



THE RANDOLPH RECAP

JUNE 2023

COMMISSIONER MEETING AGENDA SUMMARY

AGENDA ITEMS:

June 5

- Special Recognition
- Public Comment
- Sandhills Center Update
- Mediko Contract Update
- Waiver of Healthcare Debt Service
- Human Services Building Update
- Wellness Clinic Update
- Public Hearing to Assist with Pump Station for Proposed Truck Stop
- Seagrove-Ulah Metropolitan Water District
- NC Railroad Grant for Ace Avant

June 8- Department Head Budget Presentations

June 19- Budget Adoption



Critical issues facing our community and county government have never been greater as we progress in the 3rd decade of the 21st Century. The Randolph County Board of Commissioners holds regular public meetings on the first Monday of each month, beginning at 6:00 pm, in the 2nd Floor Meeting Room at the Historic Courthouse, 145 Worth Street, Asheboro, N.C. At each meeting, issues impacting our county and citizens are presented and evaluated by the County Commissioners.

Randolph County government is committed to providing citizens with the opportunity to access information and obtain the latest news and public updates regarding the county and its government. The Randolph Recap is a new addition to the Randolph County web page. It will provide monthly highlights and summaries from County Commissioner meetings. It will also highlight information on current issues facing the County Commissioners and the Departments and agencies of Randolph County government. The Randolph-Recap will serve as one of the various communication outlets, including Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and print media, that will update and communicate with our Randolph County citizens.

We hope the Randolph Recap is helpful to you and would appreciate your input and comments as we move forward.



Hal Johnson
Randolph County Manager



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Governor's Service Awards

The following individuals were recognized with Governor's Service Awards:

- Dawn Morton; Asheboro/Randolph Chamber
- Larry Reid; Randolph Senior Adults Association
- Julianna Soto; The Dream Center
- Roy Barr; Habitat for Humanity
- Tom Holtham; Communities in Schools of Randolph.

Public Comment

- Carl Hicks, Randolph County citizen, shared with Commissioners that he believed a harm reduction program could benefit the Randolph County community. **"As a faith community, I would like to see us volunteering in programs like this so that we can spread the gospel along with this program."**
- Nancy Hoskins, Randolph County citizen, shared with Commissioners a resolution from St. Luke United Methodist Church in Asheboro recommending the removal of the Confederate statue from the courthouse lawn. **"Whereas we desire pathways to peace, represent love of community, and love of one another working together to promote positive changes for all citizens of Randolph County."**
- Dwain Roberts, Commander, Son of Confederate Veterans, shared with Commissioners a verse from Proverbs 23:28, **"It says remove not the ancient landmark which thy fathers have set. Based on this, and your vote 5-0 to leave the statue where it is, this should be the end of the discussion."**
- Judy Saunders, Randolph County citizen, believes the Confederate monument should be relocated. **"When it comes to the confederate monument, it does not deserve to be where it is. There is no honor there. There is no respect there. It would be a nice thing to move it."**
- Joe Millikan, Randolph County Citizen, thanked County staff and commissioners for their hard work in updating the County's growth plan. **"I hope the County will take all considerations with the new plans. I am hoping that the people of Randleman will be considered. This could help people have a home."**
- Clyde Foust, NAACP President, thanked Commissioners for allowing the NAACP to hold its upcoming Juneteenth memorial event at the historic courthouse. **"We'd like to take this time to thank you and invite you to this event. I want to publicly say this is something we could not do without the Commissioners, and we thank you."**
- Todd Nance, Randolph County Citizen, pastor of Crossroads Baptist Church, talked about the Faith in Harm Reduction Meeting held by the Opioid Collaborative. **"We pastors are taking this very seriously. I am not convinced that harm reduction is the best solution."**



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Sandhills Center Update

Victoria Whitt, CEO, Sandhills Center, reported that based on a review of the current financial situation that impacts North Carolina and its counties, Sandhills Center will request no increase in funding from Randolph County. The total general funding request of Randolph County from Sandhills Center is \$844k. All County funding received will support local county behavioral health urgent care centers and other county-designated programs.

“You all have always been very open and accessible to anything we’ve had going on here in the County. We appreciate that and how well thought of you are across the state in the realm of behavioral and mental health. We appreciate all the time that you have spent trying to figure out the best thing for Randolph County,” said Vice-Chairman Allen.

Mediko Contract Update

Major Phillip Cheek, Randolph County Sheriff’s Office, updated Commissioners regarding the recently approved Mediko contract. In May, Commissioners approved the contract amendment 4-1 for the 2023-24 budget year. During that discussion, questions arose regarding the average daily population (ADP) cap stated in the contract.

The original Mediko contract had an ADP cap of 275 inmates, with an agreement to renegotiate if the ADP exceeded 290 inmates for over two consecutive months. Considering the completion of the detention center expansion project, there is an expectation that the ADP might exceed the originally stated contract amount. Despite the contract's prior approval, RCSO worked with Mediko to renegotiate the terms of the ADP. Mediko will increase the ADP cap to 300 inmates, with the agreement to renegotiate if it exceeds 315 for two consecutive months. The contract cost will remain the same as originally presented on May 1st for \$1.42M.



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Consider waiver of American Healthcare Debt Service for the Rural Healthcare Stabilization Loan

In 2022, Randolph County received the Rural Healthcare Stabilization Program Loan from UNC Health to finance capital improvements at Randolph Health. American Healthcare Systems, LLC (AHS) operates Randolph Health and signed a Promissory Note and Loan Agreement with the County to access these funds.

Their debt service was to equal the annual amount of the County's payment schedule to UNC Health. The intent of this arrangement was for the County to waive the debt service obligation for the year if the hospital maintained a certain level of operations and other covenants. The Board of County Commissioners will annually assess the performance of AHS to determine whether its May debt service will be waived. Commissioners postponed the decision in May, opting to wait until an official meeting of the hospital's board had convened.

"I think that spirit and intent of what we are trying to do is what is important here. Our responsibility is to make sure that taxpayer dollars are being used in accordance with where they've been designated. So, that's our concern. We know funds have been used to purchase equipment. We also want to make sure that the hospital has been profitable and that some of the investments are reinvested in the hospital, along with what the County is doing. We're a partner in this, and we want to see everyone succeed," said Vice-Chairman Allen.

"I think we feel much better about this. The money is to be used for capital purchases, not daily operations at the hospital. Also, it is important to note that AHS pays Randolph County property taxes since they operate as a for-profit hospital. The hospital is one of the top 10 taxpayers in the County," said Chairman Frye.

Commissioners voted unanimously to approve the resolution making Certain Findings and Waiving the Current Required Annual Payment for American Healthcare Systems, LLC.

Final Design of Northwest Randolph Human Services Building

At the April meeting, Commissioners awarded a contract to Smith Sinnett Architecture to proceed in designing the human services building in Archdale. This will be a satellite building for Randolph County DSS and Public Health. Architects Robert Carmac and Leanne Byrd presented the final design with an updated cost estimate and proposed schedule at the June meeting.

"There is currently money proposed in the state budget that will provide the funding for this. As of today, it is still in the proposed budget, and we feel confident that it will remain there. We are hopeful those funds will come through," said Chairman Frye.

Commissioners voted 4-1 to move forward with the bidding of the Northwest Human Services building renovation project.



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Wellness Center Update

At the April Meeting, Commissioners authorized the County to move forward on designing a wellness center at Northgate. The County contracted with Smith Sinnett Architecture for the continued design. Architects Robert Carmac and Leanne Byrd presented the final design, updated cost estimate, and proposed schedule at the June meeting.

Commissioners voted unanimously to move forward with the bidding of the Wellness Clinic at Northgate project.

Public Hearing to Assist with Pump Station for Proposed Truck Stop

The County has been approached with an opportunity to participate in an economic development project in the southern portion of the County. A large commercial truck stop is interested in possibly being located at the intersection of I-74 and New Hope Church Road, but sufficient sewer service is currently unavailable. The County has been asked to consider contributing \$300K towards the construction cost of a pump station and force main under I-74 to support this project. Without these improvements, the truck stop will likely locate elsewhere. The total cost of the improvements is \$800k, and the property owner has committed to supplying the additional funds needed over the County's requested contribution. Once constructed, these improvements will be turned over to the Seagrove-Ulah Metropolitan Water District.

A public hearing was held to discuss this matter during the June session. No speakers came forward during the public hearing.

Commissioners voted unanimously to adopt the resolution authorizing the County to enter into an Economic Development Project for a sewer main located at the intersection of I-74 and New Hope Church Road and approve the associated budget amendment.



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COMMISSIONER MEETING AGENDA SUMMARY
COUNTY DEPARTMENT BUDGET PRESENTATIONS

Sheriff's Office

The Randolph County Sheriff's Office reported the department is pleased with the FY2023-2024 budget as proposed by the County Manager.

Social Services

Tracie Murphy, Social Services Director, shared with the Board that department priorities include maintaining current mandatory services, meeting and exceeding performance measures, and preparing for Medicaid expansion.

The department requests additional income maintenance caseworkers and notes more workers will likely be needed to support Medicaid expansion.

Human Resources

Jill Williams, Human Resources Director, explained that in an extremely competitive workforce market, where employees seek flexible work and highly qualified staff are limited, the County has experienced a continued loss of employees. As a result, the County formed an Employee Recruitment and Retention Committee. Results from an employee engagement survey developed by the committee showed that competitive salary, longevity pay, and supportive leadership/management are most important to Randolph County staff.

Recommendations for FY2023-24 are targeted at staff retention. In addition to a 5% cost of living adjustment (COLA), proficiency pay is recommended to ensure market competitiveness and employee retention. This expands movement through the pay range and moves the County's standard job rate from Step 12 to 18. Finally, the County plans to maintain its focus on leadership development throughout departments. In addition to the recently implemented Randolph County Leadership Academy, the County will continue its sponsorship of department heads and senior managers through the NACO High-Performance Leadership Academy (20 graduates currently).

Emergency Services

Jared Byrd, Deputy Director, explained the department's critical focus is to fill vacant positions to address employee stress, workload, excessive overtime, and staff burnout. The Emergency Services Department is proposing the implementation of a nightshift incentive, a 10% pay increase for permanently assigned nightshift employees. The department also seeks an in-house paramedic academy with a full-time instructor. The academy would potentially produce 10 additional paramedics in a nine-month program, as opposed to the current standard fifteen-month program. The department also requests additional positions.



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COMMISSIONER MEETING AGENDA SUMMARY

Register of Deeds

County Manager, Hal Johnson, stated the Register of Deeds was requesting no increase in budget, and is pleased with the FY2023-24 budget as proposed.

Planning and Zoning

Hal Johnson, County Manager, reported no increase in the Planning and Zoning Department budget.

Child Support Services

Randolph County Child Support Services reported the department is pleased with the FY2023-24 budget, as proposed by the County Manager.

Adult Day Reporting Center

Hal Johnson, County Manager, reported no increase in the department's budget.

Public Health

Tara Aker, Public Health Director, shared with the Board that she was happy with the Public Health budget as proposed by the County Manager. Aker explained that proposed funds will be used to cover costs for employee health coverage and the increase in employee retirement. Aker also noted her support for the work Human Resources is doing regarding pressure point positions, as Environmental Health Specialist positions fall into this category and are challenging to recruit and retain in the current workforce market.

Public Library

Ross Holt, Public Library Director, reported that the library was happy with the FY2023-24 budget, as proposed by the County Manager. Holt mentioned the success of the Community Navigators Program, the success of bringing the Ramseur library under County operations, and that story walks are now at 5 County library locations.

Soil and Water Conservation District

Kaitlyn Johnson, Soil and Water Director, said the department is happy with the FY2023-24 budget as proposed by the County Manager. Johnson explained the only budget increase would be in salary, which reflects the reclassification of an Engineer position to full-time.

Animal Services

Jonathan Moody, Animal Services Director, shared that due to increased animal intakes, changes in regulations, and increased officer responsibilities, additional positions are needed. The department requests one full-time Animal Control Officer, a vehicle for the officer, and an increase in gas money. The department also requests two part-time Animal Care attendants.



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Tax

Debra Hill, Tax Administrator, explained that due to County growth, the department requests a Real Property Appraiser.

Building Inspections

The Building Inspections Department is pleased with the FY2023-24 budget, as presented by the County Manager.

Public Works

Paxton Arthurs, County Engineer, explained that budget additions were due to increased solid waste sales taxes and to support cell tower rent.

Adult Day Reporting Center

Hal Johnson, County Manager, reported no increase in the department's budget.

Cooperative Extension

Kenny Sherin, County Extension Director, explained that the increased budget would address additional gas expenses and a Digital Skills position. The department also requests to reclassify its 4-H position.

Juvenile Day Reporting Center

Pamela Resch, Juvenile Day Reporting Center Director, said that approximately 1,500 youth were served in 2022 by the Juvenile Day Reporting Center (JDRC). Resch reported that in 2022 JDRC secured all Juvenile Crime Prevention funds and some discretionary state funding. JDRC is home to the only youth substance abuse program in the County. Currently, there are about 20 weekly attendees for those support groups.

Veterans Services

Elizabeth Wood, Veteran Services Director, explained that due to office growth and expansion of programming, the department requests the reclassification of their Office Administrative Assistant and the addition of a part-time front desk position.

Information Technology

RJ Williamson, Information Technology Director, said he was pleased with the FY2023-24 budget, as presented by the County Manager. Williamson explained that a Public Safety Support Analyst was requested to address significant IT staff hours used for public safety support.

Elections

Melissa Kirstner, Elections Director, said she was pleased with the FY2023-24 budget, as presented by the County Manager. Kirstner explained that increases would support the funding of three upcoming elections and increases for election workers.

Administration

Will Massie, Assistant County Manager/Finance Director, noted two changes in the administrative budget, the addition of a Strategic Program Coordinator, and increased insurance costs, which have affected vehicle and building repairs.



(June 8th CNTD.)

Fire Departments

The Randolph County Fire Chief's Association Executive Committee presented to the Board of Commissioners. Eric Hoffman, President of the Association and Chief of Eastside Fire Department referenced presentations from each department heard by Commissioners over the past year.

Hoffman cited personnel issues, lack of volunteerism, increased operation costs, necessary capital improvements, and inflated equipment costs as issues facing Randolph County fire departments. Fire district rate requests can be found [HERE](#).

"We need these funds to be able to rise up and meet the challenges ahead of us," said Hoffman.

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COMMISSIONER MEETING AGENDA SUMMARY
BUDGET ADOPTION MEETING

Close-Out Budget Amendments for FY2023-24

Commissioners voted unanimously to approve the close-out budget amendments as stated in the agenda.

Capital Improvement Plan

Will Massie, Assistant County Manager, and Finance Director, mentioned that several large capital projects were wrapping up (Asheboro High School, Randolph County Detention Center, Northgate Commons), and several projects are beginning (Northwest Human Services Building, Ag Center, Public Health renovations, I-74 Sewer work, and Seagrove-Ulah Water District improvements). Meetings will be held with both Asheboro City and Randolph County school districts to discuss and develop planning to address capital improvement needs.



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COMMISSIONER MEETING AGENDA SUMMARY
BUDGET ADOPTION MEETING

2023-24 Budget Adoption

- Fire District Tax Rates – “While this is a pretty heavy ask, there are needs out there as far as the number of volunteers, the need to hire folks, and equipment is very expensive. This is something that we will not want to see every year. A 37% increase is a lot for the taxpayer. It ranges from 27% up to 43% for the eighteen different departments, excluding Julian. Also, by voting for this type of tax increase there is no excuse for not having an audit. You need financials with full disclosures. This is taxpayer money,” said Vice-Chairman Allen.

“Our fire departments are very important, and we see it that way and want to make that clear. We expect to be treated the same way in terms of what we need to have in answering to the public for how the money is used,” said Chairman Frye.

Commissioners unanimously voted to approve the Fire Department Tax Rates as proposed.

- Adopt School Districts Property Tax Rates-
 - Commissioners unanimously approved Archdale-Trinity Supplemental Tax District at .0703 cents.
 - Commissioners unanimously approved Asheboro City Schools Supplemental Tax District rate at .1153 cents
- Adopt Fee Schedules & Elections Poll Worker Rate
 - Building, Electrical & Plumbing Permit Fees – no change requested
 - Planning & Zoning – no change requested
 - Emergency Services Ambulance Fees
 - Public Health
 - Elections Poll Worker Pay Rate

Commissioners voted unanimously to adopt the fee schedules and election poll worker pay rates as presented.

- Consideration of Budget Inclusion of Outside Agencies with Commissioner Involvement
 - Randolph County Economic Development Center – Commissioners approved 4-0 the Randolph County Economic Development appropriation of \$367,950. (Chairman Frye was recused from the vote as he is a member of the Randolph County Economic Development Board of Directors.)
 - Sandhills Center- Commissioners approved 4-0 the Sandhills Center appropriation \$844k. (Vice-Chairman Allen was recused from the vote as he is a member of the Sandhills Center Board of Directors)
 - Family Crisis Center – Commissioners approved 4-0 the Family Crisis Center appropriation of \$75k. (Commissioner Kidd was recused from the vote as he is a member of the Family Crisis Center Board of Directors)
- Consideration Future Designation of Toyota Battery Manufacturing Property Taxes - The County is proposing the development of a special revenue fund to collect tax distributions received from Toyota and to pay out incentives. Commissioners will soon begin identifying strategic ways to use the funds.



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BUDGET ADOPTION MEETING

2023-24 Budget Adoption

- Discussion of Manager's 2023-24 Budget and Recommended Changes – Chairman Frye explained that a critical focus of the budget was employee recruitment and retention. A critical retention focus is on first responders, specifically Emergency Services. Other pressure points include positions at the Sheriff's Office, Public Health, and the Department of Social Services. In terms of revenue, funding for additional positions within the budget is expected to come from sales tax. The County estimates its sales tax growth protection at five percent. In 2023, the sales tax was 14%. The budget includes no appropriation of fund balance.

The recommended budget changes for EMS include the addition of a Fire Inspector III, four paramedic positions, four field training officers, and a training officer for the paramedic academy, effective July 1. Subsequent hiring of ten additional paramedic positions will begin on January 1. There will also be a 10 percent pay differential for night shift positions and the addition of an ambulance. The increase totals \$1.34M for Emergency Services.

The budget allocation for Randolph County Schools is \$1.51M, and \$442K for Asheboro City Schools.

“For public safety and public education in this county, 95.24% of budget changes will be directed towards those two things. I think that shows you how this board feels about our job here. This is the main focus of the changes and additions made to this budget,” said Chairman Frye.

Other budget additions include two vehicles for the Public Buildings department, a vehicle for the Cooperative Extension, and \$30.2k to support Randolph County Senior Adults in providing critical services and programming.

The tax rate will also be set at a revenue-neutral rate of 0.50 cents, decreased from 0.6327 cents.

Commissioners voted unanimously to adopt the Budget Ordinance for FY2023-2024 with the following changes, and set the Ad Valorem Tax Rate at 50 cents per \$100 valuation; which produces a budget of \$172,667,030 for FY2023-2024.

- Adoption of Final County Budget and County Property Tax Rate – Commissioners voted unanimously to adopt the budget ordinance for FY2023-24 with the following changes, and set the Ad Valorem Tax Rate at 50 cents per \$100 valuation; which produces a budget of \$172,667,030 for FY2023-24.
- Consider the Resolution for the Eastern Piedmont HOME Consortium – Commissioners unanimously approved the resolution for the County of Randolph supporting the creation of the Eastern Piedmont NC HOME Consortium.