addition of a Closed Session. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Sykes and passed unanimously (5 to 0).

IV. OATH OF OFFICE – COMMISSIONERS' ELECT

1. Clerk to the Board – Oath of Office – Commissioners Elect

   District 3: Patricia Sykes: Jason Disbrow, Senior Resident Superior Court Judge, administered the following Oath of Office:

   I, Patricia Sykes, do solemnly and sincerely swear that I will support and maintain the Constitution and laws of the United States; that I will be faithful and bear true allegiance to the State of North Carolina, and to the constitutional powers and authorities which are or may be established for the government thereof; and that I will endeavor to support, maintain and defend the Constitution and laws of said State, not inconsistent with the Constitution of the United States, to the best of my knowledge and ability; so help me God.

   I, Patricia Sykes, do swear that I will well and truly execute the duties of the Office of County Commissioner of Brunswick County according to the best of my skill and ability, according to law; so help me God.

   Patricia Sykes

Attestation:
Subscribed and sworn before me this the 2nd day of December 2024.
Jason Disbrow
Senior Resident Superior Court Judge

District 4: Mike Forte: Jason Disbrow, Senior Resident Superior Court Judge administered the following Oath of Office:

I, Mike Forte do solemnly and sincerely swear that I will support and maintain the Constitution and laws of the United States; that I will be faithful and bear true allegiance to the State of North Carolina, and to the constitutional powers and authorities which are or may be established for the government thereof; and that I will endeavor to support, maintain and defend the Constitution and laws of said State, not inconsistent with the Constitution of the United States, to the best of my knowledge and ability; so help me God.

I, Mike Fore, do swear that I will well and truly execute the duties of the Office of County Commissioner of Brunswick County according to the best of my skill and ability, according to law; so help me God.

Mike Forte

Attestation:
Subscribed and sworn before me this the 2nd day of December, 2024.
Jason Disbrow
Senior Resident Superior Court Judge

District 5: Frank L. Williams: Jason Disbrow, Senior Resident Superior Court Judge, administered the following Oath of Office:

I, Frank L. Williams, do solemnly and sincerely swear that I will support and maintain the Constitution and laws of the United States; that I will be faithful and bear true allegiance to the State of North Carolina, and to the constitutional powers and authorities which are or may be established for the government thereof; and that I will endeavor to support, maintain and defend the Constitution and laws of said State, not inconsistent with the Constitution of the United States, to the best of my knowledge and ability; so help me God.

I, Frank L. Williams, do swear that I will well and truly execute the duties of the Office of County Commissioner of Brunswick County according to the best of my skill and ability, according to law; so help me God.

Frank L. Williams

Attestation:
Subscribed and sworn before me this the 2nd day of December 2024.
Jason Disbrow
Senior Resident Superior Court Judge

V. ELECTION OF BOARD CHAIR

1. Mr. Batton, County Attorney, explained the process of the election of the Chairman and opened the floor for nominations.

   Commissioner Cooke moved to nominate Commissioner Mike Forte as Chairman. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Williams. Mr. Batton opened the floor for discussion. Hearing none, the nominations were closed. The vote for approval was unanimous (5 to 0).

   Mr. Batton turned the meeting over to Chairman Forte.

VI. ELECTION OF VICE – CHAIR

1. Chairman Forte opened the floor for nominations for Vice - Chairman. Commissioner Thompson nominated Commissioner Sykes with Commissioner Sykes seconding the motion. The motion failed (3 to 2) with the poll as follows:
   Chairman Forte: Nay
   Vice - Chairman Cooke: Nay
   Commissioner Thompson: Aye
   Commissioner Sykes: Aye

Commissioner Williams: Nay

Commissioner Williams nominated Commissioner Cooke for Vice – Chairman, Chairman Forte seconded the motion. The motion passed (4 to 1) with the poll as follows:
Chairman Forte: Aye
Vice – Chairman Cooke: Aye
Commissioner Thompson: Aye
Commissioner Sykes: Nay
Commissioner Williams: Aye

VII. APPROVAL OF THE BONDS

1. The Board adopted a Resolution approving the bonding of county officials. Commissioner Thompson made the motion to adopt the Resolution with Commissioner Williams seconding and all in favor (5 to 0). The Resolution reads as follows:

RESOLUTION APPROVING THE BONDING OF COUNTY OFFICIALS

WHEREAS, North Carolina General Statute § 105-349(c) requires the Tax Collector to provide a performance bond in an amount prescribed by this Board; and

WHEREAS, NCGS §159-29(a) requires the Finance Officer to provide a performance bond with sufficient sureties in an amount to be fixed by this Board but not less than $1,000,000; and

WHEREAS, NCGS §161-4 requires the Register of Deeds to provide a performance bond with sufficient surety to be approved by this Board, in an amount of not less than $10,000 nor more than $50,000; and

WHEREAS, NCGS §162-8 requires the Sheriff to provide a performance bond of any amount to be determined by this Board but not to exceed $25,000; and

WHEREAS, NCGS §58-72-55 requires the Clerk to the Board to record in the proceedings the names of those Commissioners who are present at the time of approval of official bonds and who voted for such approval; and

WHEREAS, NCGS §58-72-55 further provides that any Commissioner may cause his or her written dissent to an official bond to be entered into the record of this Board.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Board of Commissioners for the County of Brunswick as follows:

1. That this Board hereby accepts and approves bonds for public officials as follows:
   a. Anthony Michael Masiero, Interim Tax Collector, $500,000.00 with Travelers Casualty and Surety Company of America:
   b. Aaron Christopher Smith, Finance Director, $1,000,000.00 with Travelers Casualty and Surety Company of America:
   c. Dana Varnam, Register of Deeds, $10,000.00 with Travelers Casualty and Surety Company of America;
   d. Brian Chism, Sheriff, $25,000.00 with Western Surety Company;

2. That pursuant to NCGS 58-72-55, the Clerk is hereby instructed to record the names of all Commissioners present at this meeting who vote in favor of this resolution.

3. That pursuant to NCGS 58-72-55, any Commissioner who votes against this resolution may cause his or her written dissent to be entered into the record of the Board.

4. That this resolution shall be effective upon its adoption.

Approved and adopted this, the 2nd day of December 2024.

Mike Forte, Chair
Brunswick County Board of Commissioners

Attest:
Daralyn Spivey, NCCCC, CMC
Clerk to the Board

VIII. PUBLIC COMMENTS

Mr. Gene Vasile congratulated the current Board on their re-election and spoke to the need to continue moving forward with the issues of overdevelopment.

IX. APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA

Commissioner Thompson moved to approve the Consent Agenda. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Williams and passed unanimously (5 to 0).

1. **Administration – Approval of the FY 2025 Hone and Community Care Blcok Grant and County Agreement**
   The Board authorized approval and execution of the FY 2025 Home and Community Care Block Grant for Older Adults Agreement for the Provision of Community-Based Aging Services, the provider packet and attachments for the provision of county-based aging services, County Funding Plan, Provider Services Summaries, Federal Certifications, and Disclosure of Lobbying Activities forms.

2. **Clerk to the Board – Meeting Minutes – November 18 ,2024**
   The Board approved the meeting minutes for November 18, 2024.

3. **County Attorney – Declaration of Surplus Property**
   The Board declared property obtained by the County through tax foreclosure as surplus property to be placed on the County's website for possible future purchase.

4. **County Attorney – Ocean Isle Palms Extension Request**
   The Board approved an extension of the Ocean Isle Palms subdivision bonding agreement subject to terms satisfactory to the County Attorney and authorize the County Manager to execute the same.

5. **EMS – Arrive Ventures Ambulance Franchise Agreement**
   The Board approved the Ambulance Franchise Agreement with Arrive Ventures, LLC.

6. **EMS – CompX Narcotic Inventory System Purchase**
   The Board approved the purchase of CompX Narcotic Inventory System by Emergency Medical Services and appropriate additional funds for the required associated IT needs.

7. **EMS - Southport Fire Department Ambulance Franchise Agreement**
   The Board approved the annual ambulance franchise agreement with Southport Fire Department.

8. **Finance – Southeast Area Improvements (ARPA Project #7) Interlocal Agreement with St. James**
   The Board approved a new Interlocal Agreement allowing St. James to redirect $1,945,484.83 of previously sub-awarded ARPA funds into ARPA-enabled funds via the Revenue Replacement standard allowance for use of the Southeast Area Improvement project.

9. **Health Services – ARPA – COVID-19 School Health Funding and Agreement**
   The Board approved the ARPA – COVID-19 School Health Funding and Agreement.

10. **Health Services – NC DHHS FY25 Consolidated Agreement Amendment 1**
    The Board approved the FY 25 NC DHHS Division of Public Health, Division of Family Well-being Consolidated Agreement Amendment.

11. **Health Services – Request the Board of Commissioners Designate the Brunswick County Child Fatality Prevention Team as a Single County Local Team**

The Board approved the designation of the Brunswick County Child Fatality Prevention Team as a single-county local team.

12. **Library – Library ARPA Enabled Bookmobile Staff Computer Workstations**
The Board approved the $5,044 in ARPA-enabled funds to purchase desktop computers, laptops, and peripherals for Library Bookmobile staff use.

13. **Library – Library ARP Enabled Furnishings for Southwest Brunswick Branch**
The Board approved the $13,000 in ARPA-enabled funds to be allocated for the purchase of shelving and staff workstations at the Southwest Brunswick Branch Library.

14. **Operation Services – Tip Fee Exemption**
The Board authorized a tip fee exemption request at the Brunswick County Landfill for Bald Head Island Conservancy and Civietown Fire and Rescue, LLC.

15. **Parks and Recreation – Navassa Park Playground**
The Board awarded an agreement for a new playground structure at Navassa Park (Bliss Products) in the amount of $179,788.60 for the proposed design schematic.

16. **Sheriff's Office – Law and Order Technology Agreement**
The Board approved a contract with Law-and-Order Technology LLC for the purchase of computers approved in the Sheriff's Office and Animal Protective Services budget requests.

17. **Social Services – WARM Urgent Repair Program Support and Funding Request**
The Board approved the Wilmington Area Rebuilding Ministry, Inc. 2026 Urgent Repair Program application and 20 percent funding match up to $20,000 for their housing rehabilitation activities in Brunswick County. The resolution reads as follows:

BRUNSWICK COUNTY WARM URGENT REPAIR APPLICATION
RESOLUTION OF COMMITMENT

WHERAS, Brunswick County wishes to demonstrate local support for the Wilmington Area Building Ministry, Inc. (WARM) Urgent Repair application; and

WHERAS, WARM wishes to submit a competitive application to the North Carolina Housing Finance Agency to assist Brunswick County Residents.

NOW, THEREFORE, the Board of Commissioners of Brunswick County hereby resolve to commit $20,000.00 in unrestricted local revenue to the Urgent Repair Program project. If the project is funded, these funds will be restricted in the use for Brunswick County residents and be disbursed for "hard cost only" at the discretion of the Urgent Repair administrator during the FY 2026 budget year.

RESOLVED this 2nd day of December 2024.

Mike Forte, Chair
Brunswick County Board of Commissioners

Attest:
Daralyn Spivey, NCCCC
Clerk to the Board

18. **Soil & Water – Walter J. Wescott Conservation Easement**
The Board authorized Soil and Water to apply for a grant with the Agricultural Development and Farmland Preservation Trust Fund for the purchase of an agricultural conservation easement located in southeast Bolivia, and to provide signature authority to the County Manager for this project.

19. **Utilities - Approval of Budget Amendment and Purchase of an Excavator for 211 Water Treatment Plant in the Amount of $263,542.15**
The Board approved a budget amendment and a contract in the amount of $263,542.15 for the purchase of an excavator from Gregory Poole Equipment Company.

20. **Utilities – Approval for Generator Replacement from Coastline Electric, LLC for the Utilities Operations Center**

The Board approved a budgeted generator replacement in the amount of $266,000.00 for the Utilities Operations Center.

21. Utilities – NWWTP Expansion and Upgrades Amendment #5
The Board authorized the Chairman and Clerk to the Board to approve Amendment #5 to the contract of CDM Smith, Inc. and associated budget amendment increasing both the contract time and value.

22. Utilities - Purchase of Odor Control Unit from Evoqua Water Technologies, LLC
The Board approved a contract with Evoqua Water Technologies, LLC., for the budgeted purchase of a Zabocs odor control unit in the amount of $139,711.00 in accordance with 143-129(e)(6).

X. PRESENTATION

1. **Administration - Local Reentry Council Presentation**
Mr. Frankie Roberts, Executive Director of Leading Into New Communities Inc. (LINC) presented information regarding the Local Re-entry Council office opening in Brunswick County for those returning to the community after incarceration.

XI. PUBLIC HEARING

1. **Planning – Rezoning Case Z-898 Appeal Request for Remaining Tax Parcel 23800001**
Kirstie Dixon, Planning Director, advised the property owners have agreed to the SBR 6000 zoning.

Chairman Forte opened the Public Hearing. Hearing no comments from the public, the Public Hearing was closed. Commissioner Williams made a motion to approve the zoning of SBR 6000 with the following consistency statement:

This request to SBR-6000 is consistent with the Blueprint Brunswick 2040 Comprehensive Plan place type designation and consistent with the goals, recommendations, and policies of the plans adopted by Brunswick County (listed below). Staff also finds the request reasonable, appropriate, and in the public interest based upon the following findings:

1. The Blueprint Brunswick 2040 Comprehensive Plan (CAMA Plan) goals & objectives support the rezoning:
   - Consistent with the goals and objectives
     - LU-6. Amend land development regulations to align with Place Types as defined within Blueprint Brunswick.
     - HN-2. Minimize impacts to and invest in established residential areas.
2. Consistent with the characteristics of the area, existing zoning in the area, and adjacent uses.
3. Biodiversity and Wildlife Habitat Assessment score of 7-9 out of 10.

Commissioner Thompson seconded the motion and passed unanimously (5 to 0).

XII. ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT

1. **Organizational Structure Change – Transfer Five GIS Staff to Information Technology**
Commissioner Thompson made the motion to transfer five (5) GIS staff positions from Tax Administration to Information Technology. Commissioner Cooke seconded the motion and passed unanimously (5 to 0).

XIII. BOARD APPOINTMENTS

1. **Administration – PTC8 After Action Board Appointments**
Commissioner Williams made the motion to appoint Commissioners Thompson and Sykes to the PTC8 After Action Task Force. Commissioner Cooke seconded the motion and passed unanimously (5 to 0).

2. **Clerk to the Board - Board Appointment – Annual Board Seat Assignments**

Commissioner Williams made the motion to appoint the existing annual board seats for the Commissioners for the calendar year 2025 Board Seat listing with the following changes:

As the newly elected Chairman of the Board of Commissioners, Chairman Forte will assume seats on the Brunswick Business & Industry Development and the Brunswick-Columbus Industrial Park Boards respectively. Vice – Chairman Cooke will assume a seat on the Brunswick Business & Industry Development Board.

The motion was seconded by Commissioner Thompson and passed (4 to 1) with the poll as follows:
Commissioner Forte: Aye
Commissioner Thompson: Aye
Commissioner Cooke: Aye
Commissioner Sykes: Nay
Commissioner Williams: Aye

The seat assignments are as follows:
Brunswick Business & Industry Development: Chairman Forte
Brunswick Columbus Industrial Park: Chairman Forte
Cape Fear Council of Governments: Chairman Forte and Vice – Chairman Cooke (alternate)
Cape Feat Rural Planning Organization Transportation Adv. Committee: Chairman Forte
Grand Strand MPO Transportation Advisory Committee: Commissioners Sykes and Thompson
Greater Wilmington Metro Transportation Advisory Committee: Commissioner Williams and Chairman Forte (alternate)
Health and Human Services Advisory Board: Vice – Chairman Cooke
Local Emergency Protection Committee: Vice – Chairman Cooke
Lower Cape Fear Water and Sewer Authority: Commissioner Williams
Trillium Regional Board: Vice - Chairman Cooke
Southeastern Economic Development Commission: Commissioner Sykes
MOTSU: Commissioner Sykes and Chairman Forte (alternate).

XIV. CLOSED SESSION

By the amended agenda, the Board entered into Closed Session pursuant to N.C.G.S. 143-318.11(a)(3), to approve Closed Session Minutes of November 18, 2024 and to consult with its attorney in order to preserve attorney/client privilege.

Mr. Batton noted the above statutory requirements.

Commissioner Cooke made the motion to enter the Closed Session at 3:54 p.m. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Williams and passed unanimously (5 to 0).

Chairman Forte called the Regular Session to order at 4:34 p.m.

Mr. Batton advised there was nothing to report following Closed Session.

XV. OTHER BUSINESS/INFORMAL DISCUSSION

No other business brought before the Board.

XVI. ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Thompson moved to adjourn the meeting at 4:34 p.m. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Sykes and passed unanimously (5 to 0).

Mike Forte, Chairman
Brunswick County Board of Commissioners

Attest:

Daralyn Spivey, NCCCC, CMC
Clerk to the Board

BRUNSWICK COUNTY
NORTH CAROLINA