

COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**Monday, August 15, 2022****5:15 P.M.**

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

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT:

Ricky Bullard, **Chairman**
 Jerome McMillian, **Vice Chairman**
 Giles E. Byrd
 Lavern Coleman
 Brent Watts
 Charles T. McDowell
 Chris Smith

APPOINTEES PRESENT:

Eddie Madden, Jr., **County Manager**
 Amanda B. Prince, **Staff Attorney**
 Jay Leatherman, **Finance Director**

Agenda Item #1: MEETING CALLED to ORDER:

At 5:15 P.M., Chairman Ricky Bullard called the Monday, August 15, 2022 Columbus County Board of Commissioners 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:

At 5:16 P.M., Commissioner Smith made a motion to recess Regular Session and enter into Closed Session in accordance with N.C.G.S. § 143-318.11(A)(3) Attorney-Client privilege, seconded by Commissioner Coleman. The motion unanimously passed.

Agenda Item #2: CLOSED SESSION IN ACCORDANCE WITH N.C.G.S. § 143.318.11(A)(3) ATTORNEY-CLIENT PRIVILEGE:

No official action was taken.

ADJOURN CLOSED SESSION:

At 6:28 P.M., Commissioner McMillian made a motion to recess Closed Session, seconded by Commissioner Watts. The motion unanimously passed.

READING and APPROVAL of CLOSED SESSION GENERAL ACCOUNT:

Chairman Bullard requested Amanda Prince, Staff Attorney, to orally read the Closed Session General Account. Ms. Prince orally stated the following: "During Closed Session the Board discussed personnel matters, pending litigation and possible future litigations with Staff Attorney Amanda Prince, no action was taken by the Board."

MOTION:

Commissioner Byrd made a motion to enter into Regular Session, seconded by Commissioner Watts. The motion unanimously passed.

RECESS CLOSED SESSION and resume REGULAR SESSION:**6:30 P.M.****PUBLIC HEARING-**

Planned Development Zoning Districts Ordinance: The purpose of the public hearing is to receive oral and written comments from the public regarding the proposed Planned Development Zoning Districts Ordinance.

PUBLIC HEARING OPENED:

At 6:30 P.M., Chairman Bullard called the Public Hearing to order and stated that this is for the Planned Development Zoning Districts Ordinance. The purpose of the public hearing is to receive oral and written comments from the public regarding the proposed Planned Development Zoning Districts Ordinance.

COMMENTS:

Dr. Gary Lanier, Planning and Zoning Director, stated the purpose of this Ordinance is to allow us to move forward with growth, but with controlled planned and everyone working together growth. This plan will allow the planning department to work methodically with the developers to work with the needs of the County.

Commissioner Charles McDowell, made the comment that one of the most important aspects of this Ordinance, is it allows public input before anything is submitted. The developer can fill out an application, but before the process starts a Public Hearing will be held and the surrounding community members will be notified.

Lyndon Merritt, at 147 Antioch Church Road, Whiteville, NC 28472, stated the following:

- He has spoken to every single one of the Commissioners and he wanted to thank them.
- Thank you for taking the time to listen
- To be understanding
- He felt you had handle yourself professionally
- Not caring for one just one section of people in this County and working for the whole County
- You have done a good job
- Thank you!

Bryan Givens, at 2808 Antioch Church Road, Tabor City, NC 28463, stated there is a new subdivision with approximately 300 homes coming into the Dothan Community and the citizens of the Dothan Community was wondering if there was going to be a mandatory hookup to Grand Strand Sewer?

Chairman Bullard, stated he felt it was safe to say no.

Chris Hanks, 344 Hewett Drive, Whiteville, NC 28472, stated the following:

- He wanted to echo the cements that Lyndon Merritt said and want to give each one a thank you!
- He was wondering if there could be a HOA requirement put in place for any new subdivisions

Mr. Wes McCloud with Cape Fear Council of Governments, commented on the request for HOA requirements for any new subdivisions. Generally, you don't want to require a HOA, however, if there is a shared storm water system or some type of roadway infrastructure or street, etc. there will be a HOA or OPA mandated on how those are maintained.

Motion:

Commissioner McDowell made a motion to close the Public Hearing, seconded by Commissioner Coleman. The motion unanimously passed. Thi

PUBLIC HEARING CLOSED:

At 6:43 P.M., the Public Hearing was closed.

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

The invocation was delivered by Commissioner Smith. Everyone in attendance stood and pledged Allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America which was led by Commissioner McDowell.

Agenda Item #5: BOARD MINUTES APPROVAL:

- A. July 14, 2022 Planning Workshop
- B. July 18, 2022 Regular Session
 - 1. EMS Budget Amendment for additional funds for Rescue Units – Corrected Revenue Account Numbers: Changed 10-2000-292001 to 10-3991-499101

MOTION:

Commissioner Coleman made a motion to approve the Board Minutes, seconded by Commissioner Smith. The motion unanimously passed.

Agenda Item –#6A & B: - APPROVAL of AGENDA and AGENDA ADD-ONS A AND B

- A. COLUMBUS COUNTY SCHOOLS OFFER OF SALE 545 DESSIE ROAD, CHADBOURN, NC TO THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS FOR THE SUM OF \$5,600.
- B. CALL FOR PUBLIC HEARING FOR ANTIOCH FARM SUBDIVISION ON AUGUST 29, 2022,

AT 6:30 P.M.

MOTION:

Commissioner Byrd made a motion to approve Agenda Items 6 (A) and 6 (B) to the Agenda, seconded by Commissioner McMillian. The motion unanimously passed.

6. Approval of August 15, 2022 Agenda with Add-Ons 6.) (A) and 6.) (B):

Commissioner McDowell made a motion to approve the Agenda Items, seconded by Commissioner McMillian. The motion unanimously passed.

Agenda Item # 6.) A: COLUMBUS COUNTY SCHOOLS OFFER OF SALE 545 DESSIE ROAD, CHADBOURN, NC TO THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS FOR THE SUM OF \$5,600.

MOTION:

With recommendation from County Manager Eddie Madden to waive their rights and let the sell move forward, Commissioner Coleman made a motion to waived their rights to Agenda Item 6 (A), seconded by Commissioner Byrd. The motion unanimously passed.

Agenda Item # 6.) B: CALL FOR PUBLIC HEARING FOR ANTIOCH FARM SUBDIVISION ON AUGUST 29, 2022, AT 6:30 P.M.

MOTION:

Commissioner McDowell made a motion to approve the Agenda Item 6 (B), seconded by Commissioner McMillian. The motion unanimously passed.

Agenda Item #7: Public Input:

Chairman Bullard opened the floor for Public Comment.

Speaker #1

Heather Sasser, 4400 Sam Potts Hwy, Hallsboro, NC, stated the following:

- She asked the Board of Commissioners to reconsider the previous Lake Waccamaw Fire & Rescue Auxiliary Contract termination.
- She is not for sure what all that was about
- She is the Acting Chief now of Lake Waccamaw Fire & Rescue Auxiliary
- She has reached out to the County to try to get some understanding of what is going on
- She was given a three sentence letter, stating we were terminating the contract
- Ms. Prince sent a copy of the contract to her email and she has read it from one end to the other and cannot find a reason for the termination.
- I know you do not have to have a reason for the termination after you step out of the 90 days, however; I ask you to reconsider that.
- People in the community depend on us, we depend on them.
- I left a job making \$6 more dollars on the hour to come back here to run this department for the community
- I love what I do and each one of us loves what we do, we have dedicated our whole life.
- I have been in this job for a long time and have taken care of a lot of people.
- We all make mistakes; we all open our mouths when we shouldn't.
- I will 100% agree with that.
- All I ask for is to let us resolve this, instead of shutting down a department
- If one of you guys have acted out, you wouldn't shut down a whole Commission Board.
- If one person acts out, let us deal with it.
- I can tell you there will be some changes coming, whether there is 90 days given or not.
- We are going to make some changes.
- We love what we do, guys.
- Taking this way from us is wrong.
- I can talk for the whole department and its wrong.
- We didn't ask for none of this.
- I'm not sure what you guys have been told.
- If you want to get with me on a separate thing and want to talk to me about what you have been told, I will be glad to act on anything.
- Any advice that comes from the County, I will be glad to act on that. But, if you don't tell us, we don't know.
- If you've got a problem, we can't fix the problem if you don't tell us what the problem is.
- Our people love what they do and telling them they have 90 days is heart breaking.

Staff Attorney Amanda Prince: You have 30 seconds.

Heather Sasser:

- Oh, ok.
- I ask you to reconsider that, if not, for us then for the community
- We do love our community and that's why we do it
- Just like you guys you want to make change and you run for office
- All we are doing is try to help people
- I appreciate your time.

Speaker #2

Charles Shannon Worley, 719 Whitehall Rd, Whiteville, NC, stated the following:

- Wanted to come to you tonight first and foremost, the allegations that were made were against me.
- I'm not here to defend or say it didn't happen, or give you bull crap excuse.
- I ask you who has seen both videos. Who has seen both parts of it. Has any of you guys. Have you seen the other side of the story? Or the rest of the story as Paul Harvey says.
- I can tell you no body from the County has reached out to Lake Waccamaw EMS.
- Nobody that has done this investigation has spoken to any one from the agency. So we have a one sided story. But, we have a video that shows there is two sides to the story.
- Yes, I am here to ask you to reconsider as well.
- That's completely up to you guys.
- I apologize for whatever was done.
- Look at the video and see what was really done.
- Please understand the person that made the complaint is an ex Columbus County Sheriff's Department employee that was terminated from her job.
- So that person, are they really, did they take this opportunity to make something a little bit bigger?
- Other than that, you got to have a plan to take care of the people in Hallsboro, St. James, Lake Waccamaw, the edge of Bolton, going back towards Nakina
- About 3 1/2 to 4 months we had a plan, when Nakina Rescue was shut down.
- Many many times, we would get an email from David Ransom, (I don't have the exact number), we don't have coverage for the day in Nakina.
- I understand Whiteville Rescue is going to jump in and put a truck at Lake Waccamaw Fire Department.
- Eight times this week, they've called us because they can't handle their district.
- 27 of our last 100 calls, has been from mutual aid districts from Nakina, to Whiteville, to Buckhead. 27 out of 100.
- If it's your family, one conversation, one disagreement. I'm sure not asking you personally, I can't imagine there is one person on this board that can't say they haven't made a mistake in life. I've not gotten in an argument with my wife, I've not said stuff that really didn't work.

Staff Attorney Amanda Prince: you have 30 seconds.

Charles Shannon Worrell:

- Your plan didn't work the last time, how is it going to work this time?
- The ambulance they are talking about using at Lake Waccamaw Fire Department is in the shop. They drive it around one time and it's in the shop on Hwy 410.
- The last thing the Hispanic Community has reached out to our department and said they don't believe what was said.
- I'm not sure if they did, but a letter was supposed to be presented to you by two Hispanic restaurants.
- **Staff Attorney Amanda Prince:** That's 3 minutes.
- **Charles Shannon Worrell:**
- that said everything was ok.
- The final thing is why take the complaint of one person and damage the community without a real plan in place?

Speaker #3

Lynn Rich Worley, 719 Whitehall Rd, Whiteville, NC, stated the following:

- I come to you tonight as the Assistant Chief of Lake Waccamaw EMS.
- Thank you Commissioner Byrd for your continuing support.
- I came to you to say a few weeks ago I sat in an EMS Study Committee Meeting where each one of you were present.
- We were give an EMS Study that stated that we have several areas throughout the County that has a greater than 10 minutes' response time.
- However, there are not volunteers to fill the gaps.
- There was a vote to close down an entire department.
- One that runs 760 calls a year.
- You want mutual aid to step in, when we cover mutual aid for them.
- Was that really a smart decision for the citizens of the County?

- That's what we are really all in for.
- We are here to protect, to serve, and that's what we do.
- This places our citizens in jeopardy more so than before.
- The contract was taken, but no one bother to come and address points with us
- No complaints have been made to us.
- Please understand there was a diverse population of multiple ethnicities, as well sexual preferences on the night in question.
- Had someone came to us we would have been happy to have told you that.
- Our department has given multiple years of service and the person accused has dedicated 28 years of his life to this county.
- There has never been one single racial or sexual oriented complaint against the department or that person in 28 years.
- The week before this, we were dispatched to a medical call, we cleared that medical call.
- The person in question ran into a burning house with only EMS attire on.
- No fire truck.
- He didn't stop to say what is this person's race, what sexual orientation do they have?
- He ran into a burning house to save someone.
- Ms. Sasser, Mr. Lancaster went in the same house.
- Thursday before this happened, Mr. Madden and Mr. West sat in our department and told us what a wonderful job we were doing.
- It's hard for me to believe we went from being wonderful on Thursday, to being shut down on Monday.
- I have a problem with that.
- We have been here multiple times and you have given us certification stating what a good job we did.
- All of a sudden, we weren't worthy to speak to.
- I think we could at least have been talked to before you made that decision.
- I would appreciate it very much if you consider having a conversation with us and maybe reconsider your vote.
- We all have dedicated our lives to this community.

Staff Attorney Amanda Prince: You have 30 seconds.

Lynn Rich Worrell:

- St. James, not just St. James, but surrounding counties.
- We go all over to answer calls.
- We would really appreciate your reconsideration.
- Thank you!

Chairman Bullard:

- Thank you!
- We appreciate you also

Agenda Item #8: Proclamation- Approval of Proclamation Celebrating Tabor City Emergency Services for advancing to a Paramedic Level EMS Agency.

MOTION:

Commissioner Smith made a motion to approve the Proclamation Celebrating Tabor City Emergency Service for Advancing to a Paramedic Level EMS Agency, seconded by Commissioner Watts. The motion unanimously passed.

Agenda Item #9: EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT – KARLA BECK:

County Manager Eddie Madden will spotlight Columbus County Facilities Services' Executive Assistant Karla Beck.

County Manager Eddie Madden, stated the following:

- I have the pleasure to introduce this evening's Employee Spotlight, Ms. Karla Beck
- Karla has worked for Columbus County Facilities Services' since 2016
- She was nominated for tonight's recognition by Mr. Stuart Carroll, Facilities Services Director, who is also here this evening.
- According to Mr. Carroll, Karla is always the first one in the office each morning
- She never complains or is negative and never says no, or has an excuse.
- She has a great attitude toward her job and other people.
- Karla is typically the first person to fill calls from various departments regarding request for repairs for maintenance.
- She takes it upon herself to resolve problems, she demonstrates leadership every day.
- She is respected by her coworkers, facility department and among all county employees.
- Stuart Carroll state Karla is a well around exceptional person that goes an extra mile to make sure everything is in order while helping everyone to be the best and do the best she can.

- So, for these and many other reasons we are honor to recognize Karla Beck as employee spotlight recipient.
- We appreciate your hard work and dedication.
- Come forward and we will present a certificate to Karla.

Agenda Item #10: Administration –Approval of Agreement for On-Call Planning and Zoning Technical Services with Cape Fear Council of Governments.

MOTION:

Commissioner McDowell made a motion to approve the Agreement for On-Call Planning and Zoning Technical Services, seconded by Commissioner McMillian. The motion unanimously passed. This agreement is located in the Clerk’s office.

Agenda Item #11: Planning – Second Reading and Adoption of Planned Unit Development Zoning Ordinance:

MOTION:

Commissioner Coleman made a motion to approve the Agreement for On-Call Planning and Zoning Technical Services with Cape Fear COG, seconded by Commissioner Smith. The motion unanimously passed. A copy of this ordinance is located in the Clerk’s office.

Agenda Item #12: Columbus County Schools – Associate Superintendent Jonathan Williams, is Requesting Approval of Needs Base Capital Grants Application:

NEEDS-BASED PUBLIC SCHOOL CAPITAL FUND 2022 GRANT APPLICATION

ASSURANCE PAGE

Date: August 29, 2022

By signing below, we assure the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction that we are officials of our respective organizations and we are authorized to submit this application on behalf of these organizations.

We certify the following:

- The information provided in this proposal is correct and complete.
- The project described in the application is within the parameters of the Needs-Based Public School Capital Fund as required in Article 38B of G.S. 115C-546, and that all of the required local funding is available and designated as a match for this project.
- All Needs-Based Public School Capital Fund grant proceeds and the required Local Matching funds will be used for the construction project described in the application.
- We will work cooperatively with the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction in monitoring and evaluating the progress of the project to meet statutory reporting requirements. We will report on project status and State and local funds expended by April 1 of each year, at the time of each distribution request, and within 90 days of project completion.
- Upon receiving a Needs-Based Public School Capital Fund grant award, we will enter into an agreement with the Department of Public Instruction detailing the use of grant funds, in accordance with G.S. 115C-546.12.
- All applicable federal and state laws will be adhered to, including promotion of equal opportunity without regard to race, color, religion, gender, age, disability, political affiliation, or national origin.
- Generally accepted fiscal control and accounting procedures will be followed to ensure proper disbursement and accounting of funds from the Needs-Based Public School Capital Fund grant proceeds and required Local Matching funds.

Rich Bullard
(Signature – Chair, County Commissioners)

8/17/22
(Date)

(Signature – Chair, Board of Education)

(Date)



PROGRAM CRITERIA

Date: August 29, 2022

BACKGROUND

The Needs-Based Public School Capital Fund was established to assist counties with their critical public school building capital needs. Grants from the NBPSCF are funded with revenue from the NC Education Lottery. Grant funds are available to eligible counties for construction of new school buildings and additions, repairs, and renovations of existing school facilities.

APPLICATION TIMELINE

- Guidance Issued July 28, 2022
- Application Opens August 1, 2022
- Application Deadline September 1, 2022

ELIGIBILITY

Counties with an adjusted market value of taxable real property of less than \$40 billion are eligible to apply for a grant under the NBPSCF program. The list of eligible counties is published by DPI annually prior to the NBPSCF application period. The list of eligible counties for FY2022-23 is available here: <https://www.dpi.nc.gov/media/15318/download>

Grant funds must be used only for construction of new school buildings and additions, repairs, and renovations. Grant funds cannot be used for real property acquisition or for capital improvements to administrative buildings.

PROGRAM FUNDING

Funding available for NBPSCF Grant awards totals approximately \$296 million for FY2022-23.

MATCHING FUNDS

Counties receiving a grant are required to provide local matching funds from county funds, other non-state funds, or a combination of these sources, in accordance with G.S. 115C-546.11. Local matching fund requirements range from 0% to 35% of the grant amount, and are published by DPI annually prior to the NBPSCF application period. The local match requirement applicable to the project is the published local match requirement in effect at the time of the grant award. Local matching requirements for FY2022-23 grant applicants are available here: <https://www.dpi.nc.gov/media/15318/download>



PROGRAM CRITERIA

Date: August 29, 2022

MAXIMUM AWARD

Grant award maximums are as follows:

- Up to \$30 million for an Elementary School
- Up to \$40 million for a Middle School
- Up to \$50 million for a High School

An applicant may not apply for projects that exceed an aggregate amount greater than the maximum grant award amounts listed above in any single year.

Applications will be reviewed in the context of projected enrollment to evaluate the reasonableness of project size and scope.

REPORTING

Grant recipients are required to submit a report by April 1 of each year, with each grant funds distribution request, and upon completion of the project, detailing: the use of grant funds, progress on the project, and impact of the project on the county’s school capital plan.

Grant funds will be disbursed in a series of payments based on the progress of the project. To receive a distribution, the grant recipient must submit a request for distribution, along with documentation of the expenditures for which the distribution is requested, and evidence that the matching requirement has been met. DPI will provide grant recipients with Reporting and Distribution Request forms following announcement of awards.

AGREEMENT

A county receiving Needs-Based grant funds is required to enter into an agreement with the Department of Public Instruction detailing the use of grant funds, in accordance with G.S. 115C-546.12. DPI will provide grant recipients with Agreement Forms following announcement of awards. Signed Agreements are due within 60 days of award announcement.



NEEDS-BASED PUBLIC SCHOOL CAPITAL FUND 2022 GRANT APPLICATION PROJECT INFORMATION Date: August 29, 2022

Has this project received a previous NBPSCF grant? YES NO (X) NO If YES, provide date and dollar amount of previous award(s):

Was this project identified in the 5-year plan in the 2020-21 Facility Needs Survey? (X) YES NO

If not, provide explanation and attach equivalent information:

Will this project replace any existing facilities? (X) YES NO If YES, which school(s): Acme-Delco Elementary School, PreK-6, 311 students Hallsboro-Artesia Elementary School, PreK-6, 380 students (close) Students in 7th and 8th grades (204) currently housed at East Columbus High School

How many students will be served by this project? 900-950 Students

Has Advanced Planning been done for this project? (X) YES NO We are replicating an existing plan that is being used at two PreK through 8 schools which are under construction at the time of this grant request submission.

Have Construction Documents been completed for this project? YES (X) NO

Anticipated or Actual Bid Date: July 2023

Estimated Start Date of Construction: October 2023

Estimated Completion Date of Construction: April 2025



Applicant Status Counties that have not received a grant in the previous three years.



NEEDS-BASED PUBLIC SCHOOL CAPITAL FUND 2022 GRANT APPLICATION CONTACT INFORMATION Date: August 29, 2022

SUBMIT ONE APPLICATION PER SCHOOL CAMPUS – A PROJECT MAY INCLUDE MULTIPLE BUILDINGS

County: Columbus County Primary Contact: Eddie Madden Title: County Manager Address: 127 West Webster St Whiteville, NC Phone: 910-640-6630 email: emadden@columbusco.org

School Unit: Columbus County Schools Primary Contact: Dr. Deanne Meadows Title: Superintendent Address: 2586 James B. White Hwy North, Building A Whiteville, NC 28472 Phone: 910-642-5168 email: deannemeadows@columbus.k12.nc.us

APPLICATION SUBMITTAL

Submit completed applications and supporting materials by Thursday, September 1, 2022, via email to: Nathan Maune | School Planning Section Chief | 984-236-2919 | nathan.maune@dpi.nc.gov

SUBMITTAL CHECKLIST – SUBMIT ALL FILES IN PDF FORMAT

- Contact Information Application Form Project Narrative Budget Estimate Additional Documentation (as appropriate) Signed Assurance Page



NEEDS-BASED PUBLIC SCHOOL CAPITAL FUND 2022 GRANT APPLICATION PROJECT INFORMATION Date: August 29, 2022

Project Title: East Columbus PreK-8 School

Location: Eastern Columbus County on a site currently under negotiations

Type of Facility: PreK-8 School

Short Description of Proposed School Construction Project: Columbus County Schools plans to construct a new PreK-8 facility which would consolidate two current schools, Acme-Delco Elementary and Hallsboro-Artesia Elementary on a site in eastern Columbus County which is under negotiations. This new facility would replace buildings that were constructed as early as 1950 and serve approximately 900 students.

Describe the critical need this project addresses and the impact on student outcomes: In 2016, the Columbus County Board of Education and Board of Commissioners jointly secured a firm to conduct a study of school facilities. The study concluded that facilities were profoundly deficient in structural integrity, instructional space, and general safety. Compounding these issues was the fact that parts of the county were experiencing a decline in student enrollment, a condition that has continued to the present. In 2019, the Columbus County School Board made a decision to close Hallsboro Middle School and Acme-Delco Middle School and relocate the students and staff to East Columbus High School. In reality, the newly constructed school could possible house students and staff who were originally placed at four separate campuses. The facilities study concluded that the renovations of the four campuses would greatly exceed the cost of a new consolidated facility. Columbus County is a Tier-One county where resources are limited which has led to a perennial condition where staffing personnel (counselors, resource officers, and nurses) are shared among schools that are located over 25 miles apart. Moreover, staff members such as elective teachers, therapists, and instructional coaches must spend valuable time traveling between these schools as well. A newly constructed school will consolidate all of these critical services and have a tremendous impact of efficiency of operations. Students will benefit from more course offerings, greater social-emotional support, and vastly improved safety and security conditions in a modern energy-efficient building. Teachers will be able to collaborate more effectively to provide students the educational opportunities that they presently cannot due to small student/staff numbers and outdated buildings lacking in modern technological infrastructure.

(please attach additional information as necessary)



NEEDS-BASED PUBLIC SCHOOL CAPITAL FUND **2022 GRANT APPLICATION**
PROJECT INFORMATION Date: August 29, 2022

Has this project received a previous NBPSCF grant? YES NO
 If YES, provide date and dollar amount of previous award(s): _____

Was this project identified in the 5-year plan in the 2020-21 Facility Needs Survey? YES NO

If not, provide explanation and attach equivalent information:

Will this project replace any existing facilities? YES NO
 If YES, which school(s): Acme-Delco Elementary School, PreK-6, 311 students
Hallsboro-Artesia Elementary School, PreK-6, 380 students (close)
Students in 7th and 8th grades (204) currently housed at East Columbus High School

How many students will be served by this project? 900-950 Students

Has Advanced Planning been done for this project? YES NO
 We are replicating an existing plan that is being used at two PreK through 8 schools which are under construction at the time of this grant request submission.

Have Construction Documents been completed for this project? YES NO

Anticipated or Actual Bid Date: July 2023

Estimated Start Date of Construction: October 2023

Estimated Completion Date of Construction: April 2025



NEEDS-BASED PUBLIC SCHOOL CAPITAL FUND **2022 GRANT APPLICATION**
PROJECT BUDGET Date: August 29, 2022

Total NBPSCF Grant funding requested for this project: \$40,000,000.00
 Minimum NBPSCF Grant funding for project to proceed (optional): _____

Estimated Project Costs	Local (non-State)	NBPSCF Grant Funds	Total
Planning	\$ 128,672.56	\$ 2,236,191.74	\$ 2,364,864.30
Construction	\$ 4,441,360.00	\$ 36,330,100.00	\$ 40,771,460.00
Other Costs*	\$ 475,000.44	\$ 1,433,708.26	\$ 1,908,708.70
Total	\$ 5,045,033.00	\$ 40,000,000.00	\$ 45,045,033.00

*Project costs normally categorized as 'owner's direct costs' on a construction project – may include items such as site surveys, materials testing, site utilities, geotechnical reports, etc. Land acquisition costs are not eligible.

Source(s) of required Local Matching Funds: Columbus County Schools Capital Outlay
Additional funding provided Columbus County Commissioners

Have any of the Local Matching Funds been expended at the time of application? YES NO
 If YES, provide amount expended: \$5,500.00 by Columbus County Board of Education

If YES, provide description of work: Preliminary drawing showing slight modifications to existing plans

Estimated Project Expenditures by Fiscal Year (show estimated period over which funds will be spent by Fiscal Year)

Total Expenditures	2021-22 or earlier	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25 or later	Total
Local Match (Non-State Funds)	\$	\$ 1,045,033.00	\$ 2,000,000.00	\$ 2,000,000.00	\$ 5,045,033.00
Requested NBPSCF Grant Funds*	\$	\$ 3,500,000.00	\$ 12,000,000.00	\$ 24,500,000.00	\$ 40,000,000.00
Total Estimated Expenditures by Fiscal Year	\$	\$ 4,545,033.00	\$ 14,000,000.00	\$ 26,500,000.00	\$ 45,045,033.00

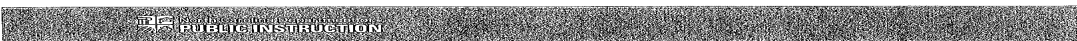
*Total requested grant funding cannot exceed maximum allowed under G.S. 115C-546.11(c)



NEEDS-BASED PUBLIC SCHOOL CAPITAL FUND **2022 GRANT APPLICATION**
ADDITIONAL DOCUMENTATION Date: August 29, 2022

Any project funded with a grant from the Needs-Based Public School Capital Fund must follow the same review process as any other LEA capital project.

- A registered Architect and/or registered Engineer shall prepare the drawings and specifications in accordance with G.S. 133-1 through 133-4.1, as applicable.
- School Planning design review is required. Design documents must be submitted at appropriate intervals during design – SD, DD, and CD. Neither the LEA nor the County shall invest any funds in construction of the project until the review process is completed.
- Transmittal of drawings and specifications to School Planning must include the form at: <https://www.dpi.nc.gov/media/581/download>
- Design of the project should be in compliance with DPI School Planning Guidelines: <https://www.dpi.nc.gov/districts-schools/district-operations/school-planning>
- DPI Facility Design Guidelines can be found at: <https://www.dpi.nc.gov/media/569/download>
- DPI School Science Facility Requirements can be found at: <https://www.dpi.nc.gov/media/570/download> <https://www.dpi.nc.gov/media/571/download>
- For projects involving the closing of an existing school, the LEA must follow these procedures: <https://www.dpi.nc.gov/media/13311/download>
- For projects involving the demolition of an existing school building, the LEA must follow the closing procedure noted above and must submit a Feasibility and Cost Analysis: <https://www.dpi.nc.gov/media/544/download>



MOTION:

Commissioner McDowell made a motion to approve the Columbus County Schools Needs Base Capital Grants Application, seconded by Commissioner McMillian. The motion unanimously passed.

Agenda Item #13: Health Department – Health Director Kim Smith, Addressed Board with Second Reading and Approval of New Tobacco-Free Policy for Columbus County Health Department, Located at 304 Jefferson Street, Whiteville, NC 28472:

MOTION:

Commissioner Coleman made a motion to approve the New Tobacco-Free Policy, seconded by Commissioner McMillian. Madame Attorney Amanda Prince took roll call: 5 yays and 2 nays. Chairman Bullard stated the motion passes 5 to 2. A copy of this policy is located in the Clerk's office.

Commissioner Coleman- yes
Commissioner Bullard – yes
Commissioner Watts – no

Commissioner McDowell – yes
Commissioner McMillian – yes

Commissioner Smith – yes
Commissioner Byrd – no

Agenda Item #14: Health Department – Health Director Kim Smith, is Requesting Approval to Hire a Full-time Grant Funded Temporary Position to Assist with COVID Case Contact Tracing:

MOTION:

Commissioner Watts made a motion to approve Hiring a Full-time Grant Funded Temporary Position to Assist with COVID Case Contact Tracing, seconded by Commissioner McMillian. The motion unanimously passed.

Agenda Item #15: Facility Services – Facilities Director Stuart Carroll, is Requesting Approval of Low Bid to Replace HVAC units at the Downtown B Building: Stuart Carroll, Director, requested Board approval of the low bid from Pridgen Brother of \$442,102 for replacement of both East and West Units.

MOTION:

Commissioner McDowell made a motion to approve, seconded by Commissioner Coleman. The motion unanimously passed.

Agenda Item #16: Aging – Aging Director Kristie Massey, is Requesting Approval of ARPA Funds:

MOTION:

Commissioner Smith made a motion to approve \$311,179 ARPA Funds for Aging, seconded by Commissioner Byrd. The motion unanimously passed.

Agenda Item #17: DSS – DSS Director Algernon McKenzie, Presented the Following Monthly Administrative Report:

**Monthly Administrative Update
For July 2022
August 15, 2022 Meeting**

On July 5, 2022, we welcomed new our new accounting specialist to the administrative unit. Mrs. Rebecca Cance filled the position, which is very critical to the financial operation of our agency.

On July 14, 2022, I participated on the monthly Director's Executive Board Meeting. During the meeting we received an update of the changes to Medicaid reimbursements to counties. We were given information on what the state wants reported by counties starting in September in the reimbursement system. We will be required to report all job classifications for Medicaid workers. This will enable the state to report information to the Feds to determine what functions are allowable to be reimbursed to local DSS agencies for services. We were told that there will be some loss of revenue once this progress is completed over the next few months, which will be based on how each county claims reimbursement for Medicaid services. The state will be providing some training and continuous direction on this matter during the month of August.

We were also told that there was no Medicaid expansion passed in the state's 2022-2023 budget. However, NC Health Choice and Medicaid are being merged by the General Assembly by June of 2023. The State Division of health Benefits is working on how this merger will take place.

Lastly, we were told that the SNAP ARA Funding for Food & Nutrition will take place for the service months of August and September. The state will reimburse counties at a rate of 100% instead of 50%/50% for Food &

Nutrition services. The purpose of this reimbursement is to reinvest it in the Food & Nutrition Program. The state will provide guidance of how local DSS agencies can use these Federal Funds.

During the month of July, we met with our state consultants concerning the results of the REDA Medicaid Audit, although we had some technical errors in our Medicaid program, I am proud to say that our Medicaid Program Staff not only met the required Federal expectation of 96.8% but exceeded it by scoring a 100% accuracy rate for active actions. In fact, Columbus County was one of only six counties throughout the state (100 Counties) that was able to perform at such a high standard. I received an email from the state consultant applauding the Medicaid Programs Leadership and the Income Maintenance Caseworkers who do this work daily. I am proud of the staff's achievement in spite of being short staffed at times, they were still able to perform and provide much needed benefits to the citizens of Columbus County.

Lastly, During the month of July, I attended and participated in six zoom and in person meeting.

July 2022 Human Services

Adult Services (APS)

APS Reports Accepted: 4
County Wards: 29
Number of Payee Cases: 13
Adults Served APS: 0
Number of Medicaid Transportation Trips: 1,219
Amount Requested for Reimbursement: \$19,082.42

Children's Protective Services (CPS)

Reports Screened out: 24
Families Receiving In-Home Services: 35
Children Served: 77
Contacts with Families Monthly: 412
Assessments: 7

Work First Employment (TANF)

Applications Taken: 16
Applications Approved: 5
Individuals Receiving Benefits: 193
Entered Employments: 1
Number in Non-Paid Work Experience: 0

Program Integrity

Collections for Fraud: \$430.00
New Referrals: 4

Day Care

Children Receiving Day Care Assistance: 479
Cases Established: 1
Children on the Waiting List: 94
Amount Spent on Day Care Services: \$199,188.00

July 2022 Economic Services

Food & Nutrition

Applications Taken: 224
Applications Approved: 241
Active Cases: 6,293
Benefits Issued: \$3,231,900.00
Participants Served: 12,345

Adult Medicaid

Applications Taken: 59
Cases Terminated: 32
Redeterminations: 213
Applications Processed: 117

Family & Children's Medicaid

Applications Taken: 127
Applications Processed: 258
Redeterminations: 863
Total Medicaid Cases: 14,981
Total Individuals Receiving: 22,851

Child Support

Absent Parents Located: 57
Orders Enforced: 912
Active Cases: 3,849
Collections: \$411,900.00

Respectfully submitted,
Algernon McKenzie

Agenda Item #18: Legal – Approval of Signatory Authority for Amanda Prince to Apply for REDLG Grant/Loans from Brunswick Electric Membership Corporation Through USDA:

MOTION:

Commissioner Byrd made a motion to approve Signatory Authority for Amanda Prince to Apply for REDLG Grant/Loans from Brunswick Electric Membership Corp. Through USDA, seconded by Commissioner Smith. The motion unanimously passed.

Agenda Item #19: Legal – Approval of Lease Extension for USDA Farm Service Building:

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE LEASE AMENDMENT	LEASE AMENDMENT No. 4 TO LEASE NO. 37047Columbus16 / Columbus County, NC FSA Office
ADDRESS OF PREMISES WHITEVILLE SERVICE CENTER 45 GOVERNMENT COMPLEX RD WHITEVILLE, NC 28472	PDN Number: N/A

THIS AMENDMENT is made and entered into between Columbus County whose address is: 111 Washington Street Whiteville NC 28472 hereinafter called the Lessor, and the UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, hereinafter called the Government:

WHEREAS, the parties hereto desire to amend the above Lease to extend lease term.

NOW THEREFORE, these parties for good and valuable consideration, the receipt and sufficiency of which is hereby acknowledged, covenant and agree that the said Lease is amended, effective upon execution by the Government as follows:

- Effective upon execution by the Government, the lease period of the above described premises will be extended from January 1, 2022 through December 31, 2024.
- Effective January 1, 2022, the Government will pay the Lessor annual rent of \$57,150.00 payable at the rate of \$4,762.50 per month (representing \$10.00* per square foot for 5,715 rentable square feet of office space) in arrears. (*Rates may be rounded.)
- The lease is amended to include FAR Part 52.204-25 (attached to this lease document) which will be initialed by the Lessor and Government.
- The Lessor must have an active/updated registration in the System for Award Management (SAM) System (<https://www.sam.gov>) upon receipt of this lease Amendment. The Government will not process rent payments to Lessors without an active/updated SAM Registration.

This Lease Amendment contains 4 pages.

All other terms and conditions of the lease shall remain in force and effect. IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the parties subscribed their names as of the below date.

FOR THE LESSOR:

FOR THE GOVERNMENT:

Signature: _____
 Name: _____
 Title: _____
 Entity Name: _____
 Date: _____

Signature: _____
 Name: _____
 Title: Lease Contracting Officer, USDA
 Date: _____

WITNESSED FOR THE LESSOR BY:

Signature: _____
 Name: _____
 Title: _____
 Date: _____

Lease Amendment Form 12/12

FAR 52-204-25

Prohibition on Contracting for Certain Telecommunications and Video Surveillance Services or Equipment (Nov 2021)

(a) Definitions. As used in this clause—

Backhaul means intermediate links between the core network, or backbone network, and the small subnetworks at the edge of the network (e.g., connecting cell phones/towers to the core telephone network). Backhaul can be wireless (e.g., microwave) or wired (e.g., fiber optic, coaxial cable, Ethernet).

Covered foreign country means The People’s Republic of China.

Covered telecommunications equipment or services means—

- Telecommunications equipment produced by Huawei Technologies Company or ZTE Corporation (or any subsidiary or affiliate of such entities);
- For the purpose of public safety, security of Government facilities, physical security surveillance of critical infrastructure, and other national security purposes, video surveillance and telecommunications equipment produced by Hytera Communications Corporation, Hangzhou Hikvision Digital Technology Company, or Dahua Technology Company (or any subsidiary or affiliate of such entities);
- Telecommunications or video surveillance services provided by such entities or using such equipment; or
- Telecommunications or video surveillance equipment or services produced or provided by an entity that the Secretary of Defense, in consultation with the Director of National Intelligence or the Director of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, reasonably believes to be an entity owned or controlled by, or otherwise connected to, the government of a covered foreign country.

Critical technology means—

- Defense articles or defense services included on the United States Munitions List set forth in the International Traffic in Arms Regulations under subchapter M of chapter I of title 22, Code of Federal Regulations;
- Items included on the Commerce Control List set forth in Supplement No. 1 to part 774 of the Export Administration Regulations under subchapter C of chapter VII of title 15, Code of Federal Regulations, and controlled-
 - Pursuant to multilateral regimes, including for reasons relating to national security, chemical and biological weapons proliferation, nuclear nonproliferation, or missile technology; or
 - For reasons relating to regional stability or surreptitious listening;
- Specially designed and prepared nuclear equipment, parts and components, materials, software, and technology covered by part 810 of title 10, Code of Federal Regulations (relating to assistance to foreign atomic energy activities);

(4) Nuclear facilities, equipment, and material covered by part 110 of title 10, Code of Federal Regulations (relating to export and import of nuclear equipment and material);

(5) Select agents and toxins covered by part 331 of title 7, Code of Federal Regulations, part 121 of title 9 of such Code, or part 73 of title 42 of such Code; or

(6) Emerging and foundational technologies controlled pursuant to section 1758 of the Export Control Reform Act of 2018 (50 U.S.C. 4817).

Interconnection arrangements means arrangements governing the physical connection of two or more networks to allow the use of another's network to hand off traffic where it is ultimately delivered (e.g., connection of a customer of telephone provider A to a customer of telephone company B) or sharing data and other information resources.

Reasonable inquiry means an inquiry designed to uncover any information in the entity's possession about the identity of the producer or provider of covered telecommunications equipment or services used by the entity that excludes the need to include an internal or third-party audit.

Roaming means cellular communications services (e.g., voice, video, data) received from a visited network when unable to connect to the facilities of the home network either because signal coverage is too weak or because traffic is too high.

Substantial or essential component means any component necessary for the proper function or performance of a piece of equipment, system, or service.

(b) *Prohibition.*

(1) Section 889(a)(1)(A) of the John S. McCain National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2019 (Pub. L. 115-232) prohibits the head of an executive agency on or after August 13, 2019, from procuring or obtaining, or extending or renewing a contract to procure or obtain, any equipment, system, or service that uses covered telecommunications equipment or services as a substantial or essential component of any system, or as critical technology as part of any system. The Contractor is prohibited from providing to the Government any equipment, system, or service that uses covered telecommunications equipment or services as a substantial or essential component of any system, or as critical technology as part of any system, unless an exception at paragraph (c) of this clause applies or the covered telecommunication equipment or services are covered by a waiver described in FAR 4.2104.

(2) Section 889(a)(1)(B) of the John S. McCain National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2019 (Pub. L. 115-232) prohibits the head of an executive agency on or after August 13, 2020, from entering into a contract, or extending or renewing a contract, with an entity that uses any equipment, system, or service that uses covered telecommunications equipment or services as a substantial or essential component of any system, or as critical technology as part of any system, unless an exception at paragraph (c) of this clause applies or the covered telecommunication equipment or services are covered by a waiver described in FAR 4.2104. This prohibition applies to the use of covered telecommunications equipment or services, regardless of whether that use is in performance of work under a Federal contract.

(c) *Exceptions.* This clause does not prohibit contractors from providing—

(1) A service that connects to the facilities of a third-party, such as backhaul, roaming, or interconnection arrangements; or

FAR Clause 52.204-25
NOV 2021

LESSOR: _____ GOVERNMENT: _____

Lease Amendment Form 12/12

(2) Telecommunications equipment that cannot route or redirect user data traffic or permit visibility into any user data or packets that such equipment transmits or otherwise handles.

(d) *Reporting requirement.*

(1) In the event the Contractor identifies covered telecommunications equipment or services used as a substantial or essential component of any system, or as critical technology as part of any system, during contract performance, or the Contractor is notified of such by a subcontractor at any tier or by any other source, the Contractor shall report the information in paragraph (d)(2) of this clause to the Contracting Officer, unless elsewhere in this contract are established procedures for reporting the information; in the case of the Department of Defense, the Contractor shall report to the website at <https://dibnet.dod.mil>. For indefinite delivery contracts, the Contractor shall report to the Contracting Officer for the indefinite delivery contract and the Contracting Officer(s) for any affected order or, in the case of the Department of Defense, identify both the indefinite delivery contract and any affected orders in the report provided at <https://dibnet.dod.mil>.

(2) The Contractor shall report the following information pursuant to paragraph (d)(1) of this clause

(i) Within one business day from the date of such identification or notification: the contract number; the order number(s), if applicable; supplier name; supplier unique entity identifier (if known); supplier Commercial and Government Entity (CAGE) code (if known); brand; model number (original equipment manufacturer number, manufacturer part number, or wholesaler number); item description; and any readily available information about mitigation actions undertaken or recommended.

(ii) Within 10 business days of submitting the information in paragraph (d)(2)(i) of this clause: any further available information about mitigation actions undertaken or recommended. In addition, the Contractor shall describe the efforts it undertook to prevent use or submission of covered telecommunications equipment or services, and any additional efforts that will be incorporated to prevent future use or submission of covered telecommunications equipment or services.

(e) *Subcontracts.* The Contractor shall insert the substance of this clause, including this paragraph (e) and excluding paragraph (b)(2), in all subcontracts and other contractual instruments, including subcontracts for the acquisition of commercial products or commercial services.

(End of clause)

FAR Clause 52.204-25
NOV 2021

LESSOR: _____ GOVERNMENT: _____

Lease Amendment Form 12/12

MOTION:

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

Agenda Item #20: Finance – Acceptance of Monthly Finance Report:

Melanie Hester, Interim Finance Director, provided the Board with the monthly finance report.

COUNTY OF COLUMBUS				
FINANCIAL SUMMARY REPORT				
July 31, 2022		Percent of Year Complete: 8.33 %		
FUND 10 - OPERATIONS				
	FY 22/23	ACTUAL YTD	BALANCE	% Expensed
REVENUES	BUDGET	TOTALS	REMAINING	YTD
AD VALOREM TAXES	\$ 38,800,374	\$ 2,769	\$ 38,797,605	0.01%
COURT	\$ 90,000	\$ -	\$ 90,000	0.00%
SALES TAX	\$ 13,633,601	\$ 993,000	\$ 12,640,601	7.28%
NC JCPC PROGRAM - TEEN COURT	\$ 77,477	\$ -	\$ 77,477	0.00%
ELECTION FEES	\$ 54,000	\$ 443	\$ 53,557	0.82%
REGISTER OF DEEDS	\$ 394,300	\$ 56,726	\$ 337,574	14.39%
SHERIFF	\$ 2,295,275	\$ -	\$ 2,295,275	0.00%
DETENTION CENTER	\$ 1,090,000	\$ -	\$ 1,090,000	0.00%
EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT	\$ 67,101	\$ -	\$ 67,101	0.00%
INSPECTION	\$ 390,000	\$ 6,997	\$ 383,003	1.79%
ANIMAL CONTROL	\$ 37,000	\$ 25	\$ 36,975	0.07%
AIRPORT	\$ 515,000	\$ 2,950	\$ 512,050	0.57%
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT	\$ 113,000	\$ 530	\$ 112,470	0.47%
PLANNING	\$ 1,200	\$ -	\$ 1,200	0.00%
SOIL CONSERVATION	\$ 34,890	\$ -	\$ 34,890	0.00%
DEPARTMENT OF AGING REVENUES	\$ 1,803,080	\$ 4,142	\$ 1,798,938	0.23%
HEALTH DEPARTMENT	\$ 2,614,410	\$ 358,295	\$ 2,256,115	13.70%
SOCIAL SERVICE	\$ 7,065,913	\$ 505	\$ 7,065,408	0.01%
VETERANS SERVICE	\$ 2,000	\$ -	\$ 2,000	0.00%
PUBLIC SCHOOLS	\$ 21,000	\$ -	\$ 21,000	0.00%
LIBRARY	\$ 131,000	\$ 10,398	\$ 120,602	7.94%
RECREATION	\$ 19,500	\$ 1,760	\$ 17,740	9.03%
MISCELLANEOUS REVENUES	\$ 392,519	\$ -	\$ 392,519	0.00%
INVESTMENT EARNINGS	\$ 680,527	\$ -	\$ 680,527	0.00%
FUND BALANCE APPROPRIATED	\$ 350,000	\$ -	\$ 350,000	0.00%
Total General Fund Revenues	\$ 70,673,167	\$ 1,438,540	\$ 69,234,627	2.04%

COUNTY OF COLUMBUS				
FINANCIAL SUMMARY REPORT				
July 31, 2022				
FUND 10 - OPERATIONS				
	FY 22/23	YTD	BALANCE	% EXPENSED
EXPENDITURES	BUDGET	TOTALS	REMAINING	YTD
GOVERNING BODY	\$ 314,509	\$ 26,148	\$ 288,361	8.31%
ADMINISTRATION	\$ 1,041,964	\$ 603,173	\$ 438,791	57.89%
PERSONNEL	\$ 433,465	\$ 96,751	\$ 336,714	22.32%
FINANCE	\$ 839,080	\$ 52,272	\$ 786,808	6.23%
TAX DEPARTMENT	\$ 1,712,705	\$ 130,415	\$ 1,582,290	7.61%
LEGAL DEPARTMENT	\$ 216,937	\$ 34,734	\$ 182,203	16.01%
NC JCPC PROGRAM - TEEN COURT	\$ 77,477	\$ 4,757	\$ 72,720	6.14%
FACILITY SERVICES	\$ 2,175,439	\$ 169,046	\$ 2,006,393	7.77%
ELECTIONS	\$ 519,204	\$ 16,149	\$ 503,055	3.11%
REGISTER OF DEEDS	\$ 542,172	\$ 25,948	\$ 516,224	4.79%
SPECIAL APPROPRIATIONS	\$ 1,017,369	\$ 111,898	\$ 905,471	11.00%
MANAGEMENT INFORMATION SYSTEM	\$ 499,850	\$ 65,592	\$ 434,258	13.12%
CENTRAL GARAGE	\$ 52,204	\$ 51	\$ 52,153	0.10%
PUBLICLY OWNED TREATMENT WATER	\$ 51,042	\$ 221	\$ 50,821	0.43%
SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT	\$ 9,139,823	\$ 572,293	\$ 8,567,530	6.26%
LAW ENFORCEMENT CENTER	\$ 5,224,025	\$ 220,052	\$ 5,003,973	4.21%
EMS	\$ 31,250	\$ -	\$ 31,250	0.00%
EMERGENCY SERVICES	\$ 2,270,455	\$ 121,709	\$ 2,148,746	5.36%
CORONER MEDICAL EXAMINER	\$ 30,500	\$ 2,350	\$ 28,150	7.70%
ANIMAL CONTROL	\$ 898,699	\$ 33,883	\$ 864,816	3.77%
AIRPORT	\$ 565,624	\$ 11,741	\$ 553,883	2.08%
INSPECTIONS	\$ 369,545	\$ 25,429	\$ 344,116	6.88%
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT/PLANNING	\$ 1,191,488	\$ 45,251	\$ 1,146,237	3.80%
COOPERATIVE EXTENSION	\$ 614,214	\$ -	\$ 614,214	0.00%
SOIL CONSERVATION	\$ 304,718	\$ 15,379	\$ 289,339	5.05%
DEPARTMENT OF AGING	\$ 2,866,093	\$ 142,840	\$ 2,723,253	4.98%
HEALTH DEPARTMENT	\$ 5,480,750	\$ 298,249	\$ 5,182,502	5.44%
SOCIAL SERVICES ADMINISTRATION	\$ 9,423,310	\$ 592,655	\$ 8,830,655	6.29%
PUBLIC ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS	\$ 2,098,049	\$ 20,812	\$ 2,077,237	0.99%
VETERANS SERVICE OFFICER	\$ 166,143	\$ 11,277	\$ 154,866	6.79%
EDUCATION	\$ 15,825,188	\$ 944,092	\$ 14,881,096	5.97%
LIBRARY	\$ 1,681,180	\$ 104,651	\$ 1,576,529	6.22%
RECREATION	\$ 644,122	\$ 36,154	\$ 607,968	5.61%
TRANSFER TO	\$ 2,354,574	\$ -	\$ 2,354,574	0.00%
Total General Fund Expenditures	\$ 70,673,167	\$ 4,535,974	\$ 66,137,193	6.42%
Total Revenue over/(under) Expenditures	\$0	\$ (3,097,435)		

COUNTY OF COLUMBUS				
FINANCIAL SUMMARY REPORT				
July 31, 2022				
COURTHOUSE RENOVATION PROJECT				
	<u>FY 22/23</u>	<u>YTD</u>	<u>BALANCE</u>	<u>% Collected</u>
<i>REVENUES</i>	<u>BUDGET</u>	<u>TOTALS</u>	<u>REMAINING</u>	<u>YTD</u>
COURTHOUSE CAP PROJ REVENUES	\$ 5,986,280	\$5,986,280	\$ -	100.00%
<i>EXPENDITURES</i>				
COURTHOUSE CAP PROJ EXPENDITURES	\$ 5,986,280	\$795,054	\$ 5,191,226	13.28%
HUD SECTION 8 RENTAL ASSISTANCE				
	<u>FY 22/23</u>	<u>YTD</u>	<u>BALANCE</u>	<u>% Collected</u>
<i>REVENUES</i>	<u>BUDGET</u>	<u>TOTALS</u>	<u>REMAINING</u>	<u>YTD</u>
HUD SECTION 8 RENTAL ASSISTANCE				
ANNUAL CONTRA EARNED	\$ 1,518,500	\$0	\$ 1,518,500	0.00%
OTHER REVENUES	\$ 344,400	\$ 50	\$ 344,350	0.01%
TOTAL HUD REVENUES	\$ 1,862,900	\$ 50	\$ 1,862,850	0.00%
<i>EXPENDITURES</i>				
HUD Expenditures	\$ 1,862,900	\$ 149,625	\$ 1,713,275	8.03%
Excess revenue over/(under) expenditures	\$0	\$ (149,575)		
TRANSPORTATION				
	<u>FY 22/23</u>	<u>YTD</u>	<u>BALANCE</u>	<u>% Collected</u>
<i>REVENUES</i>	<u>BUDGET</u>	<u>TOTALS</u>	<u>REMAINING</u>	<u>YTD</u>
REVENUES	\$ 1,166,568	\$ -	\$ 1,166,568	0.00%
<i>EXPENDITURES</i>				
EXPENDITURES	\$ 1,166,568	\$ 6,453	\$ 1,160,115	0.55%
EMERGENCY TELEPHONE SYSTEM				
	<u>FY 22/23</u>	<u>YTD</u>	<u>BALANCE</u>	<u>% Collected</u>
<i>REVENUES</i>	<u>BUDGET</u>	<u>TOTALS</u>	<u>REMAINING</u>	<u>YTD</u>
REVENUES	\$ 694,600	\$ -	\$ 694,600	0.00%
<i>EXPENDITURES</i>				
EXPENDITURES	\$ 694,600	\$ 4,776	\$ 689,824	0.69%
DEBT SERVICE				
	<u>FY 22/23</u>	<u>YTD</u>	<u>BALANCE</u>	<u>% Collected</u>
<i>REVENUES</i>	<u>BUDGET</u>	<u>TOTALS</u>	<u>REMAINING</u>	<u>YTD</u>
REVENUES	\$ 15,536,002	\$0	\$ 15,536,002	0.00%
<i>EXPENDITURES</i>				
EXPENDITURES	\$ 15,536,002	\$ 144,940	\$ 15,391,062	0.93%
WATER DISTRICTS I-V				
	<u>FY 22/23</u>	<u>YTD</u>	<u>BALANCE</u>	<u>% Collected</u>
<i>REVENUES</i>	<u>BUDGET</u>	<u>TOTALS</u>	<u>REMAINING</u>	<u>YTD</u>
COLUMBUS COUNTY COMBINED WATER DISTRICT	\$ 4,470,696	\$ 427,584	\$ 4,043,112	9.56%
<i>EXPENDITURES</i>				
COLUMBUS COUNTY COMBINED WATER DISTRICT	\$ 4,470,696	\$ 66,578	\$ 4,404,118	1.49%
Excess revenue over/(under) expenditures	\$0	\$ 361,006		
SOLID WASTE				
	<u>FY 22/23</u>	<u>YTD</u>	<u>BALANCE</u>	<u>% Collected</u>
<i>REVENUES</i>	<u>BUDGET</u>	<u>TOTALS</u>	<u>REMAINING</u>	<u>YTD</u>
REVENUES	\$ 6,016,446	\$ 8,597	\$ 6,007,849	0.14%
<i>EXPENDITURES</i>				
EXPENDITURES	\$ 6,016,446	\$ 42,477	\$ 5,973,969	0.71%
Excess revenue over/(under) expenditures	\$0	\$ (33,881)		
FIRE DEPARTMENTS				
	<u>FY 22/23</u>	<u>YTD</u>	<u>BALANCE</u>	<u>% Collected</u>
<i>REVENUES</i>	<u>BUDGET</u>	<u>TOTALS</u>	<u>REMAINING</u>	<u>YTD</u>
REVENUES	\$ 2,034,697	\$0	\$ 2,034,697	0.00%
<i>EXPENDITURES</i>				
Ad Valorem Taxes	\$ 2,034,697	\$0	\$ 2,034,697	0.00%
Special Appropriations	\$ 258,309	\$0	\$ 258,309	0.00%
	\$ 2,293,006	\$0	\$ 2,293,006	0.00%
AMBULANCE AND RESCUE				
	<u>FY 22/23</u>	<u>YTD</u>	<u>BALANCE</u>	<u>% Collected</u>
<i>REVENUES</i>	<u>BUDGET</u>	<u>TOTALS</u>	<u>REMAINING</u>	<u>YTD</u>
REVENUES	\$ 849,681	\$0	\$ 849,681	0.00%
<i>EXPENDITURES</i>				
Ad Valorem Taxes	\$ 849,681	\$ -	\$ 849,681	0.00%
Special Appropriation	\$ 225,000	\$ 100,000	\$ 125,000	44.44%
	\$ 1,074,681	\$ 100,000	\$ 974,681	9.31%

<u>CASH & INVESTMENTS</u>	
Cash:	
General Fund - checking account	\$ 5,000,000
General Fund - NCCMT	\$ 12,728,966
Water Districts	9,468,844
Solid Waste	5,293,027
Total Cash Available	\$ 32,490,837
Investments:	
BB&T Investments	5,745,739
BB&T Savings	5,022,151
First Community Bank - CD	338,459
Dana Investments	1,387,397
Multi Bank Securities	585,717
First Bank - CD	2,078,919
Total Investments	\$ 15,158,382
FUND BALANCE	
General Fund:	
Unavailable Fund Balance (per auditors)	\$ 7,223,150
Committed and Assigned Fund Balance	\$ 11,898,242
Unassigned Fund Balance	\$ 12,768,717
Unassigned fund balance as % of Gen. Fd. Expend.	20.1%
Water Districts Fund Balance	\$ 9,819,025
Solid Waste Fund Balance	\$ 8,213,508

BUDGET AMENDMENT FY 22/23

Name of Department: Health Department
 Agency Head Signature: *Kimberly Smith 07/14/22*
 Date Prepare / Submitted to Admin: July 14, 2022 Date Received in Admin: _____

Budget Code	EXPENDITURES	Requested
Fund Dept Category	Classification	Increase or (Decrease)
10 5121 512100	Comm Disease Salaries	\$50,000
10 5121 512700	Comm Disease Longevity	\$2,000
10 5121 518100	Comm Disease FICA	\$2,000
10 5121 518200	Comm Disease Retirement	\$2,000
10 5121 518300	Comm Disease Insurance	\$3,500
10 5121 523900	Comm Disease Drugs and Medical	\$100,000
10 5121 526001	Comm Disease Departmental Supplies	\$114,394
Total Net Expense		\$273,894

Budget Code	REVENUES	Requested
Fund Dept Category	Classification	Increase or (Decrease)
10 3510 430057	Comm Disease State Grant	\$273,894
Total Net Revenue		\$273,894

This budget revision has been approved by the Columbus County Finance Office:
 This budget revision has been approved by the Columbus County County Manager:
 This budget revision has been approved by the Board of Columbus County Commissioners on: _____
 Signature _____ Date _____

Explanation of Increase or Decrease: _____

Additional State Funding FY2223

BUDGET AMENDMENT FY 22/23

Name of Department: Health Department
 Agency Head Signature: *Kimberly Smith 07/14/22*
 Date Prepare / Submitted to Admin: July 14, 2022 Date Received in Admin: _____

Budget Code	EXPENDITURES	Requested
Fund Dept Category	Classification	Increase or (Decrease)
17 4213 512100	Covid Salaries	\$150,000
17 4213 512250	Covid Overtime	\$1,000
17 4213 512700	Covid Longevity	\$2,000
17 4213 518100	Covid FICA	\$2,000
17 4213 518200	Covid Retirement	\$3,000
17 4213 518301	Covid Insurance	\$5,000
17 4213 518510	Covid Christmas Bonus	\$500
17 4213 519001	Covid Contracted Services	\$76,175
17 4213 526001	Covid Departmental Supplies	\$150,000
17 4213 532101	Covid Postage	\$3,000
Total Net Expense		\$392,675

Budget Code	REVENUES	Requested
Fund Dept Category	Classification	Increase or (Decrease)
17 3581 430172	Covid Funding	\$392,675
Total Net Revenue		\$392,675

This budget revision has been approved by the Columbus County Finance Office:
 This budget revision has been approved by the Columbus County County Manager:
 This budget revision has been approved by the Board of Columbus County Commissioners on: _____
 Signature _____ Date _____

Explanation of Increase or Decrease: _____

Carry-Over Funding for FY 22/23

BUDGET AMENDMENT FY 22/23

Name of Department: Health Department
 Agency Head Signature: *Kimberly Smith 07/14/22*
 Date Prepare / Submitted to Admin: July 14, 2022 Date Received in Admin: _____

Budget Code	EXPENDITURES	Requested
Fund Dept Category	Classification	Increase or (Decrease)
10 5112 519090	Contracted School Nurse	\$551
Total Net Expense		\$551

Budget Code	REVENUES	Requested
Fund Dept Category	Classification	Increase or (Decrease)
10 3510 430046	School Nurse	\$551
Total Net Revenue		\$551

This budget revision has been approved by the Columbus County Finance Office:
 This budget revision has been approved by the Columbus County County Manager:
 This budget revision has been approved by the Board of Columbus County Commissioners on: _____
 Signature _____ Date _____

Explanation of Increase or Decrease: _____

Additional School Nurse Funding FY2223

BUDGET AMENDMENT

FY 22/23

Name of Department: FINANCE

Agency Head Signature: _____

Date Prepared / Submitted to Admin: August 8, 2022 Date Received in Admin: _____

Budget Code			EXPENDITURES	Requested
Fund	Dept	Category	Classification	Increase or (Decrease)
10	4265	550000	CAPITAL OUTLAY	\$455,000
10	4265	535110	M & r BLDG/GROUNDS	\$3,540
Total Net Expense				\$458,540

Budget Code			REVENUES	Requested
Fund	Dept	Category	Classification	Increase or (Decrease)
10	3991	499101	FUND BALANCE APPROPRIATED	\$458,540
Total Net Revenue				\$458,540

This budget revision has been approved by the Columbus County Finance Office:

This budget revision has been approved by the Columbus County County Manager:

This budget revision has been approved by the Board of Columbus County Commissioners on: _____

Signature _____ Date _____

Explanation of Increase or Decrease:
 MOVE FUNDS FROM FUND BALANCE TO: 1) REPLACE HEATING AND AIR CONDITIONING UNIT AT THE WHITEVILLE SENIOR CENTER; 2) REPLACE HEATING AND AIR CONDITIONING UNITS AT 127 WEST WEBSTER STREET AND 3) PROVIDE SECURITY CAMERAS ON THE FIRST FLOOR OF 127 WEST WEBSTER STREET

**COLUMBUS COUNTY, NORTH CAROLINA
 Ordinance making appropriations to the StreamFlow
 Rehabilitation Program Capital Project Fund
 for the Fiscal Year beginning July 1, 2022**

BE IT ORDAINED by the Board of Commissioners of Columbus County, North Carolina as follows:

Section 1: The following amounts are hereby made to the StreamFlow Rehabilitation Program Grant Capital Project pursuant to G.S. 159 -13.2 for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2022.

Source of Revenue

19-3544-432330	StRAP Grant	\$ <u>500,000</u>
Total Estimated Revenues – StreamFlow Rehabilitation Program		\$ <u>500,000</u>

Project Appropriations

19-4543-519001	Contracted Services	\$ <u>500,000</u>
Total Project Appropriations – StreamFlow Rehabilitation Program		\$ <u>500,000</u>

Description: The Streamflow Rehabilitation Assistance Program (StRAP) allocates money for projects that protect and restore the integrity of drainage infrastructure. Columbus County received funds to complete vegetative debris removal. The Project will include the clearing debris or sediment that has blocked streams and drainage ways. Applicants receiving funds for removing debris or sediment from streams must ensure that the extracted debris is either removed from the 100-year floodplain (according to FEMA Flood Insurance Rate Maps) or processed in such a manner that debris would not pose a risk of blockage or significant impairment of normal streamflow during a subsequent flood event.

Section 2: The project undertaken pursuant to this ordinance is in accordance with the Recommended Budget and any changes made during the County Commissioners' budget work sessions.

Section 3: The Finance Director is hereby directed to maintain within the Capital Project Fund sufficient specific detailed accounting records to satisfy all applicable regulations. The terms of any financing agreement also shall be met.

Section 4: The County desires to expend its own funds for the purpose of paying certain costs of various projects, for which expenditures the County reasonably expects to reimburse itself from the proceeds of debt to be incurred by the County.

Section 5: All expenditures relating to obtaining any bond referendum and or installment purchase will be reimbursed from bond proceeds and installment purchase proceeds in accordance with the requirements of the United States Treasury Regulations Section 1.150 -2.

Section 6: This declaration of official intent is made pursuant to Section 1.150-2 of the Treasury Regulations to expressly declare the official intent of the County to reimburse itself from the proceeds of debt to be hereinafter

incurred by the County for certain expenditures paid by the County on or after the date which is sixty (60) days prior to the date hereof.

Section 7: The County intends to seek Federal, State, and/or other grant funding to reduce the amount of loan proceeds. The adoption of this ordinance authorizes the County Manager and/or his representative to apply for and accept such funding if awarded.

Section 8: This project ordinance shall be entered in the minutes of the Board of Commissioners of Columbus County. Within five days hereof, copies of this ordinance shall be filed with the finance office in Columbus County, and with the Clerk to the Board of Commissioners of Columbus County. Copies of the Capital Project Ordinance shall be made available to the Budget Officer, the Project Manager, and the Finance Officer for direction in carrying out this project.

This Capital Project shall become effective on August 15, 2022.
ADOPTED, this 15th day of August, 2022

Ricky Bullard
Ricky Bullard, Chairman
Columbus County Board of Commissioners

Attest: *Amanda Fin*
LaToya Williams, Clerk to the Board



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MOTION:

Commissioner Smith made a motion to approve Budget Amendments and Capital Project Ordinance, Seconded by Commissioner McDowell. The motion unanimously passed.

Agenda Item #22: Notice – Cancellation of Tuesday, September 6, 2022, Board Meeting and Reschedule Meeting to take place on Monday, August 29, 2022 and Adoption of New Schedule:

MOTION:

Commissioner Watts made a motion to approve Cancellation of Tuesday, September 6, 2022 Board Meeting and Reschedule Meeting for Monday, August 29, 2022, Seconded by Commissioner McMillian. The motion unanimously passed.

Agenda Item #23: APPOINTMENTS/RE-APPOINTMENTS/REPLACEMENT:

Legend: EB = Entire Board
Listed Zone # = Individual Commissioner

Zone I: Jerome McMillian
Zone II: Chris Smith
Zone III: Giles E. Byrd
Zone IV: Lavern Coleman

Zone V: Brent Watts
Zone VI: Ricky Bullard
Zone VII: Charles T. McDowell

COMMITTEE	ZONE/EB	PERSON(S)	EXP. DATE	BOARD ACTION
COG Aging Advisory Council – Region O	EB	Vacant	06/30/2022	Hold
	EB	Timothy Guy Long (resigning)	06/30/2024	Hold
Department of Aging Advisory Council	II	Robert Adams (deceased)	6/30/2022	Patsy Eason
	V	Wilbur Chestnut (resigning)	6/30/2022	Hold
Home & Community Care Block Grant Committee	II	Anita Adams (resigning)	6/30/2022	Hold
	II	Karen Thurman	6/30/2022	Hold
	V	Henry Milligan	6/30/2022	Hold
	V	Tommy Spivey	6/30/2022	Hold
	VII	J.D. Gore (resigning)	6/30/2022	Hold
	VII	Judy Ward (resigning)	6/30/2022	Hold
Housing Advisory Committee	III	David Solomon	6/30/2022	Hold
The LAB Advisory Board	EB	Jobs Foundation Representative		Hold
	EB	Jobs Foundation Representative		Hold
	EB	Columbus Chamber of Commerce		Hold
	EB	Representative		Hold

	EB	(Joan McPherson recommended) Tabor City Chamber Representative		Hold
	EB	(Kandi Dill recommended) Fair Bluff Chamber Representative		Hold
	EB	Columbus County At Large		Hold
	EB	(Cynthia Ellis recommended) Columbus County At Large		Hold
	EB	Columbus County At Large		Hold
	EB	Columbus County At Large		Hold
Trillium Southern Regional Advisory Board	EB	Theron McKvian (Resigned)		Hold
Whiteville City Planning- Zoning Board and Board of Adjustment	EB	Freddie Edwards	8/1/2022	Hold
	EB	Vacant (ETJ)	8/1/2022	Hold
	EB	Vacant (ETJ)	8/1/2022	Hold

RECESS REGULAR SESSION and enter into COLUMBUS COUNTY WATER AND SEWER DISTRICT I, II, III, IV and V BOARD MEETING

At 7:37 P.M., Commissioner McDowell made a motion to recess Regular Session and enter into a combination meeting of Columbus County Water and Sewer District I, II, III, IV, and V Board Meeting, seconded by Commissioner McMillian. The motion unanimously passed.

Agenda Item # 24: WATER DISTRICTS I, II, III, AND V – Second Reading and Approval of Amendment to the Columbus County Public Utilities Customer Service Policy:

**COLUMBUS COUNTY
CUSTOMER SERVICE POLICY
UTILITIES COLLECTION DEPARTMENT**

A. SERVICE APPLICATION

Residential Accounts

Columbus County requires a completed Application for Service (attached), signature and deposit to start water service. With the application, we will need a copy of your Driver’s License or state issued ID, payment of \$50.00 for property owner and \$100.00 for renter’s deposit, and copy of lease/purchase agreement or form entitled Property Owner/Landlord Transfer of Responsibility for Account Charges. Also, please fill out the part on the application that indicates whether you are owner of the house or renter. You will need to speak with one of our customer service representatives to obtain the deposit amount required with your application. Our customer service representatives are available via telephone from 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, at 910-642-5257.

Same day service for existing customers can be done as long you stop by our office prior to 2:00 PM, Monday through Friday. Otherwise, the service may be provided the following business day.

If the owner/resident has a meter (County owned equipment) located inside a locked fence/gate the owner/resident must provide a key to the Public Utilities Department for entry. The owner/resident is required to ensure the work area around the meter/water line is safe for workers to perform their duties and shall not block or impede access to the meter/water line. If the meter/water line is inaccessible to workers in the Public Utilities Department, services may be discontinued.

The security deposit is non-transferable and shall be non-interest bearing.

The deposit will be applied to the final bill when the account is closed. Customers who have multiple accounts (apartment complexes, etc.) are required to maintain a deposit equal to the deposit outlined in the adopted budget. Customers who have multiple accounts and are renting the property are required to pay an additional security deposit.

If the customer disconnects one account to relocate to another account within the County, the security deposit will be transferred to the new account when all previous balances at the former account are paid in full. Otherwise, the customer will be required to pay an additional security deposit on the new account. If the customer relocates without notification to the Public Utilities staff, leaving a balance on their account, then the balance on the previous account can / will be transferred to the current account and will be required to pay in full at the time of the new account being established.

The customer shall receive a final bill reflecting the total amount owed to Columbus County for said account.

Upon notification of the death of the customer/account holder, services will be disconnected within ten (10) days of the date of said notice. If a family member (next of kin) or the Personal Representative of the customer/account holder's estate provides a death certificate along with one of the following: Letters Testamentary, Letters of Administration, Affidavit of Collection, or (if no estate has been opened), a letter from the family member stating that the letter-writer is an heir of the estate and is authorized to transfer water service into his/her name, then the account can be reopened in his/her name by following all requirements of the "Residential Service" policy mentioned above. Deceased customer's security deposit or credit balance is refunded to their estate through the Clerk of Court.

Commercial/ Industrial / Institutional Accounts

Columbus County requires a completed Application for Service (application), signature, security deposit and a copy of the rental agreement (if applicable) to start water service. Application for Service for all commercial, industrial, and institutional accounts must also be approved by the Planning Department.

The security deposit is non-transferable and shall be non-interest bearing.

Upon notification of the death of the owner/representative, services will be disconnected within ten (10) days of the date of said notice. If a corporate member (next of kin) or the Personal Representative of the customer/account holder's estate provides a death certificate along with one of the following: Letters Testamentary, Letters of Administration, Affidavit of Collection, or (if no estate has been opened), a letter from the family member stating that the letter-writer is an heir of the estate and is authorized to transfer water service into his/her name, then the account can be reopened in his/her name by following all requirements of the policy for the "Application for Service" for commercial, industrial, and institutional accounts. Deceased customer's security deposit or credit balance is refunded to their estate through the Clerk of Court.

B. ACCOUNT BILLING

Columbus County shall ensure that all customer's meters are read in a manner which provides the County with the most efficient use for personnel. Each customer shall be billed for water usage during a specified billing period, along with all other applicable fees and charges.

1. UTILITY PAYMENT SCHEDULE REVISED

In order to serve customers better and to have a clearer payment schedule, Columbus County is updating its Utility Payment Schedule/Policy. The changes are as follows:

- The billing date for Columbus County's utility bill will be mailed by the 8th of each month following the billing month(s). The customer understands and agrees that the County shall not be liable for the delivery of the mail through the United States Postal Service (USPS). If the customer does not receive his or her bill within a reasonable period of time it shall be the responsibility of the customer to contact the Columbus County Utilities Collection Department to acquire a current account balance due to Columbus County, at which time the customer shall make payment in full.
- Bills will now be due upon receipt. If payment is not received by the beginning of business (8:30 a.m.) on the 6th of the following month, a \$35.00 late fee penalty will be applied to the affected account on the 6th (at the beginning of the business day 8:30 a.m.) of the month.
- If payment for the month that had a late fee applied is not received along with the late fee by the close of business (5 p.m.) on the 20th of the following month, a cut-off order shall be issued on the 21st (at the start of business 8:30 a.m.) to the Public Utilities Department for the termination of service.
- A delinquent fee shall be charged on the day of cut off for any account in arrears. The delinquent fee is based on the Rate Fee Schedule that is in effect at the time of cut off.

- Once a customer's account is placed on the cut-off list, the past due amount including any other fees along with current balance must be paid in full before service is restored.

Columbus County is making these changes to better serve its customers and to make the late fee/utility cut-off policies and procedures more clear. If anyone has any questions about this matter, please call the Utilities Collection Department at 910-642-5257.

2. WATER CONNECTIONS:

Connections to the County water system may be authorized by the Utilities Collection Department with payment of proper fees (deposits, late fees, reconnect fees etc.). All transactions that occur prior to 2:00 PM will be handled the same business day. Transactions that occur after 2:00 PM will be handled the next business day.

New water connections requiring a tap will be handled after completion of an Application for Service and payment of all fees and deposits. Service is usually provided within 10 to 15 business days, weather permitting, after the customer request.

If water connections for a customer crosses other property lines, it is the responsibility of the customer to secure all easements and other legal documents at their expense to permit the connection to occur.

If more than one heir is identified for a property that is requesting a water connection, all identified heirs are required to provide notarized permission to allow one of the heirs to request connection to the water system.

By requesting water service and payment of a connection fee, the recipient of water service hereby understands and agrees to pay the minimum monthly water bill whether connected to the system or not and using water after such is made available to the dwelling for a minimum of five (5) years.

If a customer requests to be disconnected from the Columbus County public water supply system and the service materials have already been installed on the property, the customer will not be disconnected until they have paid the base rate fee for a minimum of five (5) years. If after five (5) years the customer requests disconnection, they will be required to pay a \$250 fee prior to Public Utilities performing the disconnection and removing the service from the property. Disconnections will be evaluated on a case by case basis by the Columbus County Administration Office.

The County agrees to deliver water to the meter(s) that is servicing the customer's premises at a minimum pressure of twenty (20) pounds per square inch (psi), but shall not be held liable or responsible for any damage in or on the customer's property resulting from system pressures greater than twenty (20) psi.

The Property Owner, Customer, and/or Renter agrees that no other present or future source of water shall be connected to any water lines served by the County's public water supply system. The Property Owner, Customer, and/or Renter shall disconnect from any present water supply prior to connection to and switching to the County's system and shall eliminate any present or future cross-connection in the customer's system. Any Property Owner, Customer, and/or Renter found to be in noncompliance with these Rules and Regulations may have water service(s) terminated, if deemed necessary by the County, until which time the cross-connection(s) is eliminated.

3. FEES, PENALTIES, CHARGES:

All fees, penalties, and charges shall be listed as part of the rate schedule and shall be set from time to time by the Columbus County Board of Commissioners as deemed necessary.

4. EXTENSIONS:

An extension of payment due date may be given to those customers determined to be in *“good fiscal standing”* with the Public Utilities Department. A customer in *“good fiscal standing”* shall be defined as any customer with no prior extensions, no returned check(s), and no service terminations for non-payment during the previous twelve (12) consecutive month period or since becoming a customer with Columbus County, whichever is less. The amount extended shall be paid in full on or before the 1st day of the following month or by an agreement with the Finance Director or his designee.

5. PAYMENT ARRANGEMENTS:

Payment arrangements may be available to residential utility customers when billing exceeds more than double the highest billing within a twelve (12) month period. Financing of exceedingly high bills shall be 0% interest, with a down payment of 25% of balance requiring financing, and not to exceed a term of more than 6 months.

Financed amounts will be billed monthly in addition to each month's current billing. Financed amounts and current bill must be paid each month prior to due date to avoid any late payment or delinquent fees being assessed on the account. In order to qualify for financing/payment arrangements, the customer's account must be in good standing and shall not have been cut off for non-payment within the preceding twelve (12) month period.

6. AUTHORIZATION OF EXTENSION OR PAYMENT ARRANGEMENT:

The Finance Officer, or their designee, shall have the authority to approve extensions or financing of payment arrangements.

C. ACCOUNT BALANCE:

In the event a customer disconnects his or her service or the Public Utilities Department disconnects the service, for any reason, the account balance due for water usage, late penalties, and all other applicable fees are the sole responsibility of that customer. The Finance Department shall review all outstanding debt owed to the County for water services provided. Each month, the Finance Department shall make the following attempts to collect outstanding debt:

1. The Utilities Collection Department shall send to the customer a monthly bill. Customer is to make payment in full by the 5TH of each month. If no response; then,
2. The Department shall transfer the security deposit to the customer's account, if any outstanding balance still remains; then,
3. The Department shall send notification to Debt Set-Off; a program with the North Carolina Treasurer's Department, for payment to collect from IRS for any tax refunds or lottery winnings that customer may receive which will go toward the utility bill.
4. The Department shall notify other utility operation systems throughout the State of North Carolina of this customer's indebtedness to the County.
5. All customers that have been disconnected with outstanding account balances shall **NOT** be reconnected until all indebtedness is paid in full to the County.
6. The late fee and/or delinquent fee may be waived if the customer's account has never been assessed any penalties during the life of the account. Thereafter, a late fee and/or delinquent fee may be waived once only if the customer signs up for Automatic Clearing House (ACH Draft).

RELEASES OF UNCOLLECTED UTILITY BILLS:

All utility bills are to be presented to Columbus County Board of Commissioners for release consideration after they are three (3) months old and all possible collection methods have been exhausted. If the customer attempts to reinstate a utility account after the outstanding bill is released, the outstanding amount must be paid in full prior to any new services being activated.

D. ADJUSTMENTS:

1. DEFINITIONS

The Customer side shall be defined as that side of the meter (house side) where the customer connects to the meter provided by the County and beyond.

The County's side shall be defined as that side of the meter, including the meter, where the County service line (highway side) connects to the meter and back to the main.

A water bill adjustment will not be provided when the following criteria are met:

- a. Leaks from exposed piping will not be considered for a leak adjustment.
- b. All metered water loss due to negligence on the part of the user will be charged at the normal rate, and no adjustment of the bill shall be made.

A water bill adjustment will be provided when the following criteria are met:

- a. All water line repairs on the customer's side have been completed.
- b. Evidence of repairs such as plumbing bills and/or a statement from the plumber or customer that the leak repairs have been completed.
- c. Adjustments can be given for leaks on amounts exceeding the average bill based on a calculation of the preceding twelve (12) months if the adjustment exceeds \$50.00.
- d. Only one adjustment shall be made in a twelve (12) month period. If the leak is reflected on two consecutive water bills, adjustments will be made on both bills.
- e. If the customer receives an excessive water bill and the cause is a defect in a water meter, the water bill shall be the average for the previous twelve (12) months. Defects will be confirmed by staff with the Public Utilities Department.

2. LEAKS ON CUSTOMER'S SIDE OF METER:

In the event that a leak occurred on the customer's side of the meter, customer is to make the repair(s) within (15) fifteen days of the leak. Customer shall obtain a Leak Repair Statement (obtained from the Utilities Collection Department), explain the repairs and sign it that the leak repairs have been made. The customer's account will be adjusted to the average monthly minimum usage of the past twelve (12) months. Any leak repair(s) that are not completed within the (15) fifteen-day period will forfeit the leak adjustment. All leak adjustments must be approved and signed by the Finance Director or his designee.

3. REPAYMENT:

Repayment of this extraordinary balance can be paid in full or the amount due may be paid in installments, so long as it is approved by the Finance Director or his designee. The period of time allowed for the repayment of this extraordinary balance shall not exceed three (3) consecutive billing periods.

E. DAMAGED LIABILITY:

The County shall not be liable for damage of any kind resulting from water or the use of water on the customer's property, unless damage results directly from negligence on behalf of the County. The County shall not be responsible for damages done by or resulting from any defect in the piping, fixtures, appliances, etc. on the customer's property.

The County shall not be responsible for negligence of third parties or forces beyond the control of the County resulting in any interruption of service. Otherwise, under normal conditions, all potentially affected customers shall be notified in advance of any interruption of service.

Customers who tamper or damage County meters (including all components thereof) and etc., will be reported to appropriate law enforcement and will be charged the appropriate fees as approved by the County Commissioners which will include the actual cost involved to repair/replace the property (see rate fee schedule). All applicable charges will be billed to the customer, along with their monthly water bill, and payment will be due by the due date printed on the bill. If payment is not received by the due date, a cut-off order will be issued during normal business hours to the Public Utilities Department for the termination of service.

Customers who intentionally tamper with the meter a second time or steal water that is County property will have their service removed immediately and be reported to appropriate law enforcement agency for

investigation. In order to reconnect to the County water system, they will be responsible for paying for new service at the current rate and pay all outstanding balances.

F. SEPARATE WATER CONNECTIONS AND METERS REQUIRED:

Each building shall have a separate meter, and where practicable, shall have a separate water lateral. In the event that one lateral is used for two (2) dwellings, commercial or industrial buildings, or used to serve two or more meters for the same dwelling, commercial or industrial buildings, a separate cut-off shall be provided for each meter.

However, there shall be an exception to the requirement for separate water meters in the case of groups of mobile homes or apartment developments under single ownership. In the case of said groups of mobile homes or apartment developments of more than ten (10) units, one (1) meter may be used for the entire project unless additional meters are requested by the property owner or deemed necessary by the Public Utilities Department, and the following conditions shall be met:

1. All bills will be rendered to the Owner of the property.
2. The bill will be calculated by a minimum charge for the master meter, which shall be based on the number of units served times the minimum charge per standard $\frac{3}{4}$ inch meter. The remaining bill shall be based on the total consumption passing through the master meter times the unit commodity charge.
3. Should any portion of the development be sold; the owners shall be responsible for paying whatever additional costs would be involved in bringing the divided development into compliance.
4. Cost of service shall be included in the rent/lease of each unit, and no individual meters shall be allowed.
5. In the case of group mobile homes or apartment developments where ten (10) or fewer units are involved, and where ownership is in one party, the owner may elect to have a single meter used for the entire project. Where such election is made the owner shall comply with the conditions set forth as 1, 2, 3, and 4 above.

G. PROFANE, INDECENT, AND THREATING CALL:

It is against North Carolina General Statute 14-196 to use “*profane*, indecent or threatening language to any persons over the telephone; annoying or harassing by repeated telephoning or making false statement over the telephone.”

If a call of this nature is received, do the following:

1. At the first profane or indecent word, ask the caller to please refrain from that type of language. If the profane or indecent language continues, politely inform the caller that if that type of language does not cease that the call will be terminated.
2. Document the occurrence including the caller’s name, address and telephone number, if known. Report incident to your supervisor, including the above information.
3. If the calls continue, notify your supervisor.

Adopted and effective this the 15th day of August, 2022.

Ricky Bullard, Chairman

Amanda B. Prince, Staff Attorney/Deputy Clerk

MOTION:

Commissioner McMillian made a motion to approve the Columbus County Public Utilities Customer Service Policy, Seconded by Commissioner Coleman. The motion unanimously passed.

Agenda Item # 25: WATER DISTRICT IV: APPROVAL OF AGREEMENT with MCADAMS & ASSOCIATES FOR ADMINISTRATION of the EDA GRANT:



**PROPOSAL TO FURNISH
PROFESSIONAL ADMINISTRATIVE AND CONSULTING SERVICES
COLUMBUS COUNTY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
EDA Grant Water Infrastructure to Serve the International Logistics Park**

This **PROPOSAL** made this 9th day of August 2022 by and between the COLUMBUS COUNTY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IN COLUMBUS COUNTY, NORTH CAROLINA, hereinafter called the OWNER and MCADAMS AND ASSOCIATES, LLC, hereinafter called the CONSULTANT.

WHEREAS, the CONSULTANT intends to provide Professional Administrative and Consulting Services for EDA Funding Administration, hereinafter called SERVICES, as requested by the Owner; and

WHEREAS, the CONSULTANT agrees to provide professional services as described herein to assist the OWNER in completing the described SERVICES.

NOW, THEREFORE, the OWNER and CONSULTANT, for the consideration hereinafter names, agree as follows:

The CONSULTANT agrees to perform for the above named OWNER professional services as hereinafter set forth.

The OWNER agrees to compensate the CONSULTANT for services hereinafter provided.

The CONSULTANT's services shall include the following as requested by OWNER for the EDA Water Infrastructure to serve the International Logistics Park (ILP) Project:

1. Complete funding application package and address all follow up correspondence for United States Economic Development Administration (EDA).
2. Prepare all documents to be approved by Columbus County Economic Development to ensure compliance with application and administration requirements.
3. Administer EDA grant to include compliance with all EDA grant requirements, ensuring Federal compliance of Contractor's bid documents, oversight of project schedule, process pay requisitions, and project closeout.
4. Prepare EDA Quarterly Progress Reports, bi annual Federal Financial Reports, and post grant close out reporting.
5. Maintain Columbus County's registrations on relevant Federal websites as required by EDA.
6. Administrative costs, travel, and expenses.
7. Consulting via phone, email, video conferencing, and in person at locations in and outside of Columbus County as requested by OWNER.

PAYMENT: the OWNER agrees to pay the CONSULTANT for SERVICES noted as follows.

LUMP SUM of TEN THOUSAND DOLLARS (\$10,000.00) for application submittal / revisions, PER draft / revisions, and Environmental Report revision with payment due within 15 business days of contract approval.

LUMP SUM of FORTY FIVE THOUSAND DOLLARS (\$45,000.00) for EDA Funding Administration with 5% (\$2,250.00) due within 15 business days of contract approval and the remaining balance billed in equal payments during the project construction phase.

P.O. Box 1971 • Clayton, NC 27528

GOVERNING LAW: This Agreement shall be governed in accordance with laws of the State of North Carolina. All actions relating in any ways in this Agreement shall be brought in the General Court of Justice in Wake County, North Carolina.

The OWNER and CONSULTANT hereby agree to the full performance of the covenants contained herein.

IN WITNESS HEREOF, the CONSULTANT and OWNER have executed this Agreement, the day and the year first above written, which is the effective date of this Agreement.

MCADAMS AND ASSOCIATES, LLC

COLUMBUS COUNTY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

By: 
Emily M. Miller, President

By: _____

Date: 8/9/22

Signature: _____

Date: _____

ATTEST: _____
(SEAL)

P.O. Box 1971 • Clayton, NC 27528

MOTION:

Commissioner McDowell made a motion to approve the Agreement with McAdams & Associates, Seconded by Commissioner Coleman. The motion unanimously passed.

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

At 7:38 P.M., Commissioner Watts made a motion to adjourn the combination meeting of Columbus County Water and Sewer Districts I, II, III, IV and V Board Meeting, Seconded by Commissioner McMillian. The motion unanimously passed.

Agenda Item # 26 COMMENTS:

Chairman Bullard opened the floor for comments. The following spoke:

A. Board of Commissioners:

1. Commissioner Smith

- Yes, I don't know if everybody is aware tonight that we have two new highway patrolmen in Columbus County, Jackson Cook and Hunter Cartrette.
- Also, if we can contact Bryon Tedder for his accomplishment on his baseball team and maybe give him a Proclamation.

5. Commissioner McDowell

- One thing, everyone be careful going home tonight due to the weather.

6. Commissioner Coleman

- I would like to thank everyone for showing up tonight.
- I would like to thank the County for what they are doing.
- One more thing, Ms. Julie Strickland asked to put this out.
- Her preparation for the Cycle NC, on October 7th, they are looking for donated bicycles.
- **They will be placed throughout downtown Whiteville**
- You can drop them off at the Columbus County Parks and Rec Department at 606 North Thompson Street, Whiteville, between 8:30 A.M. and 5:00 P.M.
- If you have any questions, you can call her at 910-640-6624.
- It does not matter what kind of shape they are in
- They are going to paint them and put them up for this event that going to take place on October 7th.
- Any help will certainly be appreciated.

7. Chairman Bullard

- I would just like to say I appreciate what this Board is doing for the citizens of Columbus County
- We appreciate what everybody is doing.

B. County Manager Eddie Madden:

- I just want to congratulate Karla Beck.
- She is an outstanding person and employee and well deserving of the recognition she received this evening.
- Last week Commissioner Coleman and I attended the North Carolina Association of County Commissioners Annual Conference.
- I know some of you have attended this conference in the past.
- It's a great training opportunity and an opportunity to interact with your fellow commissioners across the state.
- I'm hopeful for a large delegation next year at the conference.
- I'm pleased to announce that today, bids announcements for the Historic Courthouse went out.
- Deadline to submit the bids for the renovation for the courthouse is September 28th.
- Those bids will be open in the Commissioners Chamber
- We will keep you posted on the developments there.
- As you may have noticed the elevator is working now.
- Mr. Stuart Carroll was fortunate to coordinate temporary repair.
- A mother board from another system is working to keep the elevator operational.
- There is a more extensive renovation to that elevator coming soon.
- We are receiving bids on them now and will bring that to the board of commissioners at a later day.
- This Wednesday, the District Attorneys from our district as well as the New Hanover area, Mr. Ben David and Jon David are hosting a tour of the Healing Place in Wilmington.
- Our consultant Ms. Syd Wiford and I will be there to attend that meeting

- Ms. Wiford has submitted today an application to Trillium, our provider for support for MAT Distribution.
- We are very appreciative for Ms. Wiford's work there.
- As you know, this Board Meeting has been rescheduled instead of September 6th, to August 29th.
- We already have a number of thing on the schedule.
- Our offices will be closed for Labor Day on September 5th.
- As you are aware, the Town of Lake Waccamaw has submitted a letter of interest to contract with Columbus County for Emergency Management Services.
- Discussions with them are ongoing and we will keep you posted with that as well.
- That concludes my report.

Agenda Item # 27 ADJOURNMENT:

At 7:45 P.M., Commissioner Byrd made a motion to adjourn, Seconded by Commissioner Smith. The motion unanimously passed. These minutes were recorded by Staff Attorney Amanda Prince and typed by Special Projects Coordinator Natalie Carroll

NATALIE CARROLL, Special Projects Coordinator

RICKY BULLARD, Chairman

**COLUMBUS COUNTY WATER and SEWER DISTRICTS I, II, III, IV, and V
COMBINATION BOARD MEETING
Monday, August 15, 2022
7:37 P.M.**

The Honorable Columbus County Commissioners met on the above stated date and time at 127 West Webster Street, Whiteville, North Carolina 28472, for the purpose of acting as the Columbus County Water and Sewer District I Board.

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT:

Ricky Bullard, **Chairman**
Jerome McMillian, **Vice Chairman**
Chris Smith
Giles E. Byrd
Lavern Coleman
Brent Watts
Charles T. McDowell

APPOINTEES PRESENT:

Eddie Madden, Jr., **County Manager**
Amanda B. Prince, **Staff Attorney**
Melanie Hester, **Interim Finance Director**

APPOINTEES ABSENT (EXCUSED):

Boyd Worley, **Board Attorney**
LaToya Williams, **Clerk to the Board**

MEETING CALLED TO ORDER:

At 7:37 P.M., Chairman Ricky Bullard called the **combination meeting** of Columbus County Water and Sewer District I Board Meeting to order.

Agenda Item #24: WATER DISTRICT I – SECOND READING and APPROVAL of AMENDMENT to the COLUMBUS COUNTY PUBLIC UTILITIES CUSTOMER SERVICE POLICY:

Melanie Hester, Interim Finance Director, requested Board approval.

COLUMBUS COUNTY

CUSTOMER SERVICE POLICY

UTILITIES COLLECTION DEPARTMENT

A. SERVICE APPLICATION

Residential Accounts

Columbus County requires a completed Application for Service (attached), signature and deposit to start water service. With the application, we will need a copy of your Driver's License or state issued ID, payment of \$50.00 for property owner and \$100.00 for renter's deposit, and copy of lease/purchase agreement or form entitled Property Owner/Landlord Transfer of Responsibility for Account Charges. Also, please fill out the part on the application that indicates whether you are owner of the house or renter. You will need to speak with one of our customer service representatives to obtain the deposit amount required with your application. Our customer service representatives are available via telephone from 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, at 910-642-5257.

Same day service for existing customers can be done as long you stop by our office prior to 2:00 PM, Monday through Friday. Otherwise, the service may be provided the following business day.

If the owner/resident has a meter (County owned equipment) located inside a locked fence/gate the owner/resident must provide a key to the Public Utilities Department for entry. The owner/resident is required to ensure the work area around the meter/water line is safe for workers to perform their duties and shall not block or impede access to the meter/water line. If the meter/water line is inaccessible to workers in the Public Utilities Department, services may be discontinued.

The security deposit is non-transferable and shall be non-interest bearing.

The deposit will be applied to the final bill when the account is closed. Customers who have multiple accounts (apartment complexes, etc.) are required to maintain a deposit equal to the deposit outlined in the adopted budget. Customers who have multiple accounts and are renting the property are required to pay an additional security deposit.

If the customer disconnects one account to relocate to another account within the County, the security deposit will be transferred to the new account when all previous balances at the former account are paid in full. Otherwise, the customer will be required to pay an additional security deposit on the new account. If the customer relocates without notification to the Public Utilities staff, leaving a balance on their account, then the balance on the previous account can / will be transferred to the current account and will be required to pay in full at the time of the new account being established.

The customer shall receive a final bill reflecting the total amount owed to Columbus County for said account.

Upon notification of the death of the customer/account holder, services will be disconnected within ten (10) days of the date of said notice. If a family member (next of kin) or the Personal Representative of the customer/account holder's estate provides a death certificate along with one of the following: Letters Testamentary, Letters of Administration, Affidavit of Collection, or (if no estate has been opened), a letter from the family member stating that the letter-writer is an heir of the estate and is authorized to transfer water service into his/her name, then the account can be reopened in his/her name by following all requirements of the "Residential Service" policy mentioned above. Deceased customer's security deposit or credit balance is refunded to their estate through the Clerk of Court.

Commercial/ Industrial / Institutional Accounts

Columbus County requires a completed Application for Service (application), signature, security deposit and a copy of the rental agreement (if applicable) to start water service. Application for Service for all commercial, industrial, and institutional accounts must also be approved by the Planning Department.

The security deposit is non-transferable and shall be non-interest bearing.

Upon notification of the death of the owner/representative, services will be disconnected within ten (10) days of the date of said notice. If a corporate member (next of kin) or the Personal Representative of the customer/account holder's estate provides a death certificate along with one of the following: Letters Testamentary, Letters of Administration, Affidavit of Collection, or (if no estate has been opened), a letter from the family member stating that the letter-writer is an heir of the estate and is authorized to transfer water service into his/her name, then the account can be reopened in his/her name by following all requirements of the policy for the "Application for Service" for commercial, industrial, and institutional accounts. Deceased customer's security deposit or credit balance is refunded to their estate through the Clerk of Court.

B. ACCOUNT BILLING

Columbus County shall ensure that all customer's meters are read in a manner which provides the County with the most efficient use for personnel. Each customer shall be billed for water usage during a specified billing period, along with all other applicable fees and charges.

1. UTILITY PAYMENT SCHEDULE REVISED

In order to serve customers better and to have a clearer payment schedule, Columbus County is updating its Utility Payment Schedule/Policy. The changes are as follows:

- The billing date for Columbus County's utility bill will be mailed by the 8th of each month following the billing month(s). The customer understands and agrees that the County shall not be liable for the delivery of the mail through the United States Postal Service (USPS). If the customer does not receive his or her bill within a reasonable period of time it shall be the responsibility of the customer to contact the Columbus County Utilities Collection Department to acquire a current account balance due to Columbus County, at which time the customer shall make payment in full.
- Bills will now be due upon receipt. If payment is not received by the beginning of business (8:30 a.m.) on the 6th of the following month, a \$35.00 late fee penalty will be applied to the affected account on the 6th (at the beginning of the business day 8:30 a.m.) of the month.
- If payment for the month that had a late fee applied is not received along with the late fee by the close of business (5 p.m.) on the 20th of the following month, a cut-off order shall be issued on the 21st (at the start of business 8:30 a.m.) to the Public Utilities Department for the termination of service.
- A delinquent fee shall be charged on the day of cut off for any account in arrears. The delinquent fee is based on the Rate Fee Schedule that is in effect at the time of cut off.
- Once a customer's account is placed on the cut-off list, the past due amount including any other fees along with current balance must be paid in full before service is restored.

Columbus County is making these changes to better serve its customers and to make the late fee/utility cut-off policies and procedures more clear. If anyone has any questions about this matter, please call the Utilities Collection Department at 910-642-5257.

2. WATER CONNECTIONS:

Connections to the County water system may be authorized by the Utilities Collection Department with payment of proper fees (deposits, late fees, reconnect fees etc.,). All transactions that occur prior to 2:00 PM will be handled the same business day. Transactions that occur after 2:00 PM will be handled the next business day.

New water connections requiring a tap will be handled after completion of an Application for Service and payment of all fees and deposits. Service is usually provided within 10 to 15 business days, weather permitting, after the customer request.

If water connections for a customer crosses other property lines, it is the responsibility of the customer to secure all easements and other legal documents at their expense to permit the connection to occur.

If more than one heir is identified for a property that is requesting a water connection, all identified heirs are required to provide notarized permission to allow one of the heirs to request connection to the water system.

By requesting water service and payment of a connection fee, the recipient of water service hereby understands and agrees to pay the minimum monthly water bill whether connected to the system or not and using water after such is made available to the dwelling for a minimum of five (5) years.

If a customer requests to be disconnected from the Columbus County public water supply system and the service materials have already been installed on the property, the customer will not be disconnected until they have paid the base rate fee for a minimum of five (5) years. If after five (5) years the customer requests disconnection, they will be required to pay a \$250 fee prior to Public Utilities performing the disconnection and removing the service from the property. Disconnections will be evaluated on a case by case basis by the Columbus County Administration Office.

The County agrees to deliver water to the meter(s) that is servicing the customer's premises at a minimum pressure of twenty (20) pounds per square inch (psi), but shall not be held liable or responsible for any damage in or on the customer's property resulting from system pressures greater than twenty (20) psi.

The Property Owner, Customer, and/or Renter agrees that no other present or future source of water shall be connected to any water lines served by the County's public water supply system. The Property Owner, Customer, and/or Renter shall disconnect from any present water supply prior to connection to and switching to the County's system and shall eliminate any present or future cross-connection in the customer's system. Any Property Owner, Customer, and/or Renter found to be in noncompliance with these Rules and Regulations may have water service(s) terminated, if deemed necessary by the County, until which time the cross-connection(s) is eliminated.

3. FEES, PENALTIES, CHARGES:

All fees, penalties, and charges shall be listed as part of the rate schedule and shall be set from time to time by the Columbus County Board of Commissioners as deemed necessary.

4. EXTENSIONS:

An extension of payment due date may be given to those customers determined to be in "*good fiscal standing*" with the Public Utilities Department. A customer in "*good fiscal standing*" shall be defined as any customer with no prior extensions, no returned check(s), and no service terminations for non-payment during the previous twelve (12) consecutive month period or since becoming a customer with Columbus County, whichever is less. The amount extended shall be paid in full on or before the 1st day of the following month or by an agreement with the Finance Director or his designee.

5. PAYMENT ARRANGEMENTS:

Payment arrangements may be available to residential utility customers when billing exceeds more than double the highest billing within a twelve (12) month period. Financing of exceedingly high bills shall be 0% interest, with a down payment of 25% of balance requiring financing, and not to exceed a term of more than 6 months.

Financed amounts will be billed monthly in addition to each months current billing. Financed amounts and current bill must be paid each month prior to due date to avoid any late payment or delinquent fees being assessed on the account. In order to qualify for financing/payment arrangements, the customer's account must be in good standing and shall not have been cut off for non-payment within the preceding twelve (12) month period.

6. AUTHORIZATION OF EXTENSION OR PAYMENT ARRANGEMENT:

The Finance Officer, or their designee, shall have the authority to approve extensions or financing of payment arrangements.

C. ACCOUNT BALANCE:

In the event a customer disconnects his or her service or the Public Utilities Department disconnects the service, for any reason, the account balance due for water usage, late penalties, and all other applicable fees are the sole responsibility of that customer. The Finance Department shall review all outstanding debt owed to the County for water services provided. Each month, the Finance Department shall make the following attempts to collect outstanding debt:

1. The Utilities Collection Department shall send to the customer a monthly bill. Customer is to make payment in full by the 5TH of each month. If no response; then,
2. The Department shall transfer the security deposit to the customer's account, if any outstanding balance still remains; then,
3. The Department shall send notification to Debt Set-Off; a program with the North Carolina Treasurer's Department, for payment to collect from IRS for any tax refunds or lottery winnings that customer may receive which will go toward the utility bill.
4. The Department shall notify other utility operation systems throughout the State of North Carolina of this customer's indebtedness to the County.
5. All customers that have been disconnected with outstanding account balances shall **NOT** be reconnected until all indebtedness is paid in full to the County.
6. The late fee and/or delinquent fee may be waived if the customer's account has never been assessed any penalties during the life of the account. Thereafter, a late fee and/or delinquent fee may be waived once only if the customer signs up for Automatic Clearing House (ACH Draft).

RELEASES OF UNCOLLECTED UTILITY BILLS:

All utility bills are to be presented to Columbus County Board of Commissioners for release consideration after they are three (3) months old and all possible collection methods have been exhausted. If the customer attempts to reinstate a utility account after the outstanding bill is released, the outstanding amount must be paid in full prior to any new services being activated.

D. ADJUSTMENTS:

1. DEFINITIONS

The Customer side shall be defined as that side of the meter (house side) where the customer connects to the meter provided by the County and beyond.

The County's side shall be defined as that side of the meter, including the meter, where the County service line (highway side) connects to the meter and back to the main.

A water bill adjustment will not be provided when the following criteria are met:

- a. Leaks from exposed piping will not be considered for a leak adjustment.
- b. All metered water loss due to negligence on the part of the user will be charged at the normal rate, and no adjustment of the bill shall be made.

A water bill adjustment will be provided when the following criteria are met:

- a. All water line repairs on the customer's side have been completed.
- b. Evidence of repairs such as plumbing bills and/or a statement from the plumber or customer that the leak repairs have been completed.
- c. Adjustments can be given for leaks on amounts exceeding the average bill based on a calculation of the preceding twelve (12) months if the adjustment exceeds \$50.00.
- d. Only one adjustment shall be made in a twelve (12) month period. If the leak is reflected on two consecutive water bills, adjustments will be made on both bills.
- e. If the customer receives an excessive water bill and the cause is a defect in a water meter, the water bill shall be the average for the previous twelve (12) months. Defects will be confirmed by staff with the Public Utilities Department.

2. LEAKS ON CUSTOMER'S SIDE OF METER:

In the event that a leak occurred on the customer's side of the meter, customer is to make the repair(s) within (15) fifteen days of the leak. Customer shall obtain a Leak Repair Statement (obtained from the Utilities Collection Department), explain the repairs and sign it that the leak repairs have been made. The customer's account will be adjusted to the average monthly minimum usage of the past twelve (12) months. Any leak repair(s) that are not completed within the (15) fifteen day period will forfeit the leak adjustment. All leak adjustments must be approved and signed by the Finance Director or his designee.

3. REPAYMENT:

Repayment of this extraordinary balance can be paid in full or the amount due may be paid in installments, so long as it is approved by the Finance Director or his designee. The period of time allowed for the repayment of this extraordinary balance shall not exceed three (3) consecutive billing periods.

E. DAMAGED LIABILITY:

The County shall not be liable for damage of any kind resulting from water or the use of water on the customer's property, unless damage results directly from negligence on behalf of the County. The County shall not be responsible for damages done by or resulting from any defect in the piping, fixtures, appliances, etc. on the customer's property.

The County shall not be responsible for negligence of third parties or forces beyond the control of the County resulting in any interruption of service. Otherwise, under normal conditions, all potentially affected customers shall be notified in advance of any interruption of service.

Customers who tamper or damage County meters (including all components thereof) and etc., will be reported to appropriate law enforcement and will be charged the appropriate fees as approved by the County Commissioners which will include the actual cost involved to repair/replace the property (see rate fee schedule). All applicable charges will be billed to the customer, along with their monthly water bill, and payment will be due by the due date printed on the bill. If payment is not received by the due date, a cut-off order will be issued during normal business hours to the Public Utilities Department for the termination of service.

Customers who intentionally tamper with the meter a second time or steal water that is County property will have their service removed immediately and be reported to appropriate law enforcement agency for investigation. In order to reconnect to the County water system, they will be responsible for paying for new service at the current rate and pay all outstanding balances.

F. SEPARATE WATER CONNECTIONS AND METERS REQUIRED:

Each building shall have a separate meter, and where practicable, shall have a separate water lateral. In the event that one lateral is used for two (2) dwellings, commercial or industrial buildings, or used to serve two or more meters for the same dwelling, commercial or industrial buildings, a separate cut-off shall be provided for each meter.

However, there shall be an exception to the requirement for separate water meters in the case of groups of mobile homes or apartment developments under single ownership. In the case of said groups of mobile homes or apartment developments of more than ten (10) units, one (1) meter may be used for the entire project unless additional meters are requested by the property owner or deemed necessary by the Public Utilities Department, and the following conditions shall be met:

1. All bills will be rendered to the Owner of the property.
2. The bill will be calculated by a minimum charge for the master meter, which shall be based on the number of units served times the minimum charge per standard $\frac{3}{4}$ inch meter. The remaining bill shall be based on the total consumption passing through the master meter times the unit commodity charge.
3. Should any portion of the development be sold; the owners shall be responsible for paying whatever additional costs would be involved in bringing the divided development into compliance.
4. Cost of service shall be included in the rent/lease of each unit, and no individual meters shall be allowed.
5. In the case of group mobile homes or apartment developments where ten (10) or fewer units are involved, and where ownership is in one party, the owner may elect to have a single meter used for the entire project. Where such election is made the owner shall comply with the conditions set forth as 1, 2, 3, and 4 above.

G. PROFANE, INDECENT, AND THREATING CALL:

It is against North Carolina General Statute 14-196 to use “*profane*, indecent or threatening language to any persons over the telephone; annoying or harassing by repeated telephoning or making false statement over the telephone.”

If a call of this nature is received, do the following:

1. At the first profane or indecent word, ask the caller to please refrain from that type of language. If the profane or indecent language continues, politely inform the caller that if that type of language does not cease that the call will be terminated.
2. Document the occurrence including the caller’s name, address and telephone number, if known. Report incident to your supervisor, including the above information.
3. If the calls continue, notify your supervisor.

Adopted and effective this the 15th day of August, 2022.

Ricky Bullard, Chairman

LaToya Williams, Clerk to the Board

MOTION:

Vice Chairman McMillian made a motion to approve the Columbus County Public Utilities Customer Service Policy, seconded by Commissioner Coleman. The motion unanimously passed.

ADJOURNMENT:

At 7:38 P.M., Commissioner Watts made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Vice Chairman McMillian. The motion unanimously passed.

LATOYA WILLIAMS, Clerk to the Board

RICKY BULLARD, Chairman

**COLUMBUS COUNTY WATER and SEWER DISTRICTS I, II, III, IV, and V
COMBINATION BOARD MEETING
Monday, August 15, 2022
7:37 P.M.**

The Honorable Columbus County Commissioners met on the above stated date and time at 127 West Webster Street, Whiteville, North Carolina 28472, for the purpose of acting as the Columbus County Water and Sewer District II Board.

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT:

Ricky Bullard, **Chairman**
Jerome McMillian, **Vice Chairman**
Chris Smith
Giles E. Byrd
Lavern Coleman
Brent Watts
Charles T. McDowell

APPOINTEES PRESENT:

Eddie Madden, Jr., **County Manager**
Amanda B. Prince, **Staff Attorney**
Melanie Hester, **Interim Finance Director**

APPOINTEES ABSENT (EXCUSED):

Boyd Worley, **Board Attorney**
LaToya Williams, **Clerk to the Board**

MEETING CALLED TO ORDER:

At 7:37 P.M., Chairman Ricky Bullard called the **combination meeting** of Columbus County Water and Sewer District II Board Meeting to order.

Agenda Item #24: WATER DISTRICT II – SECOND READING and APPROVAL of AMENDMENT to the COLUMBUS COUNTY PUBLIC UTILITIES CUSTOMER SERVICE POLICY:

Melanie Hester, Interim Finance Director, requested Board approval.

COLUMBUS COUNTY

CUSTOMER SERVICE POLICY

UTILITIES COLLECTION DEPARTMENT

A. SERVICE APPLICATION

Residential Accounts

Columbus County requires a completed Application for Service (attached), signature and deposit to start water service. With the application, we will need a copy of your Driver's License or state issued ID, payment of \$50.00 for property owner and \$100.00 for renter's deposit, and copy of lease/purchase agreement or form entitled Property Owner/Landlord Transfer of Responsibility for Account Charges. Also, please fill out the part on the application that indicates whether you are owner of the house or renter. You will need to speak with one of our customer service representatives to obtain the deposit amount required with your application. Our customer service representatives are available via telephone from 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, at 910-642-5257.

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If the owner/resident has a meter (County owned equipment) located inside a locked fence/gate the owner/resident must provide a key to the Public Utilities Department for entry. The owner/resident is required to ensure the work area around the meter/water line is safe for workers to perform their duties and shall not block or impede access to the meter/water line. If the meter/water line is inaccessible to workers in the Public Utilities Department, services may be discontinued.

The security deposit is non-transferable and shall be non-interest bearing.

The deposit will be applied to the final bill when the account is closed. Customers who have multiple accounts (apartment complexes, etc.) are required to maintain a deposit equal to the deposit outlined in the adopted budget. Customers who have multiple accounts and are renting the property are required to pay an additional security deposit.

If the customer disconnects one account to relocate to another account within the County, the security deposit will be transferred to the new account when all previous balances at the former account are paid in full. Otherwise, the customer will be required to pay an additional security deposit on the new account. If the customer relocates without notification to the Public Utilities staff, leaving a balance on their account, then the balance on the previous account can / will be transferred to the current account and will be required to pay in full at the time of the new account being established.

The customer shall receive a final bill reflecting the total amount owed to Columbus County for said account.

Upon notification of the death of the customer/account holder, services will be disconnected within ten (10) days of the date of said notice. If a family member (next of kin) or the Personal Representative of the customer/account holder's estate provides a death certificate along with one of the following: Letters Testamentary, Letters of Administration, Affidavit of Collection, or (if no estate has been opened), a letter from the family member stating that the letter-writer is an heir of the estate and is authorized to transfer water service into his/her name, then the account can be reopened in his/her name by following all requirements of the "Residential Service" policy mentioned above. Deceased customer's security deposit or credit balance is refunded to their estate through the Clerk of Court.

Commercial/ Industrial / Institutional Accounts

Columbus County requires a completed Application for Service (application), signature, security deposit and a copy of the rental agreement (if applicable) to start water service. Application for Service for all commercial, industrial, and institutional accounts must also be approved by the Planning Department.

The security deposit is non-transferable and shall be non-interest bearing.

Upon notification of the death of the owner/representative, services will be disconnected within ten (10) days of the date of said notice. If a corporate member (next of kin) or the Personal Representative of the customer/account holder's estate provides a death certificate along with one of the following: Letters Testamentary, Letters of Administration, Affidavit of Collection, or (if no estate has been opened), a letter from the family member stating that the letter-writer is an heir of the estate and is authorized to transfer water service into his/her name, then the account can be reopened in his/her name by following all requirements of the policy for the "Application for Service" for commercial, industrial, and institutional accounts. Deceased customer's security deposit or credit balance is refunded to their estate through the Clerk of Court.

B. ACCOUNT BILLING

Columbus County shall ensure that all customer's meters are read in a manner which provides the County with the most efficient use for personnel. Each customer shall be billed for water usage during a specified billing period, along with all other applicable fees and charges.

1. UTILITY PAYMENT SCHEDULE REVISED

In order to serve customers better and to have a clearer payment schedule, Columbus County is updating its Utility Payment Schedule/Policy. The changes are as follows:

- The billing date for Columbus County's utility bill will be mailed by the 8th of each month following the billing month(s). The customer understands and agrees that the County shall not be liable for the delivery of the mail through the United States Postal Service (USPS). If the customer does not receive his or her bill within a reasonable period of time it shall be the responsibility of the customer to contact the Columbus County Utilities Collection Department to acquire a current account balance due to Columbus County, at which time the customer shall make payment in full.
- Bills will now be due upon receipt. If payment is not received by the beginning of business (8:30 a.m.) on the 6th of the following month, a \$35.00 late fee penalty will be applied to the affected account on the 6th (at the beginning of the business day 8:30 a.m.) of the month.
- If payment for the month that had a late fee applied is not received along with the late fee by the close of business (5 p.m.) on the 20th of the following month, a cut-off order shall be issued on the 21st (at the start of business 8:30 a.m.) to the Public Utilities Department for the termination of service.
- A delinquent fee shall be charged on the day of cut off for any account in arrears. The delinquent fee is based on the Rate Fee Schedule that is in effect at the time of cut off.
- Once a customer's account is placed on the cut-off list, the past due amount including any other fees along with current balance must be paid in full before service is restored.

Columbus County is making these changes to better serve its customers and to make the late fee/utility cut-off policies and procedures more clear. If anyone has any questions about this matter, please call the Utilities Collection Department at 910-642-5257.

2. WATER CONNECTIONS:

Connections to the County water system may be authorized by the Utilities Collection Department with payment of proper fees (deposits, late fees, reconnect fees etc.,). All transactions that occur prior to 2:00 PM will be handled the same business day. Transactions that occur after 2:00 PM will be handled the next business day.

New water connections requiring a tap will be handled after completion of an Application for Service and payment of all fees and deposits. Service is usually provided within 10 to 15 business days, weather permitting, after the customer request.

If water connections for a customer crosses other property lines, it is the responsibility of the customer to secure all easements and other legal documents at their expense to permit the connection to occur.

If more than one heir is identified for a property that is requesting a water connection, all identified heirs are required to provide notarized permission to allow one of the heirs to request connection to the water system.

By requesting water service and payment of a connection fee, the recipient of water service hereby understands and agrees to pay the minimum monthly water bill whether connected to the system or not and using water after such is made available to the dwelling for a minimum of five (5) years.

If a customer requests to be disconnected from the Columbus County public water supply system and the service materials have already been installed on the property, the customer will not be disconnected until they have paid the base rate fee for a minimum of five (5) years. If after five (5) years the customer requests disconnection, they will be required to pay a \$250 fee prior to Public Utilities performing the disconnection and removing the service from the property. Disconnections will be evaluated on a case by case basis by the Columbus County Administration Office.

The County agrees to deliver water to the meter(s) that is servicing the customer's premises at a minimum pressure of twenty (20) pounds per square inch (psi), but shall not be held liable or responsible for any damage in or on the customer's property resulting from system pressures greater than twenty (20) psi.

The Property Owner, Customer, and/or Renter agrees that no other present or future source of water shall be connected to any water lines served by the County's public water supply system. The Property Owner, Customer, and/or Renter shall disconnect from any present water supply prior to connection to and switching to the County's system and shall eliminate any present or future cross-connection in the customer's system. Any Property Owner, Customer, and/or Renter found to be in noncompliance with these Rules and Regulations may have water service(s) terminated, if deemed necessary by the County, until which time the cross-connection(s) is eliminated.

3. FEES, PENALTIES, CHARGES:

All fees, penalties, and charges shall be listed as part of the rate schedule and shall be set from time to time by the Columbus County Board of Commissioners as deemed necessary.

4. EXTENSIONS:

An extension of payment due date may be given to those customers determined to be in "*good fiscal standing*" with the Public Utilities Department. A customer in "*good fiscal standing*" shall be defined as any customer with no prior extensions, no returned check(s), and no service terminations for non-payment during the previous twelve (12) consecutive month period or since becoming a customer with Columbus County, whichever is less. The amount extended shall be paid in full on or before the 1st day of the following month or by an agreement with the Finance Director or his designee.

5. PAYMENT ARRANGEMENTS:

Payment arrangements may be available to residential utility customers when billing exceeds more than double the highest billing within a twelve (12) month period. Financing of exceedingly high bills shall be 0% interest, with a down payment of 25% of balance requiring financing, and not to exceed a term of more than 6 months.

Financed amounts will be billed monthly in addition to each months current billing. Financed amounts and current bill must be paid each month prior to due date to avoid any late payment or delinquent fees being assessed on the account. In order to qualify for financing/payment arrangements, the customer's account must be in good standing and shall not have been cut off for non-payment within the preceding twelve (12) month period.

6. AUTHORIZATION OF EXTENSION OR PAYMENT ARRANGEMENT:

The Finance Officer, or their designee, shall have the authority to approve extensions or financing of payment arrangements.

C. ACCOUNT BALANCE:

In the event a customer disconnects his or her service or the Public Utilities Department disconnects the service, for any reason, the account balance due for water usage, late penalties, and all other applicable fees are the sole responsibility of that customer. The Finance Department shall review all outstanding debt owed to the County for water services provided. Each month, the Finance Department shall make the following attempts to collect outstanding debt:

1. The Utilities Collection Department shall send to the customer a monthly bill. Customer is to make payment in full by the 5TH of each month. If no response; then,
2. The Department shall transfer the security deposit to the customer's account, if any outstanding balance still remains; then,
3. The Department shall send notification to Debt Set-Off; a program with the North Carolina Treasurer's Department, for payment to collect from IRS for any tax refunds or lottery winnings that customer may receive which will go toward the utility bill.
4. The Department shall notify other utility operation systems throughout the State of North Carolina of this customer's indebtedness to the County.
5. All customers that have been disconnected with outstanding account balances shall **NOT** be reconnected until all indebtedness is paid in full to the County.
6. The late fee and/or delinquent fee may be waived if the customer's account has never been assessed any penalties during the life of the account. Thereafter, a late fee and/or delinquent fee may be waived once only if the customer signs up for Automatic Clearing House (ACH Draft).

RELEASES OF UNCOLLECTED UTILITY BILLS:

All utility bills are to be presented to Columbus County Board of Commissioners for release consideration after they are three (3) months old and all possible collection methods have been exhausted. If the customer attempts to reinstate a utility account after the outstanding bill is released, the outstanding amount must be paid in full prior to any new services being activated.

D. ADJUSTMENTS:

1. DEFINITIONS

The Customer side shall be defined as that side of the meter (house side) where the customer connects to the meter provided by the County and beyond.

The County's side shall be defined as that side of the meter, including the meter, where the County service line (highway side) connects to the meter and back to the main.

A water bill adjustment will not be provided when the following criteria are met:

- a. Leaks from exposed piping will not be considered for a leak adjustment.
- b. All metered water loss due to negligence on the part of the user will be charged at the normal rate, and no adjustment of the bill shall be made.

A water bill adjustment will be provided when the following criteria are met:

- a. All water line repairs on the customer's side have been completed.
- b. Evidence of repairs such as plumbing bills and/or a statement from the plumber or customer that the leak repairs have been completed.
- c. Adjustments can be given for leaks on amounts exceeding the average bill based on a calculation of the preceding twelve (12) months if the adjustment exceeds \$50.00.
- d. Only one adjustment shall be made in a twelve (12) month period. If the leak is reflected on two consecutive water bills, adjustments will be made on both bills.
- e. If the customer receives an excessive water bill and the cause is a defect in a water meter, the water bill shall be the average for the previous twelve (12) months. Defects will be confirmed by staff with the Public Utilities Department.

2. LEAKS ON CUSTOMER'S SIDE OF METER:

In the event that a leak occurred on the customer's side of the meter, customer is to make the repair(s) within (15) fifteen days of the leak. Customer shall obtain a Leak Repair Statement (obtained from the Utilities Collection Department), explain the repairs and sign it that the leak repairs have been made. The customer's account will be adjusted to the average monthly minimum usage of the past twelve (12) months. Any leak repair(s) that are not completed within the (15) fifteen day period will forfeit the leak adjustment. All leak adjustments must be approved and signed by the Finance Director or his designee.

3. REPAYMENT:

Repayment of this extraordinary balance can be paid in full or the amount due may be paid in installments, so long as it is approved by the Finance Director or his designee. The period of time allowed for the repayment of this extraordinary balance shall not exceed three (3) consecutive billing periods.

E. DAMAGED LIABILITY:

The County shall not be liable for damage of any kind resulting from water or the use of water on the customer's property, unless damage results directly from negligence on behalf of the County. The County shall not be responsible for damages done by or resulting from any defect in the piping, fixtures, appliances, etc. on the customer's property.

The County shall not be responsible for negligence of third parties or forces beyond the control of the County resulting in any interruption of service. Otherwise, under normal conditions, all potentially affected customers shall be notified in advance of any interruption of service.

Customers who tamper or damage County meters (including all components thereof) and etc., will be reported to appropriate law enforcement and will be charged the appropriate fees as approved by the County Commissioners which will include the actual cost involved to repair/replace the property (see rate fee schedule). All applicable charges will be billed to the customer, along with their monthly water bill, and payment will be due by the due date printed on the bill. If payment is not received by the due date, a cut-off order will be issued during normal business hours to the Public Utilities Department for the termination of service.

Customers who intentionally tamper with the meter a second time or steal water that is County property will have their service removed immediately and be reported to appropriate law enforcement agency for investigation. In order to reconnect to the County water system, they will be responsible for paying for new service at the current rate and pay all outstanding balances.

F. SEPARATE WATER CONNECTIONS AND METERS REQUIRED:

Each building shall have a separate meter, and where practicable, shall have a separate water lateral. In the event that one lateral is used for two (2) dwellings, commercial or industrial buildings, or used to serve two or more meters for the same dwelling, commercial or industrial buildings, a separate cut-off shall be provided for each meter.

However, there shall be an exception to the requirement for separate water meters in the case of groups of mobile homes or apartment developments under single ownership. In the case of said groups of mobile homes or apartment developments of more than ten (10) units, one (1) meter may be used for the entire project unless additional meters are requested by the property owner or deemed necessary by the Public Utilities Department, and the following conditions shall be met:

1. All bills will be rendered to the Owner of the property.
2. The bill will be calculated by a minimum charge for the master meter, which shall be based on the number of units served times the minimum charge per standard $\frac{3}{4}$ inch meter. The remaining bill shall be based on the total consumption passing through the master meter times the unit commodity charge.
3. Should any portion of the development be sold; the owners shall be responsible for paying whatever additional costs would be involved in bringing the divided development into compliance.
4. Cost of service shall be included in the rent/lease of each unit, and no individual meters shall be allowed.
5. In the case of group mobile homes or apartment developments where ten (10) or fewer units are involved, and where ownership is in one party, the owner may elect to have a single meter used for the entire project. Where such election is made the owner shall comply with the conditions set forth as 1, 2, 3, and 4 above.

G. PROFANE, INDECENT, AND THREATING CALL:

It is against North Carolina General Statute 14-196 to use “*profane*, indecent or threatening language to any persons over the telephone; annoying or harassing by repeated telephoning or making false statement over the telephone.”

If a call of this nature is received, do the following:

1. At the first profane or indecent word, ask the caller to please refrain from that type of language. If the profane or indecent language continues, politely inform the caller that if that type of language does not cease that the call will be terminated.
2. Document the occurrence including the caller’s name, address and telephone number, if known. Report incident to your supervisor, including the above information.
3. If the calls continue, notify your supervisor.

Adopted and effective this the 15th day of August, 2022.

Ricky Bullard, Chairman

LaToya Williams, Clerk to the Board

MOTION:

Vice Chairman McMillian made a motion to approve the Columbus County Public Utilities Customer Service Policy, seconded by Commissioner Coleman. The motion unanimously passed.

ADJOURNMENT:

At 7:38 P.M., Commissioner Watts made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Vice Chairman McMillian. The motion unanimously passed.

LATOYA WILLIAMS, Clerk to the Board

RICKY BULLARD, Chairman

COLUMBUS COUNTY WATER and SEWER DISTRICTS I, II, III, IV, and V
COMBINATION BOARD MEETING
Monday, August 15, 2022
7:37 P.M.

The Honorable Columbus County Commissioners met on the above stated date and time at 127 West Webster Street, Whiteville, North Carolina 28472, for the purpose of acting as the Columbus County Water and Sewer District III Board.

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT:

Ricky Bullard, **Chairman**
 Jerome McMillian, **Vice Chairman**
 Chris Smith
 Giles E. Byrd
 Lavern Coleman
 Brent Watts
 Charles T. McDowell

APPOINTEES PRESENT:

Eddie Madden, Jr., **County Manager**
 Amanda B. Prince, **Staff Attorney**
 Melanie Hester, **Interim Finance Director**

APPOINTEES ABSENT (EXCUSED):

Boyd Worley, **Board Attorney**
 LaToya Williams, **Clerk to the Board**

MEETING CALLED TO ORDER:

At 7:37 P.M., Chairman Ricky Bullard called the **combination meeting** of Columbus County Water and Sewer District III Board Meeting to order.

Agenda Item #24: WATER DISTRICT III – SECOND READING and APPROVAL of AMENDMENT to the COLUMBUS COUNTY PUBLIC UTILITIES CUSTOMER SERVICE POLICY:

Melanie Hester, Interim Finance Director, requested Board approval.

COLUMBUS COUNTY

CUSTOMER SERVICE POLICY

UTILITIES COLLECTION DEPARTMENT

A. SERVICE APPLICATION

Residential Accounts

Columbus County requires a completed Application for Service (attached), signature and deposit to start water service. With the application, we will need a copy of your Driver's License or state issued ID, payment of \$50.00 for property owner and \$100.00 for renter's deposit, and copy of lease/purchase agreement or form entitled Property Owner/Landlord Transfer of Responsibility for Account Charges. Also, please fill out the part on the application that indicates whether you are owner of the house or renter. You will need to speak with one of our customer service representatives to obtain the deposit amount required with your application. Our customer service representatives are available via telephone from 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, at 910-642-5257.

Same day service for existing customers can be done as long you stop by our office prior to 2:00 PM, Monday through Friday. Otherwise, the service may be provided the following business day.

If the owner/resident has a meter (County owned equipment) located inside a locked fence/gate the owner/resident must provide a key to the Public Utilities Department for entry. The owner/resident is required to ensure the work area around the meter/water line is safe for workers to perform their duties and shall not block or impede access to the meter/water line. If the meter/water line is inaccessible to workers in the Public Utilities Department, services may be discontinued.

The security deposit is non-transferable and shall be non-interest bearing.

The deposit will be applied to the final bill when the account is closed. Customers who have multiple accounts (apartment complexes, etc.) are required to maintain a deposit equal to the deposit outlined in the adopted budget. Customers who have multiple accounts and are renting the property are required to pay an additional security deposit.

If the customer disconnects one account to relocate to another account within the County, the security deposit will be transferred to the new account when all previous balances at the former account are paid in full. Otherwise, the customer will be required to pay an additional security deposit on the new account. If the customer relocates without notification to the Public Utilities staff, leaving a balance on their account, then the balance on the previous account can / will be transferred to the current account and will be required to pay in full at the time of the new account being established.

The customer shall receive a final bill reflecting the total amount owed to Columbus County for said account.

Upon notification of the death of the customer/account holder, services will be disconnected within ten (10) days of the date of said notice. If a family member (next of kin) or the Personal Representative of the customer/account holder's estate provides a death certificate along with one of the following: Letters Testamentary, Letters of Administration, Affidavit of Collection, or (if no estate has been opened), a letter from the family member stating that the letter-writer is an heir of the estate and is authorized to transfer water service into his/her name, then the account can be reopened in his/her name by following all requirements of the "Residential Service" policy mentioned above. Deceased customer's security deposit or credit balance is refunded to their estate through the Clerk of Court.

Commercial/ Industrial / Institutional Accounts

Columbus County requires a completed Application for Service (application), signature, security deposit and a copy of the rental agreement (if applicable) to start water service. Application for Service for all commercial, industrial, and institutional accounts must also be approved by the Planning Department.

The security deposit is non-transferable and shall be non-interest bearing.

Upon notification of the death of the owner/representative, services will be disconnected within ten (10) days of the date of said notice. If a corporate member (next of kin) or the Personal Representative of the customer/account holder's estate provides a death certificate along with one of the following: Letters Testamentary, Letters of Administration, Affidavit of Collection, or (if no estate has been opened), a letter from the family member stating that the letter-writer is an heir of the estate and is authorized to transfer water service into his/her name, then the account can be reopened in his/her name by following all requirements of the policy for the "Application for Service" for commercial, industrial, and institutional accounts. Deceased customer's security deposit or credit balance is refunded to their estate through the Clerk of Court.

B. ACCOUNT BILLING

Columbus County shall ensure that all customer's meters are read in a manner which provides the County with the most efficient use for personnel. Each customer shall be billed for water usage during a specified billing period, along with all other applicable fees and charges.

1. UTILITY PAYMENT SCHEDULE REVISED

In order to serve customers better and to have a clearer payment schedule, Columbus County is updating its Utility Payment Schedule/Policy. The changes are as follows:

- The billing date for Columbus County's utility bill will be mailed by the 8th of each month following the billing month(s). The customer understands and agrees that the County shall not be liable for the delivery of the mail through the United States Postal Service (USPS). If the customer does not receive his or her bill within a reasonable period of time it shall be the responsibility of the customer to contact the Columbus County Utilities Collection Department to acquire a current account balance due to Columbus County, at which time the customer shall make payment in full.
- Bills will now be due upon receipt. If payment is not received by the beginning of business (8:30 a.m.) on the 6th of the following month, a \$35.00 late fee penalty will be applied to the affected account on the 6th (at the beginning of the business day 8:30 a.m.) of the month.
- If payment for the month that had a late fee applied is not received along with the late fee by the close of business (5 p.m.) on the 20th of the following month, a cut-off order shall be issued on the 21st (at the start of business 8:30 a.m.) to the Public Utilities Department for the termination of service.
- A delinquent fee shall be charged on the day of cut off for any account in arrears. The delinquent fee is based on the Rate Fee Schedule that is in effect at the time of cut off.
- Once a customer's account is placed on the cut-off list, the past due amount including any other fees along with current balance must be paid in full before service is restored.

Columbus County is making these changes to better serve its customers and to make the late fee/utility cut-off policies and procedures more clear. If anyone has any questions about this matter, please call the Utilities Collection Department at 910-642-5257.

2. WATER CONNECTIONS:

Connections to the County water system may be authorized by the Utilities Collection Department with payment of proper fees (deposits, late fees, reconnect fees etc.,). All transactions that occur prior to 2:00 PM will be handled the same business day. Transactions that occur after 2:00 PM will be handled the next business day.

New water connections requiring a tap will be handled after completion of an Application for Service and payment of all fees and deposits. Service is usually provided within 10 to 15 business days, weather permitting, after the customer request.

If water connections for a customer crosses other property lines, it is the responsibility of the customer to secure all easements and other legal documents at their expense to permit the connection to occur.

If more than one heir is identified for a property that is requesting a water connection, all identified heirs are required to provide notarized permission to allow one of the heirs to request connection to the water system.

By requesting water service and payment of a connection fee, the recipient of water service hereby understands and agrees to pay the minimum monthly water bill whether connected to the system or not and using water after such is made available to the dwelling for a minimum of five (5) years.

If a customer requests to be disconnected from the Columbus County public water supply system and the service materials have already been installed on the property, the customer will not be disconnected until they have paid the base rate fee for a minimum of five (5) years. If after five (5) years the customer requests disconnection, they will be required to pay a \$250 fee prior to Public Utilities performing the disconnection and removing the service from the property. Disconnections will be evaluated on a case by case basis by the Columbus County Administration Office.

The County agrees to deliver water to the meter(s) that is servicing the customer's premises at a minimum pressure of twenty (20) pounds per square inch (psi), but shall not be held liable or responsible for any damage in or on the customer's property resulting from system pressures greater than twenty (20) psi.

The Property Owner, Customer, and/or Renter agrees that no other present or future source of water shall be connected to any water lines served by the County's public water supply system. The Property Owner, Customer, and/or Renter shall disconnect from any present water supply prior to connection to and switching to the County's system and shall eliminate any present or future cross-connection in the customer's system. Any Property Owner, Customer, and/or Renter found to be in noncompliance with these Rules and Regulations may have water service(s) terminated, if deemed necessary by the County, until which time the cross-connection(s) is eliminated.

3. FEES, PENALTIES, CHARGES:

All fees, penalties, and charges shall be listed as part of the rate schedule and shall be set from time to time by the Columbus County Board of Commissioners as deemed necessary.

4. EXTENSIONS:

An extension of payment due date may be given to those customers determined to be in "*good fiscal standing*" with the Public Utilities Department. A customer in "*good fiscal standing*" shall be defined as any customer with no prior extensions, no returned check(s), and no service terminations for non-payment during the previous twelve (12) consecutive month period or since becoming a customer with Columbus County, whichever is less. The amount extended shall be paid in full on or before the 1st day of the following month or by an agreement with the Finance Director or his designee.

5. PAYMENT ARRANGEMENTS:

Payment arrangements may be available to residential utility customers when billing exceeds more than double the highest billing within a twelve (12) month period. Financing of exceedingly high bills shall be 0% interest, with a down payment of 25% of balance requiring financing, and not to exceed a term of more than 6 months.

Financed amounts will be billed monthly in addition to each months current billing. Financed amounts and current bill must be paid each month prior to due date to avoid any late payment or delinquent fees being assessed on the account. In order to qualify for financing/payment arrangements, the customer's account must be in good standing and shall not have been cut off for non-payment within the preceding twelve (12) month period.

6. AUTHORIZATION OF EXTENSION OR PAYMENT ARRANGEMENT:

The Finance Officer, or their designee, shall have the authority to approve extensions or financing of payment arrangements.

C. ACCOUNT BALANCE:

In the event a customer disconnects his or her service or the Public Utilities Department disconnects the service, for any reason, the account balance due for water usage, late penalties, and all other applicable fees are the sole responsibility of that customer. The Finance Department shall review all outstanding debt owed to the County for water services provided. Each month, the Finance Department shall make the following attempts to collect outstanding debt:

1. The Utilities Collection Department shall send to the customer a monthly bill. Customer is to make payment in full by the 5TH of each month. If no response; then,
2. The Department shall transfer the security deposit to the customer's account, if any outstanding balance still remains; then,
3. The Department shall send notification to Debt Set-Off; a program with the North Carolina Treasurer's Department, for payment to collect from IRS for any tax refunds or lottery winnings that customer may receive which will go toward the utility bill.
4. The Department shall notify other utility operation systems throughout the State of North Carolina of this customer's indebtedness to the County.
5. All customers that have been disconnected with outstanding account balances shall **NOT** be reconnected until all indebtedness is paid in full to the County.
6. The late fee and/or delinquent fee may be waived if the customer's account has never been assessed any penalties during the life of the account. Thereafter, a late fee and/or delinquent fee may be waived once only if the customer signs up for Automatic Clearing House (ACH Draft).

RELEASES OF UNCOLLECTED UTILITY BILLS:

All utility bills are to be presented to Columbus County Board of Commissioners for release consideration after they are three (3) months old and all possible collection methods have been exhausted. If the customer attempts to reinstate a utility account after the outstanding bill is released, the outstanding amount must be paid in full prior to any new services being activated.

D. ADJUSTMENTS:

1. DEFINITIONS

The Customer side shall be defined as that side of the meter (house side) where the customer connects to the meter provided by the County and beyond.

The County's side shall be defined as that side of the meter, including the meter, where the County service line (highway side) connects to the meter and back to the main.

A water bill adjustment will not be provided when the following criteria are met:

- a. Leaks from exposed piping will not be considered for a leak adjustment.
- b. All metered water loss due to negligence on the part of the user will be charged at the normal rate, and no adjustment of the bill shall be made.

A water bill adjustment will be provided when the following criteria are met:

- a. All water line repairs on the customer's side have been completed.
- b. Evidence of repairs such as plumbing bills and/or a statement from the plumber or customer that the leak repairs have been completed.
- c. Adjustments can be given for leaks on amounts exceeding the average bill based on a calculation of the preceding twelve (12) months if the adjustment exceeds \$50.00.
- d. Only one adjustment shall be made in a twelve (12) month period. If the leak is reflected on two consecutive water bills, adjustments will be made on both bills.
- e. If the customer receives an excessive water bill and the cause is a defect in a water meter, the water bill shall be the average for the previous twelve (12) months. Defects will be confirmed by staff with the Public Utilities Department.

2. LEAKS ON CUSTOMER'S SIDE OF METER:

In the event that a leak occurred on the customer's side of the meter, customer is to make the repair(s) within (15) fifteen days of the leak. Customer shall obtain a Leak Repair Statement (obtained from the Utilities Collection Department), explain the repairs and sign it that the leak repairs have been made. The customer's account will be adjusted to the average monthly minimum usage of the past twelve (12) months. Any leak repair(s) that are not completed within the (15) fifteen day period will forfeit the leak adjustment. All leak adjustments must be approved and signed by the Finance Director or his designee.

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Repayment of this extraordinary balance can be paid in full or the amount due may be paid in installments, so long as it is approved by the Finance Director or his designee. The period of time allowed for the repayment of this extraordinary balance shall not exceed three (3) consecutive billing periods.

E. DAMAGED LIABILITY:

The County shall not be liable for damage of any kind resulting from water or the use of water on the customer's property, unless damage results directly from negligence on behalf of the County. The County shall not be responsible for damages done by or resulting from any defect in the piping, fixtures, appliances, etc. on the customer's property.

The County shall not be responsible for negligence of third parties or forces beyond the control of the County resulting in any interruption of service. Otherwise, under normal conditions, all potentially affected customers shall be notified in advance of any interruption of service.

Customers who tamper or damage County meters (including all components thereof) and etc., will be reported to appropriate law enforcement and will be charged the appropriate fees as approved by the County Commissioners which will include the actual cost involved to repair/replace the property (see rate fee schedule). All applicable charges will be billed to the customer, along with their monthly water bill, and payment will be due by the due date printed on the bill. If payment is not received by the due date, a cut-off order will be issued during normal business hours to the Public Utilities Department for the termination of service.

Customers who intentionally tamper with the meter a second time or steal water that is County property will have their service removed immediately and be reported to appropriate law enforcement agency for investigation. In order to reconnect to the County water system, they will be responsible for paying for new service at the current rate and pay all outstanding balances.

F. SEPARATE WATER CONNECTIONS AND METERS REQUIRED:

Each building shall have a separate meter, and where practicable, shall have a separate water lateral. In the event that one lateral is used for two (2) dwellings, commercial or industrial buildings, or used to serve two or more meters for the same dwelling, commercial or industrial buildings, a separate cut-off shall be provided for each meter.

However, there shall be an exception to the requirement for separate water meters in the case of groups of mobile homes or apartment developments under single ownership. In the case of said groups of mobile homes or apartment developments of more than ten (10) units, one (1) meter may be used for the entire project unless additional meters are requested by the property owner or deemed necessary by the Public Utilities Department, and the following conditions shall be met:

1. All bills will be rendered to the Owner of the property.
2. The bill will be calculated by a minimum charge for the master meter, which shall be based on the number of units served times the minimum charge per standard $\frac{3}{4}$ inch meter. The remaining bill shall be based on the total consumption passing through the master meter times the unit commodity charge.
3. Should any portion of the development be sold; the owners shall be responsible for paying whatever additional costs would be involved in bringing the divided development into compliance.
4. Cost of service shall be included in the rent/lease of each unit, and no individual meters shall be allowed.
5. In the case of group mobile homes or apartment developments where ten (10) or fewer units are involved, and where ownership is in one party, the owner may elect to have a single meter used for the entire project. Where such election is made the owner shall comply with the conditions set forth as 1, 2, 3, and 4 above.

G. PROFANE, INDECENT, AND THREATING CALL:

It is against North Carolina General Statute 14-196 to use “*profane*, indecent or threatening language to any persons over the telephone; annoying or harassing by repeated telephoning or making false statement over the telephone.”

If a call of this nature is received, do the following:

1. At the first profane or indecent word, ask the caller to please refrain from that type of language. If the profane or indecent language continues, politely inform the caller that if that type of language does not cease that the call will be terminated.
2. Document the occurrence including the caller’s name, address and telephone number, if known. Report incident to your supervisor, including the above information.
3. If the calls continue, notify your supervisor.

Adopted and effective this the 15th day of August, 2022.

Ricky Bullard, Chairman

LaToya Williams, Clerk to the Board

MOTION:

Vice Chairman McMillian made a motion to approve the Columbus County Public Utilities Customer Service Policy, seconded by Commissioner Coleman. The motion unanimously passed.

ADJOURNMENT:

At 7:38 P.M., Commissioner Watts made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Vice Chairman McMillian. The motion unanimously passed.

LATOYA WILLIAMS, Clerk to the Board

RICKY BULLARD, Chairman

**COLUMBUS COUNTY WATER and SEWER DISTRICTS I, II, III, IV, and V
COMBINATION BOARD MEETING
Monday, August 15, 2022
7:37 P.M.**

The Honorable Columbus County Commissioners met on the above stated date and time at 127 West Webster Street, Whiteville, North Carolina 28472, for the purpose of acting as the Columbus County Water and Sewer District IV Board.

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT:

Ricky Bullard, **Chairman**
Jerome McMillian, **Vice Chairman**
Chris Smith
Giles E. Byrd
Lavern Coleman
Brent Watts
Charles T. McDowell

APPOINTEES PRESENT:

Eddie Madden, Jr., **County Manager**
Amanda B. Prince, **Staff Attorney**
Melanie Hester, **Interim Finance Director**

APPOINTEES ABSENT (EXCUSED):

Boyd Worley, **Board Attorney**
LaToya Williams, **Clerk to the Board**

MEETING CALLED TO ORDER:

At 7:37 P.M., Chairman Ricky Bullard called the **combination meeting** of Columbus County Water and Sewer District IV Board Meeting to order.

Agenda Item #24: WATER DISTRICT IV – SECOND READING and APPROVAL of AMENDMENT to the COLUMBUS COUNTY PUBLIC UTILITIES CUSTOMER SERVICE POLICY:

Melanie Hester, Interim Finance Director, requested Board approval.

**COLUMBUS COUNTY
CUSTOMER SERVICE POLICY
UTILITIES COLLECTION DEPARTMENT**

A. SERVICE APPLICATION

Residential Accounts

Columbus County requires a completed Application for Service (attached), signature and deposit to start water service. With the application, we will need a copy of your Driver's License or state issued ID, payment of \$50.00 for property owner and \$100.00 for renter's deposit, and copy of lease/purchase agreement or form entitled Property Owner/Landlord Transfer of Responsibility for Account Charges. Also, please fill out the part on the application that indicates whether you are owner of the house or renter. You will need to speak with one of our customer service representatives to obtain the deposit amount required with your application. Our customer service representatives are available via telephone from 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, at 910-642-5257.

Same day service for existing customers can be done as long you stop by our office prior to 2:00 PM, Monday through Friday. Otherwise, the service may be provided the following business day.

If the owner/resident has a meter (County owned equipment) located inside a locked fence/gate the owner/resident must provide a key to the Public Utilities Department for entry. The owner/resident is required to ensure the work area around the meter/water line is safe for workers to perform their duties and shall not block or impede access to the meter/water line. If the meter/water line is inaccessible to workers in the Public Utilities Department, services may be discontinued.

The security deposit is non-transferable and shall be non-interest bearing.

The deposit will be applied to the final bill when the account is closed. Customers who have multiple accounts (apartment complexes, etc.) are required to maintain a deposit equal to the deposit outlined in the adopted budget. Customers who have multiple accounts and are renting the property are required to pay an additional security deposit.

If the customer disconnects one account to relocate to another account within the County, the security deposit will be transferred to the new account when all previous balances at the former account are paid in full. Otherwise, the customer will be required to pay an additional security deposit on the new account. If the customer relocates without notification to the Public Utilities staff, leaving a balance on their account, then the balance on the previous account can / will be transferred to the current account and will be required to pay in full at the time of the new account being established.

The customer shall receive a final bill reflecting the total amount owed to Columbus County for said account.

Upon notification of the death of the customer/account holder, services will be disconnected within ten (10) days of the date of said notice. If a family member (next of kin) or the Personal Representative of the customer/account holder's estate provides a death certificate along with one of the following: Letters Testamentary, Letters of Administration, Affidavit of Collection, or (if no estate has been opened), a letter from the family member stating that the letter-writer is an heir of the estate and is authorized to transfer water service into his/her name, then the account can be reopened in his/her name by following all requirements of the "Residential Service" policy mentioned above. Deceased customer's security deposit or credit balance is refunded to their estate through the Clerk of Court.

Commercial/ Industrial / Institutional Accounts

Columbus County requires a completed Application for Service (application), signature, security deposit and a copy of the rental agreement (if applicable) to start water service. Application for Service for all commercial, industrial, and institutional accounts must also be approved by the Planning Department.

The security deposit is non-transferable and shall be non-interest bearing.

Upon notification of the death of the owner/representative, services will be disconnected within ten (10) days of the date of said notice. If a corporate member (next of kin) or the Personal Representative of the customer/account holder's estate provides a death certificate along with one of the following: Letters Testamentary, Letters of Administration, Affidavit of Collection, or (if no estate has been opened), a letter from the family member stating that the letter-writer is an heir of the estate and is authorized to transfer water service into his/her name, then the account can be reopened in his/her name by following all requirements of the policy for the "Application for Service" for commercial, industrial, and institutional accounts. Deceased customer's security deposit or credit balance is refunded to their estate through the Clerk of Court.

B. ACCOUNT BILLING

Columbus County shall ensure that all customer's meters are read in a manner which provides the County with the most efficient use for personnel. Each customer shall be billed for water usage during a specified billing period, along with all other applicable fees and charges.

1. UTILITY PAYMENT SCHEDULE REVISED

In order to serve customers better and to have a clearer payment schedule, Columbus County is updating its Utility Payment Schedule/Policy. The changes are as follows:

- The billing date for Columbus County's utility bill will be mailed by the 8th of each month following the billing month(s). The customer understands and agrees that the County shall not be liable for the delivery of the mail through the United States Postal Service (USPS). If the customer does not receive his or her bill within a reasonable period of time it shall be the responsibility of the customer to contact the Columbus County Utilities Collection Department to acquire a current account balance due to Columbus County, at which time the customer shall make payment in full.
- Bills will now be due upon receipt. If payment is not received by the beginning of business (8:30 a.m.) on the 6th of the following month, a \$35.00 late fee penalty will be applied to the affected account on the 6th (at the beginning of the business day 8:30 a.m.) of the month.
- If payment for the month that had a late fee applied is not received along with the late fee by the close of business (5 p.m.) on the 20th of the following month, a cut-off order shall be issued on the 21st (at the start of business 8:30 a.m.) to the Public Utilities Department for the termination of service.
- A delinquent fee shall be charged on the day of cut off for any account in arrears. The delinquent fee is based on the Rate Fee Schedule that is in effect at the time of cut off.
- Once a customer's account is placed on the cut-off list, the past due amount including any other fees along with current balance must be paid in full before service is restored.

Columbus County is making these changes to better serve its customers and to make the late fee/utility cut-off policies and procedures more clear. If anyone has any questions about this matter, please call the Utilities Collection Department at 910-642-5257.

2. WATER CONNECTIONS:

Connections to the County water system may be authorized by the Utilities Collection Department with payment of proper fees (deposits, late fees, reconnect fees etc.). All transactions that occur prior to 2:00 PM will be handled the same business day. Transactions that occur after 2:00 PM will be handled the next business day.

New water connections requiring a tap will be handled after completion of an Application for Service and payment of all fees and deposits. Service is usually provided within 10 to 15 business days, weather permitting, after the customer request.

If water connections for a customer crosses other property lines, it is the responsibility of the customer to secure all easements and other legal documents at their expense to permit the connection to occur.

If more than one heir is identified for a property that is requesting a water connection, all identified heirs are required to provide notarized permission to allow one of the heirs to request connection to the water system.

By requesting water service and payment of a connection fee, the recipient of water service hereby understands and agrees to pay the minimum monthly water bill whether connected to the system or not and using water after such is made available to the dwelling for a minimum of five (5) years.

If a customer requests to be disconnected from the Columbus County public water supply system and the service materials have already been installed on the property, the customer will not be disconnected until they have paid the base rate fee for a minimum of five (5) years. If after five (5) years the customer requests disconnection, they will be required to pay a \$250 fee prior to Public Utilities performing the disconnection and removing the service from the property. Disconnections will be evaluated on a case by case basis by the Columbus County Administration Office.

The County agrees to deliver water to the meter(s) that is servicing the customer's premises at a minimum pressure of twenty (20) pounds per square inch (psi), but shall not be held liable or responsible for any damage in or on the customer's property resulting from system pressures greater than twenty (20) psi.

The Property Owner, Customer, and/or Renter agrees that no other present or future source of water shall be connected to any water lines served by the County's public water supply system. The Property Owner, Customer, and/or Renter shall disconnect from any present water supply prior to connection to and switching to the County's system and shall eliminate any present or future cross-connection in the customer's system. Any Property Owner, Customer, and/or Renter found to be in noncompliance with these Rules and Regulations may have water service(s) terminated, if deemed necessary by the County, until which time the cross-connection(s) is eliminated.

3. FEES, PENALTIES, CHARGES:

All fees, penalties, and charges shall be listed as part of the rate schedule and shall be set from time to time by the Columbus County Board of Commissioners as deemed necessary.

4. EXTENSIONS:

An extension of payment due date may be given to those customers determined to be in "*good fiscal standing*" with the Public Utilities Department. A customer in "*good fiscal standing*" shall

be defined as any customer with no prior extensions, no returned check(s), and no service terminations for non-payment during the previous twelve (12) consecutive month period or since becoming a customer with Columbus County, whichever is less. The amount extended shall be paid in full on or before the 1st day of the following month or by an agreement with the Finance Director or his designee.

5. PAYMENT ARRANGEMENTS:

Payment arrangements may be available to residential utility customers when billing exceeds more than double the highest billing within a twelve (12) month period. Financing of exceedingly high bills shall be 0% interest, with a down payment of 25% of balance requiring financing, and not to exceed a term of more than 6 months.

Financed amounts will be billed monthly in addition to each months current billing. Financed amounts and current bill must be paid each month prior to due date to avoid any late payment or delinquent fees being assessed on the account. In order to qualify for financing/payment arrangements, the customer's account must be in good standing and shall not have been cut off for non-payment within the preceding twelve (12) month period.

6. AUTHORIZATION OF EXTENSION OR PAYMENT ARRANGEMENT:

The Finance Officer, or their designee, shall have the authority to approve extensions or financing of payment arrangements.

C. ACCOUNT BALANCE:

In the event a customer disconnects his or her service or the Public Utilities Department disconnects the service, for any reason, the account balance due for water usage, late penalties, and all other applicable fees are the sole responsibility of that customer. The Finance Department shall review all outstanding debt owed to the County for water services provided. Each month, the Finance Department shall make the following attempts to collect outstanding debt:

1. The Utilities Collection Department shall send to the customer a monthly bill. Customer is to make payment in full by the 5TH of each month. If no response; then,
2. The Department shall transfer the security deposit to the customer's account, if any outstanding balance still remains; then,
3. The Department shall send notification to Debt Set-Off; a program with the North Carolina Treasurer's Department, for payment to collect from IRS for any tax refunds or lottery winnings that customer may receive which will go toward the utility bill.
4. The Department shall notify other utility operation systems throughout the State of North Carolina of this customer's indebtedness to the County.
5. All customers that have been disconnected with outstanding account balances shall **NOT** be reconnected until all indebtedness is paid in full to the County.
6. The late fee and/or delinquent fee may be waived if the customer's account has never been assessed any penalties during the life of the account. Thereafter, a late fee and/or delinquent fee may be waived once only if the customer signs up for Automatic Clearing House (ACH Draft).

RELEASES OF UNCOLLECTED UTILITY BILLS:

All utility bills are to be presented to Columbus County Board of Commissioners for release consideration after they are three (3) months old and all possible collection methods have been exhausted. If the customer attempts to reinstate a utility account after the outstanding bill is released, the outstanding amount must be paid in full prior to any new services being activated.

D. ADJUSTMENTS:**1. DEFINITIONS**

The Customer side shall be defined as that side of the meter (house side) where the customer connects to the meter provided by the County and beyond.

The County's side shall be defined as that side of the meter, including the meter, where the County service line (highway side) connects to the meter and back to the main.

A water bill adjustment will not be provided when the following criteria are met:

- a. Leaks from exposed piping will not be considered for a leak adjustment.
- b. All metered water loss due to negligence on the part of the user will be charged at the normal rate, and no adjustment of the bill shall be made.

A water bill adjustment will be provided when the following criteria are met:

- a. All water line repairs on the customer's side have been completed.
- b. Evidence of repairs such as plumbing bills and/or a statement from the plumber or customer that the leak repairs have been completed.
- c. Adjustments can be given for leaks on amounts exceeding the average bill based on a calculation of the preceding twelve (12) months if the adjustment exceeds \$50.00.
- d. Only one adjustment shall be made in a twelve (12) month period. If the leak is reflected on two consecutive water bills, adjustments will be made on both bills.
- e. If the customer receives an excessive water bill and the cause is a defect in a water meter, the water bill shall be the average for the previous twelve (12) months. Defects will be confirmed by staff with the Public Utilities Department.

2. LEAKS ON CUSTOMER'S SIDE OF METER:

In the event that a leak occurred on the customer's side of the meter, customer is to make the repair(s) within (15) fifteen days of the leak. Customer shall obtain a Leak Repair Statement (obtained from the Utilities Collection Department), explain the repairs and sign it that the leak repairs have been made. The customer's account will be adjusted to the average monthly minimum usage of the past twelve (12) months. Any leak repair(s) that are not completed within the (15) fifteen day period will forfeit the leak adjustment. All leak adjustments must be approved and signed by the Finance Director or his designee.

3. REPAYMENT:

Repayment of this extraordinary balance can be paid in full or the amount due may be paid in installments, so long as it is approved by the Finance Director or his designee. The period of time allowed for the repayment of this extraordinary balance shall not exceed three (3) consecutive billing periods.

E. DAMAGED LIABILITY:

The County shall not be liable for damage of any kind resulting from water or the use of water on the customer's property, unless damage results directly from negligence on behalf of the County. The County shall not be responsible for damages done by or resulting from any defect in the piping, fixtures, appliances, etc. on the customer's property.

The County shall not be responsible for negligence of third parties or forces beyond the control of the County resulting in any interruption of service. Otherwise, under normal conditions, all potentially affected customers shall be notified in advance of any interruption of service.

Customers who tamper or damage County meters (including all components thereof) and etc., will be reported to appropriate law enforcement and will be charged the appropriate fees as approved by the County Commissioners which will include the actual cost involved to repair/replace the property (see rate fee schedule). All applicable charges will be billed to the customer, along with their monthly water bill, and payment will be due by the due date printed on the bill. If payment is not received by the due date, a cut-off order will be issued during normal business hours to the Public Utilities Department for the termination of service.

Customers who intentionally tamper with the meter a second time or steal water that is County property will have their service removed immediately and be reported to appropriate law enforcement agency for investigation. In order to reconnect to the County water system, they will be responsible for paying for new service at the current rate and pay all outstanding balances.

F. SEPARATE WATER CONNECTIONS AND METERS REQUIRED:

Each building shall have a separate meter, and where practicable, shall have a separate water lateral. In the event that one lateral is used for two (2) dwellings, commercial or industrial buildings, or used to serve two or more meters for the same dwelling, commercial or industrial buildings, a separate cut-off shall be provided for each meter.

However, there shall be an exception to the requirement for separate water meters in the case of groups of mobile homes or apartment developments under single ownership. In the case of said groups of mobile homes or apartment developments of more than ten (10) units, one (1) meter may be used for the entire project unless additional meters are requested by the property owner or deemed necessary by the Public Utilities Department, and the following conditions shall be met:

1. All bills will be rendered to the Owner of the property.
2. The bill will be calculated by a minimum charge for the master meter, which shall be based on the number of units served times the minimum charge per standard $\frac{3}{4}$ inch meter. The remaining bill

shall be based on the total consumption passing through the master meter times the unit commodity charge.

3. Should any portion of the development be sold; the owners shall be responsible for paying whatever additional costs would be involved in bringing the divided development into compliance.

4. Cost of service shall be included in the rent/lease of each unit, and no individual meters shall be allowed.

5. In the case of group mobile homes or apartment developments where ten (10) or fewer units are involved, and where ownership is in one party, the owner may elect to have a single meter used for the entire project. Where such election is made the owner shall comply with the conditions set forth as 1, 2, 3, and 4 above.

G. PROFANE, INDECENT, AND THREATING CALL:

It is against North Carolina General Statute 14-196 to use “*profane*, indecent or threatening language to any persons over the telephone; annoying or harassing by repeated telephoning or making false statement over the telephone.”

If a call of this nature is received, do the following:

1. At the first profane or indecent word, ask the caller to please refrain from that type of language. If the profane or indecent language continues, politely inform the caller that if that type of language does not cease that the call will be terminated.
2. Document the occurrence including the caller’s name, address and telephone number, if known. Report incident to your supervisor, including the above information.
3. If the calls continue, notify your supervisor.

Adopted and effective this the 15th day of August, 2022.

Ricky Bullard, Chairman

LaToya Williams, Clerk to the Board

MOTION:

Vice Chairman McMillian made a motion to approve the Columbus County Public Utilities Customer Service Policy, seconded by Commissioner Coleman. The motion unanimously passed.

Agenda Item #25: WATER DISTRICT IV – APPROVAL of AGREEMENT with MCADAMS & ASSOCIATES for ADMINISTRATION of the EDA GRANT:

Dr. Gary Lanier, EDC/Planning Director, requested Board approval.



**PROPOSAL TO FURNISH
PROFESSIONAL ADMINISTRATIVE AND CONSULTING SERVICES
COLUMBUS COUNTY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
EDA Grant Water Infrastructure to Serve the International Logistics Park**

This **PROPOSAL** made this 9th day of August 2022 by and between the COLUMBUS COUNTY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IN COLUMBUS COUNTY, NORTH CAROLINA, hereinafter called the OWNER and MCADAMS AND ASSOCIATES, LLC, hereinafter called the CONSULTANT.

WHEREAS, the CONSULTANT intends to provide Professional Administrative and Consulting Services for EDA Funding Administration, hereinafter called SERVICES, as requested by the Owner; and

WHEREAS, the CONSULTANT agrees to provide professional services as described herein to assist the OWNER in completing the described SERVICES.

NOW, THEREFORE, the OWNER and CONSULTANT, for the consideration hereinafter names, agree as follows:

The CONSULTANT agrees to perform for the above named OWNER professional services as hereinafter set forth.

The OWNER agrees to compensate the CONSULTANT for services hereinafter provided.

The CONSULTANT's services shall include the following as requested by OWNER for the EDA Water Infrastructure to serve the International Logistics Park (ILP) Project:

1. Complete funding application package and address all follow up correspondence for United States Economic Development Administration (EDA).
2. Prepare all documents to be approved by Columbus County Economic Development to ensure compliance with application and administration requirements.
3. Administer EDA grant to include compliance with all EDA grant requirements, ensuring Federal compliance of Contractor's bid documents, oversight of project schedule, process pay requisitions, and project closeout.
4. Prepare EDA Quarterly Progress Reports, bi annual Federal Financial Reports, and post grant close out reporting.
5. Maintain Columbus County's registrations on relevant Federal websites as required by EDA.
6. Administrative costs, travel, and expenses.
7. Consulting via phone, email, video conferencing, and in person at locations in and outside of Columbus County as requested by OWNER.

PAYMENT: the OWNER agrees to pay the CONSULTANT for SERVICES noted as follows.

LUMP SUM of TEN THOUSAND DOLLARS (\$10,000.00) for application submittal / revisions, PER draft / revisions, and Environmental Report revision with payment due within 15 business days of contract approval.

LUMP SUM of FORTY FIVE THOUSAND DOLLARS (\$45,000.00) for EDA Funding Administration with 5% (\$2,250.00) due within 15 business days of contract approval and the remaining balance billed in equal payments during the project construction phase.

GOVERNING LAW: This Agreement shall be governed in accordance with laws of the State of North Carolina. All actions relating in any ways in this Agreement shall be brought in the General Court of Justice in Wake County, North Carolina.

The OWNER and CONSULTANT hereby agree to the full performance of the covenants contained herein.

IN WITNESS HEREOF, the CONSULTANT and OWNER have executed this Agreement, the day and the year first above written, which is the effective date of this Agreement.

MCADAMS AND ASSOCIATES, LLC

COLUMBUS COUNTY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

By: Emily M. Miller
Emily M. Miller, President

By: _____

Date: 8/9/22

Signature: _____

Date: _____

ATTEST: _____
(SEAL)

MOTION:

Commissioner McDowell made a motion to approve the Agreement with McAdams & Associates, Seconded by Commissioner Coleman. The motion unanimously passed.

ADJOURNMENT:

At 7:38 P.M., Commissioner Watts made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Vice Chairman McMillian. The motion unanimously passed.

LATOYA WILLIAMS, Clerk to the Board

RICKY BULLARD, Chairman

COLUMBUS COUNTY WATER and SEWER DISTRICTS I, II, III, IV, and V
COMBINATION BOARD MEETING
Monday, August 15, 2022
7:37 P.M.

The Honorable Columbus County Commissioners met on the above stated date and time at 127 West Webster Street, Whiteville, North Carolina 28472, for the purpose of acting as the Columbus County Water and Sewer District V Board.

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT:

Ricky Bullard, **Chairman**
 Jerome McMillian, **Vice Chairman**
 Chris Smith
 Giles E. Byrd
 Lavern Coleman
 Brent Watts
 Charles T. McDowell

APPOINTEES PRESENT:

Eddie Madden, Jr., **County Manager**
 Amanda B. Prince, **Staff Attorney**
 Melanie Hester, **Interim Finance Director**

APPOINTEES ABSENT (EXCUSED):

Boyd Worley, **Board Attorney**
 LaToya Williams, **Clerk to the Board**

MEETING CALLED TO ORDER:

At 7:37 P.M., Chairman Ricky Bullard called the **combination meeting** of Columbus County Water and Sewer District V Board Meeting to order.

Agenda Item #24: WATER DISTRICT V – SECOND READING and APPROVAL of AMENDMENT to the COLUMBUS COUNTY PUBLIC UTILITIES CUSTOMER SERVICE POLICY:

Melanie Hester, Interim Finance Director, requested Board approval.

COLUMBUS COUNTY

CUSTOMER SERVICE POLICY

UTILITIES COLLECTION DEPARTMENT

A. SERVICE APPLICATION

Residential Accounts

Columbus County requires a completed Application for Service (attached), signature and deposit to start water service. With the application, we will need a copy of your Driver's License or state issued ID, payment of \$50.00 for property owner and \$100.00 for renter's deposit, and copy of lease/purchase agreement or form entitled Property Owner/Landlord Transfer of Responsibility for Account Charges. Also, please fill out the part on the application that indicates whether you are owner of the house or renter. You will need to speak with one of our customer service representatives to obtain the deposit amount required with your application. Our customer service representatives are available via telephone from 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, at 910-642-5257.

Same day service for existing customers can be done as long you stop by our office prior to 2:00 PM, Monday through Friday. Otherwise, the service may be provided the following business day.

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The security deposit is non-transferable and shall be non-interest bearing.

The deposit will be applied to the final bill when the account is closed. Customers who have multiple accounts (apartment complexes, etc.) are required to maintain a deposit equal to the deposit outlined in the adopted budget. Customers who have multiple accounts and are renting the property are required to pay an additional security deposit.

If the customer disconnects one account to relocate to another account within the County, the security deposit will be transferred to the new account when all previous balances at the former account are paid in full. Otherwise, the customer will be required to pay an additional security deposit on the new account. If the customer relocates without notification to the Public Utilities staff, leaving a balance on their account, then the balance on the previous account can / will be transferred to the current account and will be required to pay in full at the time of the new account being established.

The customer shall receive a final bill reflecting the total amount owed to Columbus County for said account.

Upon notification of the death of the customer/account holder, services will be disconnected within ten (10) days of the date of said notice. If a family member (next of kin) or the Personal Representative of the customer/account holder's estate provides a death certificate along with one of the following: Letters Testamentary, Letters of Administration, Affidavit of Collection, or (if no estate has been opened), a letter from the family member stating that the letter-writer is an heir of the estate and is authorized to transfer water service into his/her name, then the account can be reopened in his/her name by following all requirements of the "Residential Service" policy mentioned above. Deceased customer's security deposit or credit balance is refunded to their estate through the Clerk of Court.

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Columbus County requires a completed Application for Service (application), signature, security deposit and a copy of the rental agreement (if applicable) to start water service. Application for Service for all commercial, industrial, and institutional accounts must also be approved by the Planning Department.

The security deposit is non-transferable and shall be non-interest bearing.

Upon notification of the death of the owner/representative, services will be disconnected within ten (10) days of the date of said notice. If a corporate member (next of kin) or the Personal Representative of the customer/account holder's estate provides a death certificate along with one of the following: Letters Testamentary, Letters of Administration, Affidavit of Collection, or (if no estate has been opened), a letter from the family member stating that the letter-writer is an heir of the estate and is authorized to transfer water service into his/her name, then the account can be reopened in his/her name by following all requirements of the policy for the "Application for Service" for commercial, industrial, and institutional accounts. Deceased customer's security deposit or credit balance is refunded to their estate through the Clerk of Court.

B. ACCOUNT BILLING

Columbus County shall ensure that all customer's meters are read in a manner which provides the County with the most efficient use for personnel. Each customer shall be billed for water usage during a specified billing period, along with all other applicable fees and charges.

1. UTILITY PAYMENT SCHEDULE REVISED

In order to serve customers better and to have a clearer payment schedule, Columbus County is updating its Utility Payment Schedule/Policy. The changes are as follows:

- The billing date for Columbus County's utility bill will be mailed by the 8th of each month following the billing month(s). The customer understands and agrees that the County shall not be liable for the delivery of the mail through the United States Postal Service (USPS). If the customer does not receive his or her bill within a reasonable period of time it shall be the responsibility of the customer to contact the Columbus County Utilities Collection Department to acquire a current account balance due to Columbus County, at which time the customer shall make payment in full.
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Columbus County is making these changes to better serve its customers and to make the late fee/utility cut-off policies and procedures more clear. If anyone has any questions about this matter, please call the Utilities Collection Department at 910-642-5257.

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Connections to the County water system may be authorized by the Utilities Collection Department with payment of proper fees (deposits, late fees, reconnect fees etc.,). All transactions that occur prior to 2:00 PM will be handled the same business day. Transactions that occur after 2:00 PM will be handled the next business day.

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If water connections for a customer crosses other property lines, it is the responsibility of the customer to secure all easements and other legal documents at their expense to permit the connection to occur.

If more than one heir is identified for a property that is requesting a water connection, all identified heirs are required to provide notarized permission to allow one of the heirs to request connection to the water system.

By requesting water service and payment of a connection fee, the recipient of water service hereby understands and agrees to pay the minimum monthly water bill whether connected to the system or not and using water after such is made available to the dwelling for a minimum of five (5) years.

If a customer requests to be disconnected from the Columbus County public water supply system and the service materials have already been installed on the property, the customer will not be disconnected until they have paid the base rate fee for a minimum of five (5) years. If after five (5) years the customer requests disconnection, they will be required to pay a \$250 fee prior to Public Utilities performing the disconnection and removing the service from the property. Disconnections will be evaluated on a case by case basis by the Columbus County Administration Office.

The County agrees to deliver water to the meter(s) that is servicing the customer's premises at a minimum pressure of twenty (20) pounds per square inch (psi), but shall not be held liable or responsible for any damage in or on the customer's property resulting from system pressures greater than twenty (20) psi.

The Property Owner, Customer, and/or Renter agrees that no other present or future source of water shall be connected to any water lines served by the County's public water supply system. The Property Owner, Customer, and/or Renter shall disconnect from any present water supply prior to connection to and switching to the County's system and shall eliminate any present or future cross-connection in the customer's system. Any Property Owner, Customer, and/or Renter found to be in noncompliance with these Rules and Regulations may have water service(s) terminated, if deemed necessary by the County, until which time the cross-connection(s) is eliminated.

3. FEES, PENALTIES, CHARGES:

All fees, penalties, and charges shall be listed as part of the rate schedule and shall be set from time to time by the Columbus County Board of Commissioners as deemed necessary.

4. EXTENSIONS:

An extension of payment due date may be given to those customers determined to be in "*good fiscal standing*" with the Public Utilities Department. A customer in "*good fiscal standing*" shall be defined as any customer with no prior extensions, no returned check(s), and no service terminations for non-payment during the previous twelve (12) consecutive month period or since becoming a customer with Columbus County, whichever is less. The amount extended shall be paid in full on or before the 1st day of the following month or by an agreement with the Finance Director or his designee.

5. PAYMENT ARRANGEMENTS:

Payment arrangements may be available to residential utility customers when billing exceeds more than double the highest billing within a twelve (12) month period. Financing of exceedingly high bills shall be 0% interest, with a down payment of 25% of balance requiring financing, and not to exceed a term of more than 6 months.

Financed amounts will be billed monthly in addition to each months current billing. Financed amounts and current bill must be paid each month prior to due date to avoid any late payment or delinquent fees being assessed on the account. In order to qualify for financing/payment arrangements, the customer's account must be in good standing and shall not have been cut off for non-payment within the preceding twelve (12) month period.

6. AUTHORIZATION OF EXTENSION OR PAYMENT ARRANGEMENT:

The Finance Officer, or their designee, shall have the authority to approve extensions or financing of payment arrangements.

C. ACCOUNT BALANCE:

In the event a customer disconnects his or her service or the Public Utilities Department disconnects the service, for any reason, the account balance due for water usage, late penalties, and all other applicable fees are the sole responsibility of that customer. The Finance Department shall review all outstanding debt owed to the County for water services provided. Each month, the Finance Department shall make the following attempts to collect outstanding debt:

1. The Utilities Collection Department shall send to the customer a monthly bill. Customer is to make payment in full by the 5TH of each month. If no response; then,
2. The Department shall transfer the security deposit to the customer's account, if any outstanding balance still remains; then,
3. The Department shall send notification to Debt Set-Off; a program with the North Carolina Treasurer's Department, for payment to collect from IRS for any tax refunds or lottery winnings that customer may receive which will go toward the utility bill.
4. The Department shall notify other utility operation systems throughout the State of North Carolina of this customer's indebtedness to the County.
5. All customers that have been disconnected with outstanding account balances shall **NOT** be reconnected until all indebtedness is paid in full to the County.
6. The late fee and/or delinquent fee may be waived if the customer's account has never been assessed any penalties during the life of the account. Thereafter, a late fee and/or delinquent fee may be waived once only if the customer signs up for Automatic Clearing House (ACH Draft).

RELEASES OF UNCOLLECTED UTILITY BILLS:

All utility bills are to be presented to Columbus County Board of Commissioners for release consideration after they are three (3) months old and all possible collection methods have been exhausted. If the customer attempts to reinstate a utility account after the outstanding bill is released, the outstanding amount must be paid in full prior to any new services being activated.

D. ADJUSTMENTS:

1. DEFINITIONS

The Customer side shall be defined as that side of the meter (house side) where the customer connects to the meter provided by the County and beyond.

The County's side shall be defined as that side of the meter, including the meter, where the County service line (highway side) connects to the meter and back to the main.

A water bill adjustment will not be provided when the following criteria are met:

- a. Leaks from exposed piping will not be considered for a leak adjustment.
- b. All metered water loss due to negligence on the part of the user will be charged at the normal rate, and no adjustment of the bill shall be made.

A water bill adjustment will be provided when the following criteria are met:

- a. All water line repairs on the customer's side have been completed.
- b. Evidence of repairs such as plumbing bills and/or a statement from the plumber or customer that the leak repairs have been completed.
- c. Adjustments can be given for leaks on amounts exceeding the average bill based on a calculation of the preceding twelve (12) months if the adjustment exceeds \$50.00.
- d. Only one adjustment shall be made in a twelve (12) month period. If the leak is reflected on two consecutive water bills, adjustments will be made on both bills.
- e. If the customer receives an excessive water bill and the cause is a defect in a water meter, the water bill shall be the average for the previous twelve (12) months. Defects will be confirmed by staff with the Public Utilities Department.

2. LEAKS ON CUSTOMER'S SIDE OF METER:

In the event that a leak occurred on the customer's side of the meter, customer is to make the repair(s) within (15) fifteen days of the leak. Customer shall obtain a Leak Repair Statement (obtained from the Utilities Collection Department), explain the repairs and sign it that the leak repairs have been made. The customer's account will be adjusted to the average monthly minimum usage of the past twelve (12) months. Any leak repair(s) that are not completed within the (15) fifteen day period will forfeit the leak adjustment. All leak adjustments must be approved and signed by the Finance Director or his designee.

3. REPAYMENT:

Repayment of this extraordinary balance can be paid in full or the amount due may be paid in installments, so long as it is approved by the Finance Director or his designee. The period of time allowed for the repayment of this extraordinary balance shall not exceed three (3) consecutive billing periods.

E. DAMAGED LIABILITY:

The County shall not be liable for damage of any kind resulting from water or the use of water on the customer's property, unless damage results directly from negligence on behalf of the County. The County shall not be responsible for damages done by or resulting from any defect in the piping, fixtures, appliances, etc. on the customer's property.

The County shall not be responsible for negligence of third parties or forces beyond the control of the County resulting in any interruption of service. Otherwise, under normal conditions, all potentially affected customers shall be notified in advance of any interruption of service.

Customers who tamper or damage County meters (including all components thereof) and etc., will be reported to appropriate law enforcement and will be charged the appropriate fees as approved by the County Commissioners which will include the actual cost involved to repair/replace the property (see rate fee schedule). All applicable charges will be billed to the customer, along with their monthly water bill, and payment will be due by the due date printed on the bill. If payment is not received by the due date, a cut-off order will be issued during normal business hours to the Public Utilities Department for the termination of service.

Customers who intentionally tamper with the meter a second time or steal water that is County property will have their service removed immediately and be reported to appropriate law enforcement agency for investigation. In order to reconnect to the County water system, they will be responsible for paying for new service at the current rate and pay all outstanding balances.

F. SEPARATE WATER CONNECTIONS AND METERS REQUIRED:

Each building shall have a separate meter, and where practicable, shall have a separate water lateral. In the event that one lateral is used for two (2) dwellings, commercial or industrial buildings, or used to serve two or more meters for the same dwelling, commercial or industrial buildings, a separate cut-off shall be provided for each meter.

However, there shall be an exception to the requirement for separate water meters in the case of groups of mobile homes or apartment developments under single ownership. In the case of said groups of mobile homes or apartment developments of more than ten (10) units, one (1) meter may be used for the entire project unless additional meters are requested by the property owner or deemed necessary by the Public Utilities Department, and the following conditions shall be met:

1. All bills will be rendered to the Owner of the property.
2. The bill will be calculated by a minimum charge for the master meter, which shall be based on the number of units served times the minimum charge per standard $\frac{3}{4}$ inch meter. The remaining bill shall be based on the total consumption passing through the master meter times the unit commodity charge.
3. Should any portion of the development be sold; the owners shall be responsible for paying whatever additional costs would be involved in bringing the divided development into compliance.
4. Cost of service shall be included in the rent/lease of each unit, and no individual meters shall be allowed.
5. In the case of group mobile homes or apartment developments where ten (10) or fewer units are involved, and where ownership is in one party, the owner may elect to have a single meter used for the entire project. Where such election is made the owner shall comply with the conditions set forth as 1, 2, 3, and 4 above.

G. PROFANE, INDECENT, AND THREATING CALL:

It is against North Carolina General Statute 14-196 to use “*profane*, indecent or threatening language to any persons over the telephone; annoying or harassing by repeated telephoning or making false statement over the telephone.”

If a call of this nature is received, do the following:

1. At the first profane or indecent word, ask the caller to please refrain from that type of language. If the profane or indecent language continues, politely inform the caller that if that type of language does not cease that the call will be terminated.
2. Document the occurrence including the caller’s name, address and telephone number, if known. Report incident to your supervisor, including the above information.
3. If the calls continue, notify your supervisor.

Adopted and effective this the 15th day of August, 2022.

Ricky Bullard, Chairman

LaToya Williams, Clerk to the Board

MOTION:

Vice Chairman McMillian made a motion to approve the Columbus County Public Utilities Customer Service Policy, seconded by Commissioner Coleman. The motion unanimously passed.

ADJOURNMENT:

At 7:38 P.M., Commissioner Watts made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Vice Chairman McMillian. The motion unanimously passed.

LATOYA WILLIAMS, Clerk to the Board

RICKY BULLARD, Chairman