



THE RANDOLPH RECAP

APRIL 4, 2022

COMMISSIONER MEETING AGENDA SUMMARY

AGENDA ITEMS:

(April 4, 2022)

- Public Comment
- National Child Abuse Prevention Month
- JDRC Renovation Project
- County Capital Projects Funding
- Emergency Services Managed Care
- Randolph Health Psychiatric Renovation Grant Project Fund
- TEFRA Hearing- UCA
- Soil & Water Conservation District stRAP Program Grant
- Chairman's Comments

(March 22, 2022)

- GREAT Grant (Broadband)
- Rural Healthcare Stabilization Plan

(March 25, 2022)

- Technimark Expansion Project



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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COMMISSIONER MEETING AGENDA SUMMARY

Public Comment

Six speakers took the floor during the public comment period, each commenting on the Confederate Statue at the Randolph County Courthouse.

Dr. Charles Egerton, Randolph County citizen, shared his disappointment in commissioners, as he feels a rushed decision was made. **“We in the NAACP stand with Dr. Martin Luther King in nonviolence. Where did that unsubstantiated threat of violence come from, that rushed your vote?”** asked Egerton.

Chip Foust, Randolph County NAACP President, told commissioners that he was disappointed yet not surprised at their recent actions. At last month’s meeting, commissioners voted unanimously to leave the Confederate Statue as it is, where it is. **“What I saw last month was sad but not unexpected. It is high time that we came to the realization that peace without justice is an illusion,”** said Foust.

Dwain Roberts, Commander, Sons of Confederate Veterans, thanked commissioners for voting to keep the memorial statue in front of the Randolph County Courthouse. **“April is Confederate History Month. What a great day to have that memorial sitting out front right where it belongs,”** said Roberts.

National Child Abuse Prevention Month

April is Child Abuse Prevention Month. Wearing blue symbolizes the statewide campaign to show support for preventing child abuse and neglect. In Randolph County, there are record numbers of reports of child maltreatment, including child abuse, neglect, and dependency.

“Child Abuse Prevention Month is an opportunity to redefine how our policies, systems, and communities work together to propel children into becoming healthy thriving members of their communities and reaching their full potential,” said Tracie Murphy, Randolph County Department of Social Services.

Murphy also addressed staffing and recruitment challenges currently facing the Randolph County Department of Social Services. **“We have record numbers of youth in foster care at this time. It has been very difficult to keep up. Our numbers are far outweighing our ability to meet the need with the current staff that we have. However, we want to do everything in our power that we can to support parents and children,”** said Murphy.

For more information on Child Abuse Prevention Month, visit the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services [website](#). To learn more about the Randolph County Department of Social Services, please visit the [website](#).

Commissioners voted to support the proclamation designating April as Child Abuse Prevention Month in Randolph County.



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JDRC Renovation Project

On February 28th, the County issued a Request for Bids for the renovation of space for the Juvenile Day Reporting Center. The renovation will take place at the current Child Support location, and will begin once Child Support Services moves to its new home at Northgate Commons in May.

The deadline for receiving bids was March 29. Granco Construction submitted the lowest bid of \$161,400 and would expect to complete the project by the end of summer, 2022.

Commissioners voted to award Granco Construction the contract for the JDRC renovation, to create four new classrooms at a cost of \$161,400.

Consider Funding County Capital Projects

- **Farm, Food and Family Education Center** - Randolph County has received \$16,400,000 from the State for the Farm, Food and Family Education Center. The total project cost is currently expected to be over \$25,000,000. Using available County capital reserves, the Board of County Commissioners may wish to contribute additional monies to move us closer to the amount needed for construction.
 - Total Projected Cost - \$30M
 - State SCIF Grants - \$16.4M
 - Possible USDA Loans- \$4M

Commissioners voted to partially finance this project with reserve funds by approving a budget amendment to the General Fund and Agricultural Center Capital Project Fund in the amount of \$5M.

- **Adoption of JDRC Renovation Capital Project Ordinance** - Child Support Services will be moving to Northgate in the coming months. Randolph County intends to renovate this vacant office space, to respond to growth in programs offered by the Juvenile Day Reporting Center. This renovation includes increasing client training capacity and modernization of infrastructure.

Commissioners voted to adopt a capital project ordinance to move forward with the budget of \$300,000.

- **Northgate Capital Project** - A multi-year capital project fund, separate from the General Fund, has already been established to account for costs related to the renovation of Northgate Commons. When the Rent-A-Center moves out, the County would like to continue to renovate the remaining vacant space to meet the needs of the Social Services Department. This conversion will conclude the major upgrades to this facility.

Commissioners voted to finance the Northgate Capital Project with capital reserve funds in the amount of \$1.5M

- **Historic Courthouse Capital Project**- A multi-year capital project fund, separate from the General Fund, has already been established to account for the design costs related to the renovation of the Historic County Courthouse. However, no construction costs were included in the original project ordinance. Additional funding may be necessary after the project is bid later in 2022.

Commissioners voted to finance the project with capital reserve funds in the amount of \$3M.

“If you look at what we have done here, the expansion at Asheboro High School, our detention center, the new middle school in Trinity, funded a Megasite and through all of that, we have not raised taxes. I am proud of this board for being fiscally responsible in every way. We have not overextended the county in any way with the decisions that have been made here tonight,” said Chairman Frye.



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Emergency Services Managed Care

The State of NC has transitioned to a managed care model this year. This results in the County receiving the cost-based rates that are billed through the Medicaid system, with an invoice for us to pay provider-specific minimum fees for outside contractors.

These contractors usually provide non-emergency transport. This model will not provide any additional net cost or revenue to the County.

Commissioners approved the budget amendment for emergency services managed care to the General Fund.

Randolph Health Psychiatric Renovation Grant Project Fund

In its recent budget, the General Assembly set aside \$4,000,000 for Randolph Health to renovate space in its facility, to provide 32-35 psychiatric beds. The grant will flow through Randolph County. A separate capital project is needed to account for the proceeds and related renovation costs. Total project costs are expected to be around \$8,000,000, with American Healthcare Systems, LLC funding the remainder. American Healthcare Systems will fund the continuing operations of the new service. Both Chairman Frye and Vice-Chairman Frye are members of the Randolph Health Board of Directors.

“It is important to emphasize that the County will control dispensing of the funds, as requested and as documented. As will be the \$12M in funding from the Rural Hospital Stabilization Fund. All of those funds will come through Randolph County,” said Chairman Frye.

It's easy to assume that this kind of service is already being done, but it wasn't. It has not been. We have not had this type of service in this county. This service needs to be here,” said Commissioner McDowell.

Commissioners voted to accept the \$4M state grant for the hospital psychiatric renovation, authorize the Chairman to sign the scope of work and related grant documentation, and adopt the Hospital Psychiatric Renovation Capital Project Fund ordinance.



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COMMISSIONER MEETING AGENDA SUMMARY

TEFRA Hearing- Uwharrie Charter Academy (UCA)

UCA intends to construct an educational facility of approximately 80,000 square feet (with 80 classrooms), a trades education center of approximately 24,518 square feet, and a central administrative office of approximately 5,034 square feet. UCA also intends to refinance a recent loan.

To do this, it will pursue the use of tax-exempt financing through the issuance of Public Finance Authority Education Revenue Bonds in a maximum stated principal amount of \$48.5M. One of the IRS requirements regarding the issuance of these bonds is that a TEFRA (Tax Equity and Fiscal Responsibility Act) Hearing be held for interested people to express their views, either orally or in writing, on the issuance of the bonds and the nature of the improvements and projects for which the bond funds will be allocated.

No comments were submitted in writing and there were no attendees at the hearing.

Aimee Scotton, Associate County Attorney, reminded Commissioners that **“they are not endorsing the project nor are they obligating the County in any manner whatsoever. This is simply something that is required by the IRS in order for UCA to proceed with tax-exempt financing.”**

Commissioners approved the issuance of bonds by a local finance authority.

Soil and Water Conservation District stRAP Program Grant

The Randolph Soil and Water Conservation District will be applying for the Streamflow Rehabilitation Assistance Program Grant for \$3,076,290. This is a new program that aims to reduce flooding across the state’s waterways by protecting and restoring the integrity of the drainage infrastructure. If awarded funds through this program, equipment will be needed to implement these funds during the upcoming budget cycle.

The funds from the grant would be used to remove the vegetative debris from stream segments and disposed of outside of the 100-year floodplain. The grant will also allow for the management of beavers to address the ongoing issues they can cause. The stRAP program allows for 15% of funds to be used for administrative costs. The Randolph Soil and Water District Board asked commissioners to allow the district to retain the 15% as match funds, instead of utilizing them for administrative costs. If the district is indeed awarded the grant, funds will be dispersed and facilitated through the County.

“We have had a lot of help from our representative Pat Hurley, with her seniority she has really worked hard to get this funding approved in the budget. We were ahead of the game and knew a lot about the program early on. We can do any stream, in the county if we have the funding.” - Craig Frazier, Soil and Water Conservation District Board.

Commissioners voted to approve the grant submission for the Soil and Water Conservation District stRAP program grant with the understanding that 15% will be utilized as a match, as opposed to administrative cost.



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Opioid Settlement

Mike Fox, attorney, updated the board on the ongoing opioid settlement process. Mr. Fox is one of several attorneys representing Randolph County in the opioid settlement case. In 2018, Randolph County signed on as a litigating party in the lawsuits against opioid distributors. Since that time a number of settlements have been negotiated on a national basis. **“You will start seeing some money coming soon, that you will be able to put towards opioid treatment and relief from this surge,”** said Fox.

Paul Coats, attorney, spoke with commissioners about the settlement and how funds will be dispersed to Randolph County. North Carolina has reached a \$750M settlement, from which Randolph County will receive a \$10M share over the next 18 years. The County will receive roughly \$1.2M this year, with the remainder being paid out over 18 consecutive years.

“I want to thank Randolph County for being a litigating county because without lawsuits bringing the mass to this mass tort, we would not have gotten this kind of settlement. Your participation and willingness to come into this case early on made a huge difference,” said Coates.

“For several years now, we have had an ongoing opioid collaborative in Randolph County that this board funded through strategic planning. I am so proud of the work they are doing because we truly are ahead of the game in so many different ways,” said Hal Johnson, County Manager.

Randolph County recently approved a MOU developed by the NCACC, that was also adopted by all 100 counties in North Carolina.

Chairman's Comments

Chairman Frye addressed the issue of fire district taxation. While the state limit is \$1.50, all Randolph County Fire Districts have a tax rate of 15 cents or less. **“The county fire taxes will continue to be set by the Board of County Commissioners. Each one of these districts has its own board of directors, its own fire chiefs, and they submit a budget to us every year. But the state limit in no way takes away from the process that the county has always followed in setting fire tax rates in every jurisdiction,”** said Frye.

Recently, there was a North Carolina Association of County Commissioners Board Meeting. Vice-Chairman Allen represents District 11 (Randolph, Davidson, Guilford, Alamance, and Caswell counties.) Chairman Frye was also appointed to the board as past president of the association, which allows Randolph County to have two commissioners currently represented on the state board. The committee recently agreed to change the voting process for legislative goals. In the past, it has been a simple majority, but the threshold will now increase to two-thirds votes.

Vice-Chairman Allen shared that there would be a district meeting in May, that will focus on legislators and allows County commissioners to introduce themselves to their representatives. **“We have a good relationship with the folks here in Randolph County, but there are other counties that may not, so we want to have some discussions around what is important to County Commissioners, which ties into the legislative process,”** said Vice-Chairman Allen.

Vice-Chairman Allen also shared that there had been some recent discussions in Washington D.C. around the drawbacks of ARPA funding because it is not being used. This money was state funding and senators would like to see that money be recycled through the economy in response to COVID-19. **“Randolph County has taken an approach of being very diligent and deliberate in how we are utilizing our funds, we are making progress. I think we are in good shape,”** said Vice-Chairman Allen.



THE RANDOLPH RECAP

MARCH 22, 2022

SPECIAL MEETING AGENDA SUMMARY

Rural Healthcare Stabilization Plan

Will Massie, Assistant County Manager/Finance Director shared with the commissioners that the study conducted by VMG had finally been submitted to the Local Government Commission. It is expected to be approved within the next few months.

The purpose of the study was to provide a revised feasibility study to indicate that \$12M would be sufficient for stabilization.

The new Randolph Health Board of Directors had its first meeting a few weeks ago. Both Vice-Chairman Allen and Chairman Frye are board members, as required by the LGC.

NC GREAT Grant (Broadband)

The N.C. Department of Information Technology's Broadband Infrastructure Office provides state-funded grants to private providers of broadband services to facilitate the deployment of broadband service to unserved areas of North Carolina. The Growing Rural Economies with Access to Technology (GREAT) Program funds the terrestrial deployment of broadband within unserved areas of economically distressed counties.

The grants help bring high-speed internet to thousands of North Carolinians, businesses, and farms in the most rural and remote areas of the state. These state-funded grants are available to private broadband service providers and are designed to connect these areas with broadband as quickly as possible.

Joey Stephenson, Northstate, shared a proposal to serve 1,827 homes in Randolph County with broadband service. In serving those homes, Northstate is asking for a \$250,000 match from the County using American Rescue Plan Funds. Northstate's plan includes financing \$2.5M for an eventual total buildout of \$6.3M. The project timeline allows for a two-year buildout phase once the bid is awarded.

Commissioner Haywood addressed concerns about access to broadband for citizens living in the Fuller Mill Road area. Mr. Stephenson confirmed that this area was included in Northstate's plan.

Vice-Chairman Allen asked about the possibility of additional grants in the future, to which Mr. Stephenson confirmed that a Counties Accessing Broadband Grant would be forthcoming to work directly with counties in obtaining broadband service.

Chairman Frye explained that the use of ARPA funds would allow the county to avoid using its funds. Mr. Stephenson explained that the state would like to see counties use those funds to make grant matches. With an ARPA match, the state will fund up to 85% of project costs, up to \$4M.

Commissioners voted unanimously to partner with NorthState on a NC GREAT Grant for extending broadband service to underserved areas as presented.



THE RANDOLPH RECAP

MARCH 25, 2022

SPECIAL MEETING AGENDA SUMMARY

Technimark Expansion Project

Technimark is contemplating an expansion of its Asheboro operations. This project remains competitive with other locations and an incentive offer will factor into Technimark's consideration of Asheboro and Randolph County as the location for its expansion project.

Technimark is a full-service solutions provider to users of plastic products. Starting in 1983 as a small injection molder located in Asheboro, the company is now one of the largest independent injection molders in the world. If Asheboro is chosen for the project, Technimark will retain 1,435 current jobs and create 220 new jobs. The average annual wage of the new jobs would be \$44,920, exceeding Randolph County's current private sector average wage of \$40,522. The company's total project investment would be \$62M, which includes \$54M in machinery and equipment. Randolph County EDC proposed a total local incentive package of \$950,000 paid in five annual installments, equally divided by the City of Asheboro and Randolph County.

Both Randolph County Commissioners and the Asheboro City Council voted to approve the resolution offering \$950,000 in local incentives, to encourage Technimark decision-makers to expand in Asheboro.