

**COLUMBUS COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

**Monday, October 16, 2023**

**5:30 P.M. – Closed Session**

**6:30 P.M. – Regular Session**

The Honorable Columbus County Commissioners met on the above stated date and time at the Columbus County Commissioners Chamber, 127 West Webster Street, Whiteville, North Carolina 28472, for the purpose of conducting a Regular Session.

**COMMISSIONERS PRESENT:**

Ricky Bullard, **Chairman**  
Lavern Coleman, **Vice Chairman**  
Giles E. Byrd  
Scott Floyd  
Barbara Featherson  
Brent Watts  
Chris Smith

**APPOINTEES PRESENT:**

Eddie Madden, Jr., **County Manager**  
Amanda B. Prince, **Attorney**  
Jana Nealey, **Clerk to the Board**

**COMMISSIONERS ABSENT:**

**Agenda Item #1: MEETING CALLED to ORDER:**

**At 5:15 P.M. Chairman Ricky Bullard called the regular session meeting to order.**

**RECESS REGULAR SESSION and enter into CLOSED SESSION in ACCORDANCE with N.C.G.S. § 143-318.11(A) (3) ATTORNEY-CLIENT PRIVILEGE, N.C.G.S. § 143-318.11(A) (4) ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, and N.C.G.S. § 143-318.11(A) (6) PERSONNEL**

**MOTION:**

Commissioner Byrd made a motion to recess regular session and enter into closed session, seconded by Commissioner Watts. The motion unanimously passed.

**Agenda Item #2: CLOSED SESSION in ACCORDANCE with N.C.G.S. § 143-318.11(A) (3) ATTORNEY-CLIENT PRIVILEGE, N.C.G.S. § 143-318.11(A) (4) ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, and N.C.G.S. § 143-318.11(A) (6) PERSONNEL**

**RECESS CLOSED SESSION and enter into REGULAR SESSION**

**MOTION:**

Commissioner Watts made a motion to recess closed session and enter into regular session, seconded by Vice Chairman Coleman. The motion unanimously passed.

**GENERAL ACCOUNT:**

Attorney Amanda Prince gave the general account as follows:

The board discussed (2) matters of Attorney-Client Privilege, and (1) matter regarding Personnel.

**MOTION:**

Commissioner Byrd made a motion to approve the General Account, seconded by Commissioner Smith. The motion unanimously passed.

**Chairman Bullard recessed regular session until 6:30 P.M.**

**Regular Session resumes at 6:30 P.M.**

**Agenda Items # 3 and #4: INVOCATION and PLEDGE of ALLEGIANCE:**

The invocation was delivered by Commissioner Featherson. Everyone in attendance stood and pledged Allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America which was led by Vice Chairman Coleman.

**PUBLIC HEARINGS:**

At 6:35 P.M., Chairman Bullard opened the floor for the following public hearings:

**6:30 PM or as soon as can be heard – Public Hearing regarding the 2023 CDBG Neighborhood Revitalization Program Grant Application.**

Assistant County Manager Gail Edwards discussed the following in regard to the 2023 CDBG Neighborhood Revitalization Program Grant Application:

**Maximum grant amount of \$950,000**

**Eligible activities:** Housing and Infrastructure related to housing which includes, New utility services, Streets, Flood and Drainage improvements, and Sidewalks/pedestrian ways.

**Public facilities:** Shelters, community center, and/or recreation center which must meet I of 3 national objectives, Benefit LMI persons, Prevent or eliminate slums/blight and/or meet other urgent needs (typically storm/disaster related)

- Homes must be owner occupied LMI, real property (no mobile homes)
- Can include rehabilitation of housing or reconstruction (demo/rebuild)
- List potential candidates from county staff
- 2nd public hearing will be held on November 6<sup>th</sup>, 2023 at 6:30 P.M. or as soon as can be heard.

**MOTION:**

Commissioner Watts made a motion to close the public hearing, seconded by Commissioner Floyd. The motion unanimously passed.

**Agenda Item# 5: APPROVAL OF AGENDA:**

**MOTION:**

Commissioner Byrd made a motion to approve the Agenda, seconded by Commissioner Featherson. The motion unanimously passed.

**Agenda Item #6: PUBLIC INPUT:**

Columbus County Board of Commissioners  
(Public Comments at Public Hearings)

REQUEST #:	TIME REC'D:	P.M.	MEETING DATE:
<small>(Leave this blank, Clerk will fill in)</small>			
NAME: Mike Creen & Kim Sellers			
<small>(First) (Middle) (Last)</small>			
ADDRESS: 527 Edgewood Cr Whitville			
TELEPHONE: 843 214 - 0315			
COMMENTS (if desired): Columbus County Veterans Celebration Parade			
NOTE: Thank you for taking the time to address the Board with your information and concerns. Please give this card to the Clerk no later than thirty (30) minutes after the commencement of the meeting. This will aid in a smooth and harmonious meeting, and, in addition, give more people the opportunity to speak.			

Kim Sellers and Mike Creen c spoke about the Veteran’s Parade on November 11th and encouraged the commissioners and the public to participate. They left information and flyers to promote the parade.

Columbus County Board of Commissioners  
(Public Comments at Public Hearings)

REQUEST #: 2  
(Leave this blank, Clerk will fill in)

TIME REC'D: \_\_\_\_\_ P.M.

MEETING DATE: 10/16/2023

NAME: AJ Worley

ADDRESS: 2106 Old Cribbtown Rd Chadbourn NC

TELEPHONE: (910) 234-1145

COMMENTS (if desired): Skate for Whiteville

NOTE: Thank you for taking the time to address the Board with your information and concerns. Please give his card to the Clerk no later than thirty (30) minutes after the commencement of the meeting. This will aid in smooth and harmonious meeting, and, in addition, give more people the opportunity to speak.

AJ Worley commented about his involvement with the Skate for Whiteville movement and asked for any contributions the county could make to build a skate park in Whiteville.

Agenda Item #7: **APPROVAL of BOARD MINUTES:**  
a. October 2, 2023

**MOTION:**  
Vice Chairman Coleman made a motion to approve seconded by Commissioner Feathersen. The motion unanimously passed

Agenda Item #8: **ADMINISTRATION – EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT:**  
County Manager Eddie Madden recognized Finance Employee, Susanne Wallace.

Agenda Item #9: **ADMINISTRATION – RETIREMENT PLAQUE of APPRECIATION:**  
The Governing Body recognized Jeanette Ward from Emergency Services for over 29 years of service.

Agenda Item #10: **ADMINISTRATION – APPROVAL to SCHEDULE the SECOND PUBLIC HEARING regarding the 2023 CDBG NEIGHBORHOOD REVITALIZATION PROGRAM GRANT APPLICATION:**

Gail Edwards requested to establish the second public hearing on November 6<sup>th</sup>, 2023, at 6:30 P.M., or as soon as can be heard regarding the 2023 CDBG Neighborhood Revitalization Grant Application

**MOTION:**  
Commissioner Byrd made a motion to approve, seconded by Commissioner Smith. The motion unanimously passed.

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING  
COUNTY OF COLUMBUS  
APPLICATION FOR  
2023 COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT FUNDING

Notice is hereby given that the Columbus County Board of Commissioners will hold a public hearing on November 6, 2023, at 6:30 p.m., or as soon as can be heard at the Columbus County Commissioners Chambers within the County Administration Building concerning the intention of Columbus County to apply for funding under the CDBG NR program.

The proposed project will include housing rehabilitation/reconstruction and general administration. CDBG activities are proposed scattered throughout Columbus County. The total estimated CDBG program cost is \$950,000.00 which represents 100% of the total program costs.

Citizens will be given the opportunity to provide oral and written comment on Columbus County's use of CDBG funds. All interested citizens from Columbus County are encouraged to attend. Formal written views and proposals concerning the Community Development Block Grant application process which are submitted to the Clerk to the Board will be responded to within ten (10) calendar days.

Persons with disabilities or who otherwise need assistance should contact Jana Nealey, Clerk to the Board, at 910-640-6640 or TDD# 1-800-735-2962. Accommodations will be made for all who request assistance. Request should be made at least 2 days prior to the public hearing.

This information is available in Spanish or any other language upon request. Please contact Natalie Carroll, at 910-640-6630 or at 127 W Webster St., Whiteville, NC 28472 for accommodations for this request.

Esta información está disponible en español o cualquier otro lenguaje a petición. Póngase en contacto con Natalie Carroll, en 910-640-6630 o en 127 W Webster St, Whiteville, NC 28472 de alojamiento para esta solicitud.

Ricky Bullard  
Chairman  
County of Columbus  
EEO Employer



Agenda Item #11: AIRPORT – APPROVAL of the WATER and SEWER SYSTEM EXTENSIONS for the AIRPORT IMPROVMENTS PROJECT:

Airport Director Phil Edwards is requested approval of the water and sewer extensions for the Airport Improvements Project estimated to cost \$887,905.00 and will come from the SCIF Funds.

MOTION:

Commissioner Smith made a motion to approve, seconded by Commissioner Featherson. The motion unanimously passed.

City of Whiteville - Construction Estimates for Water and Sewer  
System Extensions - Columbus Co. Municipal Airport Improvements Project  
October 4, 2023

Water & Sewer Extensions

Extend 6" Water Main along Airport Road from Prison Camp Road to new Terminal Bldg.				
Item	Quantity	Unit	Unit Price	Totals
1.) 6" C900 PVC Water Main	2,000	LF	\$70.00	\$140,000.00
2.) 6" CL350 DIP Water Main	100	LF	\$90.00	\$9,000.00
3.) Fire Hydrant Assembly	2	EA	\$6,500.00	\$13,000.00
4.) 6" Gate Valve w/Box	2	EA	\$1,500.00	\$3,000.00
5.) 8"x6" Tapping Sleeve and Gate Valve	1	EA	\$5,500.00	\$5,500.00
6.) Meter Assembly and Vault	1	EA	\$20,000.00	\$20,000.00
7.) #57 Stone for Pipe Bedding	150	Tons	\$50.00	\$7,500.00
8.) Asphalt Pavement Replacement	25	SY	\$100.00	\$2,500.00
9.) Sidewalks, driveways, erosion control, etc.	1	LS	10% of Const.	\$20,050.00
10.) Mobilization	1	LS	3% Max.	\$6,617.00
Estimated Subtotal For Construction				\$227,167.00

Duplex Sewer Pump Station at New Terminal Bldg. & Force Main along Airport Rd. to Ex. MH				
Item	Quantity	Unit	Unit Price	Totals
1.) 4" PVC Force Main	1,900	LF	\$60.00	\$114,000.00
2.) 4" DIP Force Main	100	LF	\$80.00	\$8,000.00
3.) Force Main Flushing Port	1	EA	\$5,000.00	\$5,000.00
4.) 4" Valve w/Box	2	EA	\$1,000.00	\$2,000.00
5.) Core & Connect Force Main to Existing Manhole	1	LS	\$3,000.00	\$3,000.00
6.) Asphalt Pavement Replacement	55	SY	\$100.00	\$5,500.00
7.) Duplex Sewer Pump Station Package	1	LS	\$250,000.00	\$250,000.00
8.) Sidewalks, driveways, erosion control, etc.	1	LS	10% of Const.	\$38,750.00
9.) Mobilization	1	LS	3% Max.	\$12,788.00
Estimated Subtotal For Construction				\$439,038.00

Estimated Construction Subtotal	\$666,205.00
Add 10% Construction Contingency	\$66,620.00
Estimated Construction Total	\$732,825.00
Professional Fees for Water Project	
Surveying Fees	\$15,000.00
Bidding Assistance	\$10,000.00
Engineering Design Fees (8.25% of Const.)	\$60,460.00
Construction Observation (5.0% of Construction)	\$36,640.00
Construction Administration Fees (4.5% of Const.)	\$32,980.00
TOTAL PROJECT COST ESTIMATE	\$887,905.00

Agenda Item #12: PLANNING DEPARTMENT – APPROVAL of the RESOLUTION for the DESIGNEES of the 2020 FMA GRANT PROJECT:

Planning Board Director Gary Lanier is requested approval of the resolution authorizing Dr. Gary Lanier as the primary agent and Bridgette Spann as the secondary agent for the 2020 FMA Project

MOTION:

Vice Chairman Coleman made a motion to approve, seconded by Commissioner Floyd. The motion unanimously passed.

RESOLUTION	
DESIGNATION OF APPLICANT'S AGENT	
North Carolina Division of Emergency Management	
Organization Name (hereafter named Organization)	Disaster Number:
COUNTY OF COLUMBUS	EMA-2020-FM-110-0001
Applicant's State Cognizant Agency for Single Audit purposes (If Cognizant Agency is not assigned, please indicate):	
127 West Webster Street Whiteville, North Carolina 28472	
Applicant's Fiscal Year (FY) Start	Month: JULY Day: 1
2023-2024	
Applicant's Federal Employer's Identification Number	
56 - 6000289	
Applicant's Federal Information Processing Standards (FIPS) Number	
047 - 99047 - 00	
PRIMARY AGENT	
Agent's Name	GARY A. LANIER
Organization	COLUMBUS COUNTY PLANNING
Official Position	DIRECTOR
Mailing Address	127 WEST WEBSTER ST. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
City, State, Zip	WHITEVILLE, NC 28472
Daytime Telephone	(910) 640-6608
Facsimile Number	
Pager or Cellular Number	(910) 499-1409
SECONDARY AGENT	
Agent's Name	BRIDGETTE SPANN
Organization	COLUMBUS COUNTY PLANNING
Official Position	SR. ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT
Mailing Address	127 WEST WEBSTER ST. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
City, State, Zip	WHITEVILLE, NC 28472
Daytime Telephone	(910) 640-6608
Facsimile Number	
Pager or Cellular Number	
BE IT RESOLVED BY the governing body of the Organization (a public entity duly organized under the laws of the State of North Carolina) that the above-named Primary and Secondary Agents are hereby authorized to execute and file applications for federal and/or state assistance on behalf of the Organization for the purpose of obtaining certain state and federal financial assistance under the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief & Emergency Assistance Act, (Public Law 93-288 as amended) or as otherwise available. BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the above-named agents are authorized to represent and act for the Organization in all dealings with the State of North Carolina and the Federal Emergency Management Agency for all matters pertaining to such disaster assistance required by the grant agreements and the assurances printed on the reverse side hereof. BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED THAT the above-named agents are authorized to act severally. PASSED AND APPROVED this 10th day of October, 2023.	
GOVERNING BODY	
Name and Title	Ricky Bullard, Chairman of the Board
Name and Title	
Name and Title	10/26/2023
CERTIFYING OFFICIAL	
Name	Jana Nealey
Official Position	Clerk to the Board
Daytime Telephone	(910) 640-6630
CERTIFICATION	
I, Jana Nealey, (Name) duly appointed and Clerk to the Board (Title) of the Governing Body, do hereby certify that the above is a true and correct copy of a resolution passed and approved by the Governing Body of (Organization) on the 10th day of October, 2023.	
Date:	10/26/2023
Signature: _____	

**Agenda Item #13: FACILITY SERVICES – APPROVAL of the LOW BIDS for the ASBESTOS ABATEMENT and DEMOLITION of the FORMER SHERIFF’S OFFICE BUILDING:**

Facility Services Director Stuart Carroll is requested approval of the Asbestos Abatement and demolition of the former Sheriff’s Office building which will come out of the SCIF Funds.

**MOTION:**

Commissioner Floyd made a motion to approve, seconded by Vice Chairman Coleman. The motion unanimously passed.

Sheriff Office Demo Project	
Bid Sheet	
<u>Asbestos Abatement</u>	
Retro Environmental, Ocean Isle Beach	\$16,900
Enviro Assessments East, New Bern	\$18,480
Republic Industries, Wilmington	\$33,000
Cecil Holcomb Renovations, Raleigh	\$69,850
 <u>Demo:</u>	
D.H. Griffin Wrecking, Wilmington	\$64,825
Retro Environmental, Ocean Isle Beach	\$70,900
Terra Nova, High Point	\$73,931
Noble Work, Chadbourn	\$75,500
Cecil Holcomb Renovations, Raleigh	\$132,000

**Agenda Item #14: SOIL and WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT – APPROVAL of the COLUMBUS COUNTY BEAVER BOUNTY PROGRAM BY-LAWS:**

Columbus Soil and Water Conservation District Director Morgan Hayes presented the second reading for approval of the revisions to the Columbus County Beaver Bounty Program By-Laws.

**MOTION:**

Commissioner Smith made a motion to approve, seconded by Commissioner Watts. The motion unanimously passed.

- COLUMBUS COUNTY BEAVER BOUNTY PROGRAM  
BY-LAWS/ STEP BY STEP PROCESS
- The Columbus County Beaver Bounty Program is for beaver management purposes only.
  - The Columbus County Board of Commissioners shall establish a Beaver Management Committee to implement the provisions to these By-Laws. The Beaver Management Committee shall consist of no less than seven (7) members. Each Beaver Management Committee member will be selected by the Columbus County Commissioners. The selection of areas will cover all unincorporated land within Columbus County. All appointees to the Beaver Bounty Committee shall be appointed for a period of three years, with reappointment permitted. Any member of the Beaver Bounty Committee may be removed by the Columbus County Board of Commissioners.
  - The Beaver Bounty Management Committee will meet with the Columbus SWCD Staff once a month during the trapping season. This meeting will allow the District Staff to give the Committee an update on the Beaver Bounty Program. Any business decisions related to the Beaver Bounty Program must be brought up and discussed at these meetings. For any business decisions to be voted on at the monthly meetings, there must be a quorum present (4 members).
  - The District Staff and the Beaver Bounty Management Committee is responsible for delegating a part of the beaver that will be used as confirmation of number of beavers trapped. The part that is chosen will be the only part of the beaver that the trapper will turn into the District Office for payment.
  - Landowner(s) can call or visit the Columbus Soil and Water Conservation District office to participate in the Columbus County Beaver Bounty Program. An application will have to be signed by the landowner(s) and access granted to the site for the Columbus SWCD staff and trappers.
  - Absentee landowner(s) can contact the Columbus SWCD office to request a form to participate in the Beaver Bounty Program.
  - A landowner can designate someone (trapper) to receive payment for trapping by designating them on the Program Application form.
  - If a trapper is not the landowner, the trapper must obtain written permission with landowner’s signature on it and carry this with them when checking traps. (Written permission to trap on someone else’s property is required by state law whether the trapper participates in the bounty program or not. Please see the pocket size permission card. This card is small enough that it can be laminated and carried in the trapper’s wallet.)
  - Where adjacent landowners are involved, the landowner(s) making the request for beaver service must obtain adjacent landowner written permission for participation in the program.
  - A maximum of 10 beavers will be allowed per site. A new evaluation will be necessary before additional beaver are received from this site unless otherwise pre-approved by District staff or a member of the Beaver Management Committee.
  - Payment will be made in accordance with the guidelines of the Columbus County Finance Department to the landowner(s) or their designee according to the number of beavers collected as stated on the “Beaver Certification Form” of the Columbus County Beaver Bounty Program.
  - The “Beaver Certification Form” must accompany the parts to be collected when they are brought to the District office for bounty.
  - Parts to be collected must be brought to the District office during regular business hours on the first Wednesday of each month by appointment only. When extenuating circumstances arise, a trapper may request a different appointment day/time to turn in parts collected for the month. No beaver parts will be collected without an appointment.
  - When a trapper collects 20 or more beaver for bounty, the trapper must make an appointment to turn in their collection more often than the time stated above.
  - One zip-type bag will be used for the parts to be collected from each beaver. Each bag must be labeled with the landowner’s name and the site identified. All parts collected shall be frozen when brought to the District office.
  - After verification that the beavers were properly collected, a pay request is completed and forwarded to the County Finance office for processing payment.

- If the payee is not a vendor with the county, the completion of a W-9 form is required before payments are processed. (This is a one-time document unless client's information changes.)
- If the bounty exceeds \$200, the District office is required to submit a Purchase Order with the Columbus County Finance Department. This could delay payment, therefore; please allow up to 6 weeks for payment.
- The County Finance office will mail the check directly to the landowner or designee unless otherwise requested.
- By signing below, I agree that I have read understand these guidelines for the Columbus County Beaver Bounty Program.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

**Agenda Item #15: SHERIFF’S OFFICE – APPROVAL of the MOA with the ROBESON COUNTY SHERIFF’S OFFICE:**

Attorney Amanda Prince requested approval of the Memorandum of Understanding (MOA) that will transfer the ownership of the fuel truck to Robeson County Sheriff’s Office with the understanding that they will provide law enforcement with helicopter assistance upon request.

**MOTION:**

Commissioner Byrd made a motion to approve, seconded by Commissioner Floyd. The motion unanimously passed.



To: Sheriff Bill Rogers  
From Sheriff Burnis L. Wilkins  
Date: Tuesday, September 12, 2023  
Re: Helicopter and Fuel Truck

Robeson County Sheriff's Office understands that the use of a helicopter and fuel truck can be invaluable during certain situations. Robeson County Sheriff's Office Aviation Division will be willing to assist the Columbus County Sheriff's Office upon request for the helicopter and fuel truck for law enforcement purposes. The use of the helicopter and fuel truck will be without cost to your agency.

*agreed!*  
*RB.*  
*W. A. Rogers*  
SHERIFF  
*Glenn Moulton*

*[Signature]*  
Sheriff Burnis L. Wilkins

**Agenda Item #16: DSS – MONTHLY UPDATE for SEPTEMBER 2023:**

Social Services Director Algernon McKenzie presented the monthly Social Services update for September 2023.

**MOTION:**

Commissioner Byrd made a motion to approve, seconded by Commissioner Feathersen. The motion unanimously passed.

**Monthly Administrative Update  
For September 2023  
October 16, 2023 Meeting**

On September 14, 2023, I attended the Directors Executive Board Meeting in Raleigh, NC. During the meeting we received an update from Melanie Bush from DHHS on Medicaid Expansion. There is still no state budget which continues to delay the states plans to move forward with an implementation date. However, they are continuing to work on the Straight Through Processing of applications to help counties with the increased amount of applications at the federal level. She informed us that the funding to assist counties with the Continuous

Coverage Unwinding and Medicaid Expansion is still available and she encouraged us to hire additional staff to help with and prepare for Medicaid Expansion as soon as possible. She stated that a letter was sent to county commissioners and county manager in June concerning funding.

During our session, the Directors Association Membership asked for more assistance from the state Operational Support Team (OST) coming to the local DSS agency to assist with training on the many Medicaid changes that have occurred and are occurring. Mrs. Bush stated that there are only eight OST staff to serve all 100 counties at this time. They will be trying to pull some Medicaid cases to review in preparation for the Federal Reda Audit to help identify areas of weakness.

We were also informed about a centralized bed registry that has been developed to help providers locate and refer individuals to the appropriate level of care. It is called Behavioral Health Statewide Central Access Network (BHSAN). At this time there are seventy-four facilities within this system. We are hopeful that this will be helpful to DSS agencies as we continue to have difficulty finding placements for many of the children and adults in custody.

On September 19, 2023, we held our Community Child Protection Team Meeting at DSS. We met with the school social workers and counselors from the city and county school systems. During this meeting updates are given on current or new cases involving children attending the various schools.

On September 20, 2023, we received notice that DHHS has identified some unspent Federal SNAP (ARPA) Funds in the amount of \$3,604,084.00. these funds will be distributed to all 100 counties through 100% reimbursement for its Food & Nutrition Share, instead of the normal 50% reimbursement. This additional funds are to be used to enhance access to SNAP benefits. The 100% reimbursement will be for the service month of August 2023 claimed in September 2023. It appears that Columbus County DSS will receive around \$15,000.00 to reinvest. Counties also received some additional funding in 2002

On September 25, 2023, after the passing of the state budget by the General Assembly, the Governor, and Secretary Kinsley announced the Medicaid Expansion would go live on December 1, 2023.

On September 28, 2023, an alarm key pad was installed on the west end of our building to allow for convenience and safety when child welfare after hours staff need to access the building.

During the month of September, I attended eight in person and virtual meeting.

***HUMAN SERVICES BOARD REPORT***  
**Dwella M. Hall, Program Manager**  
**Vacancies/Updates/News for September, 2023**

**Intake/Investigation/Assessment:**

The Intake/Investigation/Assessment Unit continues to be fully staffed. This Unit continues to receive referrals involving substance abuse, domestic violence, and mental health issues, among other things. The after-hours positons continue to be fully staffed as well. They are also continuing to assist the FC unit with incoming cases due to staff shortage. Our Regional Child Welfare Consultant (RCWC) conducted a virtual consultation to review agency data, policy updates, and casework.

**In-Home Services:**

The In-Home Services Unit continues to be fully staffed. This unit have seen some decrease in their caseload size indicating more successful outcomes and families can remain together in the home. They are also continuing to assist the FC unit until they are fully staffed. Our Regional Child Welfare Consultant (RCWC) conducted a virtual consultation to review agency data, policy updates, and casework.

**Foster Care/Permanency Planning:**



The Foster Care Unit have 2-vacancy. 2 applicants applied; however, 1 recently declined the interview. There are currently 105 children in care. The CPS and In-home Services unit continue to assist Foster Care with case management duties, until staff can be hired and properly trained. Our Regional Child Welfare Consultant (RCWC) conducted a virtual consultation to review agency data, policy updates, and casework.

#### **Transitional Unit:**

The Transitional unit is fully staff. This unit continues to work caseloads while assisting the other Child Welfare Units as needed, particularly in the areas of courtesy requests from other counties, assisting with supervising visits and transporting children in custody. This Unit continues to assist particularly in the area of making monthly contacts with the children in foster care. Foster Home Licensing continues to work on completing more licensures to help increase the number of foster home in the county. A new MAPP training course has begun. We currently have 3 families participating in the training. Our Regional Child Welfare Consultant (RCWC) conducted a virtual consultation to review agency data, policy updates, and casework.

#### **Adult Services:**

The Adult Services Unit has 1 vacancy. The position has been reposted. The supervisor continues to be out on medical leave. This unit continues to serve ages 18 and above, with protective services, persons under guardianship, and special assistance in-home case management. The guardianship cases continue to demand extensive time due to severe and persistent mental illness and the lack of resources for this population.

#### **Work First Employment:**

This Unit continues to be fully staffed. The unit is open for in-person applications, telephone interviews continue for Work First applications, recertification's, short-term services and benefits. Certain necessary application documentation can be mailed to individuals that wish to apply and when received back the worker can conduct telephone interviews to complete that application. Some application information is also being provided for pick-up in the foyer area of the agency. Workers are encouraged to make telephone contacts with clients at least every two weeks to offer support and resources to clients and to encourage program participation. The agency continues to have monthly meetings with the state reps by conference calls. The Regional Economic Consultant conducted a telephone consultation this month.

#### **Child Day Care:**

The Child Day Care Unit continues to be fully staffed. The Supervisor and staff continue to work the over and under payment report to ensure proper payment is being made to county daycare providers. Day Care services are continuing to be provided and the state is working with county agencies and day cares to help them stay open as much as possible while providing a safe environment for children. Day Care slots within local Day Cares are limited at this time and many Day Cares are now on a waiting list. DSS staff continue to work with families to ensure their services stay in place while limiting contact to the telephone as much as possible. The agency has eliminated the waiting list and able to serve the public. Supervisor continue to ensure case transfers are received properly and sent in a timely manner.

#### **Program Integrity:**

Program Integrity office visits are limited and telephone contact is encouraged, but office visits are possible. Repayment agreements are no longer relaxed, and recoupments are being received. Staff are working to clean up a backlog, establishing cases and repayment agreements, all while assisting with the Energy Programs.

#### **Energy Assistance**

CIP continues with the cooling season which means helping with electricity needs. Applications continue to be available on EPASS where applicants can complete and submit applications on-line, but continue to be available in our lobby for pick up and completion. One in-house staff person is currently processing applications and Program Integrity staff are assisting as needed.

*Economic Services Narrative  
Darlene Jenkins-Parks, Income Maintenance Administrator  
Vacancies/Updates/News for September 2023*

**Medicaid Expansion Update:** On September 25<sup>th</sup>, Governor Roy Cooper & The NC Department of Health & Human Services Secretary Kody H. Kinsley announced NCDHHS will launch Medicaid Expansion on December 1, 2023, giving more than 600,000 North Carolinians access to health care. NCDHHS anticipates approximately 300,000 eligible people currently receiving Medicaid Family Planning benefits will automatically be enrolled in full health care coverage on day one. Most people may get full health care coverage through Medicaid Expansion if they meet the eligibility criteria. Eligibility criteria includes: Live in North Carolina, Age 19-64, Not be eligible for Medicare or any other full Medicaid



benefit, US Citizenship or meet the non-US Citizen requirements, and household income within guidelines. Individuals can apply online through E-pass - a secure, self-service website at [epass.nc.gov](http://epass.nc.gov)., they can apply at their local DSS office, by calling or by mailing in application that is available at [ncgov.servicenow.com](http://ncgov.servicenow.com) or the agency lobby. It may take up to 45 days after you apply to find out if you are eligible. There will not be any premiums, the highest co-pay is \$4.00 and that is only required for some services.

**F&C Medicaid Intake/Processing Unit:**

The Family and Children's Medicaid Unit is currently fully staffed with no vacancies, operating with (5) five fully trained caseworkers who intake & process their own e-pass, FFM, and mail- in applications in a timely manner. They are currently in the unwinding process from the PHE. This unit has been discussing the new Medicaid expansion. There has been a significant increase in applications from Recertification, FFP's and terminated F&C applications.

**F&C Medicaid Review Unit:**

The F&C Medicaid unit has (2) two vacancies as of 9/21. They had (1) one caseworker transfer to the Adult Medicaid review unit and the other position was the retirement of Teresa Faircloth. These 2 vacancies have been posted and close on 10/9. This program had several policy changes and updates: DHB Adm. Letter 14-23 (Breast and Cervical Cancer) DHB Adm. Letter 13-23 (Child Support and other Post Eligibility Benefits) DHB Adm. Letter 06-23 Amended (CCU Period)

**Adult Medicaid Intake/Processing Unit:**

The Adult Medicaid Intake and Processing Unit currently have (1) one vacant Intake and Processing position as of September 11th. The position was advertised in house that closed on 9/29 with no applicants, currently pending posting outside of agency. They currently have (2) two employees that are in the middle of their training. The Supervisor along with the Lead worker is continuing to train the new staff and on a weekly basis they do second party reviews for all of the veteran staff members.

**Adult Medicaid Review Unit:**

The Adult Medicaid Review Unit is currently fully staffed, with (1) one in house transfer employee in the middle stages of her program training. She has proved in her training so far she will be a great asset to the unit. All workers in this unit were able to complete the Authorized Rep. & Important NCFAS-20020 training course on September, 26<sup>th</sup> and Mastering Medicaid Policy: Authorized Representatives & Important NCFAS-20020 Reminder training on Sept, 26<sup>th</sup>, 27<sup>th</sup>, 28<sup>th</sup>.

**Long Term Care/Community Alternative Program/Special Assistance Unit: (LTC/CAP/SA)**

The LTC/ CAP/SA unit has no vacancies. This unit consist of (4) four caseworkers with (1) one of these caseworkers in training for the LTC/CAP programs, she is expected to begin SA training the first of the year. This unit has been very busy with applications and processing. Training complete this month include: 9/13/2023 – Medicaid Expansion Webinar, 9/26/2023 – OST Training, 9/28/2023 – Special Assistance Breakout Call

**Non-Emergency Medicaid Transportation (NEMT) Unit:**

The NEMT unit currently has no vacancies, the unit continues with daily calls, new and updated assessments, scheduling for pickups from vendors, as well as billing for van and mileage.

**Housekeeping:**

The Housekeeping unit currently has no vacancies. The housekeepers keep up with daily schedules and routines throughout their day with sanitizing and keeping the agency clean.

**Food & Nutrition Services Intake/Processing: (FNS)**

The FNS intake/processing unit currently has (3) three vacancies. On 9/21 they filled (1) one vacancy, but lost a veteran caseworker to the Child Support unit, and then on 9/25/2023 had (1) one trainee quit with no notice. This unit struggles with only (1) one veteran caseworker to meet timeliness guidelines. This unit has (8) eight caseworkers when fully staffed. Interviews are scheduled for 10/12. The FNS program currently still has a few wavier in place for Tel Signature, Wavier Telephone interviews. Applications continue to come in rapidly from all sources in agency face to face, mail-ins, drop offs and E-pass. This unit, the lead worker and supervisor are working hard to stay afloat.

**Food Nutrition Services Review: (FNS)**

The FNS Review unit is fully staffed. There has been (6) six reports of EBT card skimming thus far in Columbus County. They were able to replace benefits for (5) five of the (6) six according to policy so far totaling \$963. The (1) one remaining was denied due to failure to provide affidavit by 9/23. FNS household units can receive a maximum of (2) two replacements per FFY (October – September.) FNS program has had a lot of changes since July 2023 when the end of the PHE. Able bodied adults without dependents age limits changing, EBT card skimming/cloning, QSAP drug felons and e-pass re-certifications have impacted our team in addition to unwinding.

**Child Support**

We are proud to announce, Kelly Batten as the Child Support Enforcement Supervisor effective September 21, 2023. Kelly began her career with Columbus County DSS in 2/2009 in the Adult Medicaid department until 9/2011 she accepted position as a Child Support Agent until 12/2014 as she accepted the Child Support Enforcement Lead Agent. As a result of her promotion it created a vacancy for the Enforcement Lead Agent, it was advertised in house with response of one applicant. We are scheduled to interview this week for this position. The department has (5) five new trainees at different levels of training with the last (2) two starting 9/21. The department has prepared 203 cases for court action in the month of

September for Establishment and Enforcement Units. The Child Support unit can now access the WIFI, which is very helpful during court proceedings to assure we provide the most current information and payments on the case.

**September 2023**

**Human Services**

**Adult Services (APS)**

APS Reports Accepted: 5  
County Wards: 27  
Number of Payee Cases: 4  
Adults Served APS: 0  
Number of Medicaid Transportation Trips: 1,284  
Amount Requested for Reimbursement: \$42,568.19

**Children’s Protective Services (CPS)**

Reports Accepted: 20  
Reports Screened out: 13  
Families Receiving In-Home Services: 28  
Children Served: 52  
Contacts with Families Monthly: 368  
Assessments: 11

**Foster Care**

Foster Children in Foster Homes: 96  
Children Placed Outside County: 41  
Agency Adoptions: 0  
Pending Adoptions: 11  
Total Foster Homes Licensed: 8  
Total Children in Foster Care: 105

**Work First Employment (TANF)**

Applications Taken: 28  
Applications Approved: 6  
Individuals Receiving Benefits: 142  
Entered Employment: 2  
Number in Non-Paid Work Experience: 0

**September 2023**

**Human Services (continued)**

**Program Integrity**

Collections for Fraud: \$3,560.12  
New Referrals: 4  
Cases Established: 0

**Day Care**

Children Receiving Day Care Assistance: 476  
Children on the Waiting List: 0  
Amount Spent on Day Care Services: \$268,003.00

September 2023  
Economic Services

Food & Nutrition

Applications Taken: 115  
Applications Approved: 145  
Active Cases: 6,317  
Benefits Issued: \$1,951,798.00  
Participants Served: 12,328

Adult Medicaid

Applications Taken: 95  
Cases Terminated: 63  
Redeterminations: 196  
Applications Processed: 88

Family & Children’s Medicaid

Applications Taken: 134  
Applications Processed: 151  
Redeterminations: 1,277  
Total Medicaid Cases: 14,936  
Total Individuals Receiving: 22,636

Child Support

Absent Parents Located: 47  
Orders Enforced: 767  
Active Cases: 3,805  
Collections: \$373,240.00

Respectfully submitted,  
Algernon McKenzie

Agenda Item #17: DSS – APPROVAL of 4 NEW POSITIONS and the BUDGET AMENDMENT DUE to MEDICAID EXPANSION:

Social Services Director Algernon McKenzie requested approval of 4 new positions and the budget amendment associated due to Medicaid Expansion.

**MOTION:**

Commissioner Byrd made a motion to approve, seconded by Commissioner Feathersen. The motion unanimously passed.

Request & Justification for Additional Medicaid  
Income Maintenance Caseworker II Positions  
Upcoming Medicaid Expansion Program  
October 10, 2023

On September 25<sup>th</sup>, Governor Roy Cooper & the NC Department of Health & Human Services Secretary Kody H. Kinsley announced NCDHHS will launch Medicaid Expansion on December 1, 2023. This means many North Carolinians who did not qualify for health care coverage through NC Medicaid before, may soon qualify. They have projected that the implementation of Medicaid Expansion will allow over 600,000 more North Carolinians to get health care coverage through Medicaid. This program will increase the availability of health care coverage for people aged 19 to 64 with higher income than other full Medicaid programs. We are told to expect a higher increase in telephone calls for inquiries, more foot traffic within the agency, an increased reflux of applications coming via online through ePass – a secure, self-service website, in person or calling the local agency, mail-in and/or paper applications. In preparation, to determine the amount of potential applicants and workloads, we have reviewed the latest US Census Bureau information for Columbus County, 49,885 population estimates, July 1, 2022, then Persons without health insurance, under age 65 years, percentage 14.90%  
Ref:census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/columbuscountynorthcarolina

Formula Used:

49,885 (population) x 14.90 (Persons w/o health insurance) = 7432.86

Estimated 7300 (Columbus County individuals potentially eligible for Medicaid)

Less 3146 (Active Family Planning individuals)

Equals 4154 (Potential Individuals applying)

These numbers maybe to low using the US Census totals, since discovery of our County GIS has an appeal pending in reference to the population total being closer to 65,000. That would be about 9685 potentially eligible less 3146 active Family Planning = 6539. If these figures are more accurate, we may have to come back to request 3 additional IMC II's and a supervisor to handle the ongoing recertifications.

We are expecting the F&C Medicaid Intake/Processing unit to have the first impact with the increased applicants. This unit is currently fully staffed with 5 IMC II's (Income Maintenance Caseworkers), 1 IMC III Lead, and the unit supervisor. They are currently able to handle the applications and meet their deadlines. However, with the estimated 7400 more potential applicants. We feel it necessary to request 2 additional IMC II's to handle the volume of the Medicaid Expansion applicants and the additional Federal Market Place (FFM) open enrollment period each year of November 1<sup>st</sup> to January 15<sup>th</sup>.

Our plans are to train the Adult Medicaid Intake/Processors how to complete these applications so if they are needed or have a client in their office and discover they may need to apply for this program they can handle it.

The Family & Children Review unit is currently struggling with the massive additional CCU (Continued Coverage Unwinding) reviews that is expected to be over in April 2024 and 2 vacancies. This unit currently has 7 IMC II's, 2 vacancies, 1 lead, and supervisor. The unit's current active caseload is 9100 (Ref: DHHS SFY County Enrollment report attached) divide that by 9 once fully staffed leaves average caseload of 1011. In addition, the review unit is responsible for completing eligibility recertification every 6 month or annually on all active cases to evaluate for continued eligibility. They handle all changes reported for all individuals in their caseload. This could include individuals moving in or out of household, address updates, household members and working a multitude of reports daily and/or monthly. All individuals approved for Medicaid Expansion will increase these caseloads. We recommend 2 additional IMC II positions for the recertification unit to be able to keep up with the additional review and changes.

Please consider our request for approval of the 4 additional IMC's (Income Maintenance Caseworker) for the implementation and ongoing Medicaid Expansion. The in-house training process normally takes 6 to 9 months. Upon, your approval, we will be required to send the request to the State for new job position numbers prior to advertisement. If possible, we would like to begin this process as soon as possible with the implementation of Medicaid Expansion effective December 1, 2023.

BUDGET AMENDMENT Columbus County, NC				
Name of Department:		Social Services		
Name of Capital Project (if applicable):				
Agency Head Signature:		Al McKenzie		
Date Prepared:		October 11, 2023	Date Received in Admin	
EXPENDITURE				
Budget Code	Fund	Dept	Object	Classification Line Item
	10	5301	512100	Salaries and Wages
				128,000
	10	5301	518100	FICA
				9,300
	10	5301	518200	Retirement Contribution
				16,000
	10	5301	518300	Insurance - Contribution
				30,000
	10	5301	518910	Christmas Bonus
				240
Total Net Expenditures				183,540
REVENUE				
Budget Code	Fund	Dept	Object	Classification Line Item
	10	3991	499101	Fund Balance Appropriated
				45,885
	10	3530	430075	Medicaid Administration
				137,655
Total Net Revenue				183,540
This budget revision has been approved by the Board of Columbus County Commissioners on:				
Signature		Date		
Explanation of Increase or Decrease:				
DSS is requesting 4 additional funding for Income Maintenance positions needed due to the expansion of Medicaid.				





Agenda Item #21: **WATER and SEWER DISTRICT IV – APPROVAL of CHANGE ORDER NO. 2 from BILL’S WELL DRILLING for a TEST WELL:**

Public Utilities Director Harold Nobles requested approval of Change Order No. 2 from Bill’s Well Drilling for a test well in the amount of \$40,000.

MOTION:

Vice Chairman Coleman made a motion to approve, seconded by Commissioner Watts. The motion unanimously passed.

Form RD 1924-7  
(Rev. 2-97)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE  
RURAL DEVELOPMENT AND  
FARM SERVICE AGENCY  
CONTRACT CHANGE ORDER

CONTRACT FOR *Water Supply Test Wells Water District IV*

OWNER *Columbus County*

TO *Bill's Well Drilling Company*  
(Contractor)

You are hereby requested to comply with the following changes from the contract plans and specifications:

Description of Changes (Supplemental Plans and Specifications Attached)	DECREASE in Contract Price	INCREASE in Contract Price
<i>1. Additional Drilling at Old Lake Road Site</i>		<i>40,000.00</i>
TOTALS \$	\$	\$
NET CHANGE IN CONTRACT PRICE \$	<i>0.00</i>	<i>40,000.00</i>

JUSTIFICATION:  
*See attached breakdown dated October 3, 2023*

The amount of the Contract will be (Decreased)(Increased) By The Sum Of: *Forty Thousand*

*and 00/100* \*\*\*\*\* Dollars (\$ *40,000.00* ) .

The Contract Total Including this and previous Change Orders Will Be: *One Hundred Twenty-Four Thousand,*

*Two Hundred Fifty and 00/100* \*\*\*\*\* Dollars (\$ *124,250.00* ) .

The Contract Period Provided for Completion Will Be (Increased)(Unchanged) : *0* Days.

This document will become a supplement to the contract and all provisions will apply hereto.

Requested *Columbus County* (Signature of Owner) \_\_\_\_\_ (Date) \_\_\_\_\_

Recommended *Green Engineering, PLLC* (Signature of Owner's Architect/Engineer) \_\_\_\_\_ (Date) *October 4, 2023*

Accepted *Bill's Well Drilling Company* (Signature of Contractor) \_\_\_\_\_ (Date) *10-5-23*

Approved by Agency \_\_\_\_\_ (Name and Title) \_\_\_\_\_ (Date) \_\_\_\_\_

Certification \_\_\_\_\_ (Signature of Owner's Finance Officer) \_\_\_\_\_ (Date) \_\_\_\_\_

*This change order has been pre-audited in accordance with the Local Government Budget and Fiscal Control Act.*

Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 15 minutes per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing this burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden, to U.S. Department of Agriculture, Executive Office, WPCP 7002, 1400 Independence Avenue, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20250-7602. Please DO NOT RETURN this form to this address. Forward to the local USDA office only. You are not required to respond to this collection of information unless it displays a currently valid OMB control number.

CONTRACT CHANGE ORDER FORM: 1 OF 1

POSITION 6

Form RD 1924-7 (Rev. 2-97)

W:\COLUMBUS\19230016\Bill's Well Drilling Change Order #2 10-4-2023

**BILL’S WELL DRILLING CO.**  
800 McArthur Road, Fayetteville, North Carolina 28311  
Office (910) 488-3740    [office@billswelldrilling.com](mailto:office@billswelldrilling.com)

October 3, 2023

Columbus County Water District

RE: Water Supply Test Wells – Change Order Request For additional drilling at Old Lake Rd !

To whom it may concern,

Clean and dispose of all trees and vegetation (offsite) from the access road and test well location to provide for orderly ingress, egress and drilling.	\$500.00
Consult with Engineer and onsite Hydrologist prior to commencing test well construction.	\$500.00
Install a 20-inch diameter bore hole to a depth of 40 feet and set 40 feet of 14-inch sch 40 outer casing	\$6000.00
Collect geophysical logs including Gamma, Potential and Resistivity	\$1000.00
Drill 13-inch diameter hole to a depth of 300 feet and install 6-inch diameter line pipe and a total of 90 feet of appropriately placed 6-inch 30 slot screen	\$21,000.00
Install test pump for a minimum of 6-hour capacity testing	\$5000.00
Collect water samples and deliver to certified lab for complete "New well test"	\$4000.00
Make recommendations for permanent well to Engineer	\$500.00
Site Clean-up and demobilization	\$1500.00

Total Change Order \$40,000.00

Respectfully submitted,

Jonathan Kamionka  
President

ADJOURN COMBINATION MEETING of COLUMBUS COUNTY WATER and SEWER DISTRICTS I, II, III, IV AND V BOARD MEETING.

MOTION:

Commissioner Floyd made a motion to approve, seconded by Commissioner Featherson. The motion unanimously passed.

Agenda Item #22: **COMMENTS:**



## A. Board of Commissioners

### Commissioner Floyd commented:

Thank the Fair Board for an outstanding job with the fair.

### Commissioner Smith commented:

I also would like to thank the fair board for the outstanding job, I understand there were 7,700 – 8,000 people in attendance one of the nights.

### Vice Chairman Coleman commented:

Thanks for the turn out to the fair. There will be a Boston Butt Sale for the Veterans in the middle of November and encourage you all to participate. Thanks to all the county staff.

### Commissioner Byrd commented:

I am just going to agree with what the others have said tonight.

### Commissioner Watts commented:

I'd like to thank all those who turned out to the fair and also all of the volunteers and county staff who jumped in to help. There were no issues this year which was also a blessing. The Yam Festival is October 28<sup>th</sup> and I encourage you all to go.

### Chairman Bullard commented:

I am also thankful for all of the things everyone has mentioned tonight. Also, I am excited that we came together with the City of Whiteville to get a building to add jobs within the county.

*\*Commissioner Smith also added, at this time, condolences to County Manager Eddie Madden for the passing of his mother.*

## B. County Manager

### County Manager Eddie Madden commented:

A couple things, thank you everyone on the fair board and the volunteers from the county, you help serve and I miss Christie Massey, Mr. Nealey Strickland, the others who pitched in to help.

Commissioner Watts represented the fair board and they provide a great service to the fair each year and I'm glad it went off very, very well.

Just a couple of reminders:

- the Waccamaw Siouan PowWow is this weekend and I knew what number of you will plan to participate in that.
- The Taste of Tabor, we always attend, that is on the 26th at 6 o'clock
- The Yam Festival is on the 28th.
- North Carolina pecan festival on November 4
- Shuck and Shag coming up on November 9. If you want a ticket for that please let me know.
- The Veterans Parade in downtown Whiteville on the 11th
- The Inter-governmental meeting November 27 and we are hosting the dinner on the fourth floor of this building so we're looking forward to that.
- The employee appreciation luncheon December 7 from 11 to 2
- The Ribbon-Cutting that was originally scheduled for the day we moved to tomorrow I do to a conflict with Representative Jones, is tomorrow, here on this property, at 4 please plan to attend it's open to the public. We will have some refreshments afterwards, followed by open house of the other buildings.
- Algernon McKenzie will be retiring later this year, his retirement date initially was October 20 which is just a few days away from you, but we quickly twisted his arm. He decided to stay with us a little bit longer through the end of December. The staff is still planning to have a reception for him this Friday from 230 to 4 and I know they would appreciate if you all would come by and express your appreciation to Mr. McKenzie.

**Agenda Item #29:    ADJOURNMENT:**

**MOTION:**

At 7:39 P.M., Commissioner Watts made a motion to adjourn; seconded by Commissioner Featherson  
The motion unanimously passed.

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JANA NEALEY, Clerk to the Board

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RICKY BULLAR

*Intentionally*

*Left*

*Blank*

D, Chairman