

**MINUTES
WILKES COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
OCTOBER 4, 2022**

The Wilkes County Board of Commissioners met on Tuesday, October 4, 2022 at 6:01 P.M. with the following members present: Chairman Keith Elmore, Vice Chairman Casey Joe Johnson, Commissioner David Gambill, Commissioner Eddie Settle, and Commissioner Brian S. Minton.

Also present for the meeting were Tony Triplett, County Attorney; John Yates, County Manager; and Sarah Call, Clerk to the Board.

Chairman Keith Elmore welcomed everyone and called the meeting to order at this time.

INVOCATION – Vice Chairman Casey Joe Johnson led the Invocation.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE – Chairman Keith Elmore led the Pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES – Motion was made by Commissioner Brian S. Minton, seconded by Vice Chairman Casey Joe Johnson and unanimously adopted to approve the Minutes of the Board Meeting held on September 20, 2022.

BUDGET AMENDMENTS/TRANSFERS – Motion was made by Commissioner David Gambill to approve Budget Amendment No. 8 (General – EMS and Parks & Rec – This request is to transfer funds (\$35,000) received from the Carson foundation in FY 2022 that moved into fund balance on June 30, 2022. These funds will be used to provide soccer lighting at River’s Edge. This request is to transfer unspent HRSA Funds (\$300,942) received by EMS in FY 2022 that moved into fund balance on June 30, 2022. These funds will be used to provide equipment and supplies needed for EMS. No county funds required). The motion was seconded by Commissioner Brian S. Minton and unanimously approved.

WILKES EMERGENCY SERVICE CENTER UPDATE – Chairman Elmore recognized Kris Little, Vannoy Construction and Tim Pennington, EMS Director. Mr. Little thanked the Board and said they bring good news. The foundations are complete, they are in the site work phase, part of the slab is in place for the office portion and the entire wall structure for the vehicle bay is up. He added they did a good job with ordering the steel early and had it within 3 days of when it was needed, thanks to the foresight of everyone and especially John Yates. Mr. Little said they will see a dramatic change at the site in the next 30-45 days. He added so far there are no unforeseen contingencies, at this time they are under budget and a little ahead of schedule. Mr. Little stated originally, they were looking at 56 weeks on the generator, but they worked out a deal locally with Wilkes Electric for an equal or better generator with 24 weeks turnaround, this is a win and with a local company. Mr. Pennington agreed it was great to get the generator locally with a much less lead time. He said the project is looking great and going along on schedule.

Chairman Elmore asked the completion date. Mr. Little replied end of October or first of November 2023. He added they will make the December deadline which is when the lease with the Hospital will be up. Mr. Yates stated they will consider approval of the Lease amendment to extend until December 2023 later in the meeting.

Chairman Elmore and the Board thanked Mr. Little and Mr. Pennington for the update

SECOND REVISED GRANT PROJECT ORDINANCE FOR THE COUNTY OF WILKES CORONAVIRUS STATE AND LOCAL FISCAL RECOVERY FUNDS – Ms.

Felts stated before the Board for consideration is the second revision of the Grant Project Ordinance for ARPA funding. She added the only change is the River’s Edge project and the bids came in higher than anticipated so they moved excess funds out of the wastewater project to the River’s Edge allocation. Mr. Yates added the Board will consider awarding the low bid next, which is Wilkie Construction at \$729,914.

Vice Chairman Casey Joe Johnson made a motion to approve the Second Revised Grant Project Ordinance for the County of Wilkes Coronavirus State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds as presented at tonight’s meeting. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Eddie Settle. Voting on the motion:

- Ayes: Chairman Keith Elmore
Vice Chairman Casey Joe Johnson
Commissioner Eddie Settle
Commissioner Brian S. Minton
- Nays: Commissioner David Gambill

*SECOND REVISED GRANT PROJECT ORDINANCE FOR THE COUNTY OF WILKES
CORONAVIRUS STATE AND LOCAL FISCAL RECOVERY FUNDS*

BE IT ORDAINED by the Board of Commissioners of the County of Wilkes, North Carolina that, pursuant to Section 13.2 of Chapter 159 of the General Statutes of North Carolina, the following grant project ordinance is hereby adopted:

WHEREAS the County of Wilkes adopted the Grant Project Ordinance for the County of Wilkes: Coronavirus State and Local Fiscal Recovery Fund under date of November 16th, 2021; and

WHEREAS the County of Wilkes adopted the Revised Grant Project Ordinance for the County of Wilkes: Coronavirus State and Local Fiscal Recovery Fund under date of June 21st, 2022; and

WHEREAS the County of Wilkes desires to revise the same, amending the allocations set forth therein; and

WHEREAS this Revised Grant Project Ordinance for the County of Wilkes: Coronavirus State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds is adopted for the purpose of affecting said revisions; and

NOW, THEREFORE the County of Wilkes hereby adopts the following Revised Grant Project Ordinance for the County of Wilkes: Coronavirus State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds.

Section 1: This ordinance is to establish a budget for a project to be funded by the Coronavirus State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds of H.R. 1319 American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 (CSLRF). The County of Wilkes has received the first tranche in the amount of \$6,644,144 of CSLRF funds. The total allocation is \$13,288,299, with the remainder to be distributed to the county within 12 months. These funds may be used for the following categories of expenditures, to the extent authorized by state law:

- 1. Support public health expenditures, by funding COVID-19 mitigation efforts, medical expenses, behavioral healthcare, and certain public health and safety staff;*
- 2. Address negative economic impacts caused by the public health emergency, including economic harms to workers, households, small businesses, impacted industries, and the public sector;*
- 3. Replace lost public sector revenue, using this funding to provide government services to the extent of the reduction in revenue experienced due to the pandemic;*
- 4. Provide premium pay for essential workers, offering additional support to those who have borne and will bear the greatest health risks because of their service in critical infrastructure sectors; and,*
- 5. Invest in water, sewer, and broadband infrastructure, making necessary investments to improve access to clean drinking water, support vital wastewater and stormwater infrastructure, and to expand access to broadband internet.*

Section 2: The following amounts are appropriated for the project and authorized for expenditure:

<i>INTERNAL CODE:</i>	<i>PROJECT TITLE:</i>	<i>ARPA FUNDS:</i>	<i>COUNTY FUNDS:</i>	<i>PROJECT DESCRIPTION:</i>
<i>ARPA 1</i>	<i>Vaccine Incentive Program</i>	<i>\$288,933</i>	<i>\$0</i>	<i>The Wilkes County Board of Commissioners is dedicated to creating a safe workplace environment and to achieving herd-immunity in the county. To that end, the County of Wilkes is implementing a program that will reward employees who have already chosen to become vaccinated and motivate other employees to do so. This appropriation would fund the vaccine incentive program.</i>
<i>ARPA 2</i>	<i>Rural Community Wastewater Infrastructure Extension</i>	<i>\$7,728,172</i>	<i>\$0</i>	<i>The Wilkes County Board of Commissioners recognizes that critical infrastructure is lacking in the more rural areas of the county. It is a priority to bring wastewater infrastructure to underserved communities. This will serve current area residents and contribute to eminent growth. This appropriation would fund the installation of sewer pipes and pump stations in rural communities.</i>

ARPA 3	<i>Emergency Services Center / COVID Vaccination Center</i>	\$3,100,000	\$7,000,000	<i>The Wilkes County Board of Commissioners has an indispensable interest in the rapid, prepared deployment of emergency services to county residents. Wilkes County is among the largest counties in North Carolina and as such, strategically locating emergency service facilities throughout the county is vital to rapid response times. This base would also serve as the county’s primary COVID-19 vaccination center in the coming years through utilization of the drive-through bay, which will provide shelter for public health and emergency personnel and allow citizens to remain socially distanced in their vehicles. The construction of this facility would be the final phase of the county’s ongoing efforts to minimize response times and maximize preparedness. This appropriation would fund between one-third and one-fourth of the Emergency Services Center, which would be used as the county’s COVID-19 Vaccination Center during ongoing and future COVID-19 mitigation efforts.</i>
ARPA 4	<i>Emergency Response Vehicles & Training Facility</i>	\$1,600,000	\$1,000,000	<i>The Wilkes County Board of Commissioners has a vital interest in ensuring that citizens have access to reliable emergency services. Due to the geographic layout and size of the county, emergency response vehicles rapidly accrue mileage. Additionally, EMS and public safety officers need more vehicles in rotation to allow for adequate cleaning and quarantine time between COVID-19 cases. It is critically important to maintain a fully-functional fleet of uncontaminated emergency response vehicles. Furthermore, since many of the county’s EMS personnel are also volunteer firefighters, the county intends to construct a “Burn Building” in an effort to provide them additional training opportunities and to boost their morale/mental health during these unprecedented times. The “Burn Building” will be a facility where firefighters can harness their skills and it will ultimately provide citizens with better emergency services. This appropriation would fund the procurement of two (2) ambulances and ten (10) public safety vehicles as well as the</i>

				<i>construction of one (1) "Burn Building."</i>
ARPA 5	<i>North Carolina Parks & Recreation Trust Fund Project – River's Edge</i>	\$571,194	\$191,194	<i>The Wilkes County Board of Commissioners is dedicated to providing access to recreational activities for citizens at the River's Edge Park. This allocation will fund the construction of recreational facilities and thereby ensure that citizens of the county as well as visitors, coaches, parents, and children have access to recreational facilities at one of the area's most popular locations for outdoor recreation.</i>

Section 3: The following revenues are anticipated to be available to complete the project:

<i>CSLRF Funds</i>	\$13,288,299
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Section 4: The Finance Officer is hereby directed to maintain sufficient specific detailed accounting records to satisfy the requirements of the grantor agency and the grant agreements.

Section 5: The Finance Officer is hereby directed to report the financial status of the project to the governing board on a quarterly basis.

Section 6: Copies of this grant project ordinance shall be furnished to the Finance Officer and to the Clerk to the Board.

Section 7: This grant project ordinance expires on December 31, 2026, or when all the CSLRF funds have been obligated and expended by the County, whichever occurs sooner.

This the 4th day of October, 2022.

WILKES COUNTY

By: _____

*Gideon Keith Elmore, Chairman
 Wilkes County Board of Commissioners*

ATTEST:

Sarah D. Call, Clerk

PART F RECREATION FACILITY AT RIVER'S EDGE – AWARD BID – Chairman Elmore welcomed and recognized Kelly Coffee, Senior Planner HCCOG. Mr. Coffee stated this is the third time this project has been presented to the Board. He added the first was approval to submit the grant application and second was to approve the grant contract with the state. The purpose this time is to award the construction contract to the low bidder, Wilkie Construction. Mr. Coffee said he doesn't usually deal with this type of contractor, but he does know Wilkie has been around a long time and they have not heard anything negative about them. He added the most important thing to consider is state and federal governments both have a debarred vendor list of contractors, business, and companies who are prohibited from working on projected funded with government grants. Mr. Coffee checked both lists and Wilkie is not on either list.

They have an impressive list of finished projects many for local governments and were public projects. Mr. Coffee said the Board is compelled to award to the lowest responsible bidder and he is not aware of any reasons to conclude they are not responsible.

Mr. Yates added they solicited several contractors in the region and had to bid it twice. He added many said they were too busy and couldn't bid, they were lucky to get three the second time. Chairman Elmore said with the prior approval, all of the funds will come from ARPA. Ms. Felts replied yes, expect the portion from the PART F Grant, which is \$191,194 the remaining \$571,194 will come from ARPA. Mr. Yates added ARPA funds are the match, the county is not putting in any other funds, they received the Part F Grant and the match is ARPA.

Mr. Yates stated in the motion they would like the Board to give the Chairman authorization to sign the Contract once approved by Legal so they can get Wilkie Construction working on the project as soon as possible. They have a goal to get it done by very early spring. Chairman Elmore added there are many uses for this facility to include MerleFest, Speedway, and Faith Fest. Mr. Yates added along with all the programs provided by Parks & Rec at River's Edge as well. Mr. Triplett stated in the absence of any evident that the low bid is not the lowest responsible and responsive bid and they have none to the contrary. He added the motion need to include the company name, amount and that the Chairman is authorized to sign the contract after reviewed by legal.

Commissioner Eddie Settle made a motion to award the Bid for the Part F Recreation Facility at River's Edge to Wilkie Construction Company for the low bid amount of \$729,914.00 and authorized the Chairman to execute a Construction Contract with Wilkie Construction Company subject to the review by the County Attorney as presented at tonight's meeting. The motion was seconded by Vice Chairman Casey Joe Johnson. Voting on the motion:

Ayes: Chairman Keith Elmore
Vice Chairman Casey Joe Johnson
Commissioner Eddie Settle
Commissioner Brian S. Minton

Nays: Commissioner David Gambill

Bid Tabulation PART F Recreation Facility at River's Edge	Total Bid
Wilkie Construction Company	\$729,914.00
MBI Builders	\$888,350.00
VPC Builders	\$866,055.00

JCPC BOARD MEMBER APPOINTMENTS – Jane Casarez, JCPC Chair stated the Wilkes County Juvenile Crime Prevention Council has to have membership from certain sectors that impact justice involved youth. They would like to make the following recommendations to fill vacancies to serve 2-year terms from 2022 to 2024 for: Lieutenant Jason Adams from the Wilkes Sheriff’s Department to fill the vacancy of the SRO; Edward Smith of Daymark Recovery to fill the vacancy as Substance Abuse representative; retired State Trooper from the Highway Patrol Brandon Stokes, Parks & Recreation Dept. representative; Alex Falls, Assistant District Attorney, as the District Attorney’s designee; and Greg Minton, Wilkes Community College Dean of Public Safety, public member representing the interest of families of at risk juveniles.

Commissioner Brian Minton made a motion to appoint Lieutenant Jason Adam, Edward Smith, Brandon Stokes, Alex Falls and Greg Minton to the JCPC Board for 2-year terms 2022-2024 as requested and presented at tonight’s meeting. The motion was seconded by Commissioner David Gambill and unanimously approved.

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES – UPDATE – Chairman Elmore recognized John Blevins, DSS Director. Mr. Belvin said they have had a stressful day, one of the facilities in McDowell is going to be closed. They have 4 males there, age 16 and 17, and 4 counties are involved. They found out last Friday evening it would be closed, it has been suspended and the kids can stay until placement is found which is very hard to do. It’s either leave them there or bring them here put in 2 hotel rooms with 4 social workers and no hope of placement at this time. They spoke with the State and they said they messed up they can’t decide something like this and dump it on a county with no placement options. They kids are safe and protected and VAYA is helping them, but it is stressful and this is the hardest part of the Social Worker’s job. They are hardworking, dedicated people that do a very good job. Mr. Blevins said they may have placement for 2 tomorrow, the remaining 2 has no hope for placement at this time. They will find something eventually, but it is difficult for the kids and staff.

Mr. Blevins said the Family First Preservation Act will affect their funds next year. They want the kids in family like settings and not facilities and after 2 weeks they can’t claim IV-E funding. That means the county’s cost will go from 17% to 50% due to changes from the feds, the state is giving them bridge funding this year, but will not next year. The revenues will take a hit next year, for the first 3 months this year the bridge funding from the state has been \$50K, that could mean \$200K revenue hit next fiscal year. He added next is the 75%-25% reimbursement for Medicaid, counties will have to reduce what they can claim per Fed changes. They estimate at this time they will lose about \$136K revenue for this, both of these will affect their budget for next year on the revenue side. Chairman Elmore said this is another unfunded mandate, feds are pulling funds back to send to Ukraine and elsewhere. This is where it comes from, the state does not make up the difference the county does.

Mr. Blevins provided the Commissioners handouts for August. He said Child Support Services won two awards from the state: silver medal for most improved overall incentive performance and outstanding achievement for all collection incentive measures as well. They are very proud of them, they work hard and do a good job. Their Audit is going great so far, they are halfway

and no paybacks. He briefly went over the monthly caseload report, Foster Care financial report, Adoption Services financial report, Child Development and Subsidized Child Care financial report. He also went through the CPS Foster Care monthly reports for August.

The Board thanked Mr. Blevins for his update.

EMS – FIRST AMENDMENT TO SUBLEASE AGREEMENT – WILKES MEDICAL CENTER – Brooke Felts stated before the Board is a revision to the contract they already have where EMS leases space at the hospital. This changes the term of that contract, which will now expire at the end of next year, which is when they anticipate Base 1 will be completed and ready to move in. Chairman Elmore asked if there are any other changes in the contract. Ms. Felts replied only the term, the rent does go up annually, but that was in the original contract at 2% increase annually. Chairman Elmore added Baptist has been very good to work with in the past few years since they have taken over. Mr. Pennington agreed.

Commissioner David Gambill made a motion to approve the First Amendment to Sublease Agreement with WRMC Hospital Operating Corporation d/b/a Wilkes Medical Center, and Wake Forest University Health Sciences and Wilkes County as presented at tonight's meeting. The motion was seconded by Vice Chairman Casey Joe Johnson and unanimously approved.

WILKES COUNTY AIRPORT – BOARD APPOINTMENT AND REAPPOINTMENTS – County Attorney Tony Triplett said there is a memo in the packet that has the background on this. He added the terms of three of the nine members of the Airport Board expired September 30th for Ike Forester, Virgil Gottfried and David Schmidt. He said at its regular meeting on September 15, 2022, the Airport Board considered and discussed the matter of appointments/reappointments. Ike Forester indicated that he did not wish to have his name submitted for reappointment as he is retiring and feels that he needs to step aside and let others have an opportunity to serve on the Board, which created a vacancy. Virgil Gottfried and David Schmidt both indicated that they would be willing to have their names submitted for reappointment. Mr. Triplett said the Board discussed the matter in detail and considered all outstanding applications for appointment they had received, including those received either this year or in previous years. Following their discussion, the Airport Board voted unanimously to recommend to the Board of Commissions that Mr. Gottfried and Mr. Schmidt be reappointed for terms of three (3) years, from October 1, 2022 through September 30, 2025, and that Kirk C. Bumgarner be appointed to fill the vacancy. Mr. Triplett said he is a pilot for Vannoy Construction, active in the Airport, active in aviation and most of the Airport Board members know him. They recommended Mr. Bumgarner for consideration for a three (3) year term to fill the spot created by the retirement of Mr. Forester. Mr. Triplett said Mr. Bumgarner's application, Mr. Gottfried and Mr. Schmidt's No Change forms have all been submitted.

Commissioner Eddie Settle made a motion to approve the Reappointments of Mr. Virgil Gottfried and Mr. David Schmidt and the Appointment of Mr. Kirk Bumgarner to serve on the Wilkes County Airport Board for a 3-year term each, as presented. The motion was seconded by Vice Chairman Casey Joe Johnson and unanimously approved.

CLOSED SESSION – Motion was made by Commissioner Eddie Settle to go into closed session under Section 143-318.11(a)(3) of the North Carolina General Statutes to consult with the Board’s attorneys to preserve the attorney-client privilege; and under Section 143-318.11 (a)(4) of the North Carolina General Statutes to discuss the location or expansion of business in Wilkes County. The motion was seconded by Vice Chairman Casey Joe Johnson and unanimously approved.

Motion was made by Commissioner David Gambill seconded by Commissioner Eddie Settle and by unanimous vote adopted to adjourn back into regular session. No action was taken in the closed session.

ADJOURN – Motion was made by Commissioner Brian S. Minton, seconded by Vice Chairman Casey Joe Johnson and by unanimous vote adopted to adjourn the meeting of the Wilkes County Board of Commissioners at 7: 58 P.M.

Sarah D. Call, Clerk

Gideon Keith Elmore, Chairman

WILKES COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

Approved: October 18, 2022