

COLUMBUS COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

**Monday, October 16, 2017
6:30 P.M.**

The Honorable Columbus County Commissioners met on the above stated date and at the above stated time in the Dempsey B. Herring Courthouse Annex Building, located at 112 West Smith Street, Whiteville, North Carolina, for the purpose of conducting three (3) Public Hearings and Regular Session, it being the third Monday.

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT:

James E. Prevatte, **Chairman**
 Amon E. McKenzie, **Vice Chairman**
 Giles E. Byrd
 P. Edwin Russ
 Trent Burroughs
 Ricky Bullard
 Charles T. McDowell

APPOINTEES PRESENT:

Mike Stephens, **County Attorney /
Interim County Manager**
 June B. Hall, **Clerk to Board**
 Bobbie Faircloth, **Finance Officer**

6:30 P.M.

PUBLIC HEARING (#1): Community Development Block Grant/Disaster Recovery (CDBG-DR): the purpose of this Public Hearing is for public input on local community development and needs in relation to the Community Development Block Grant/Disaster Recovery (CDBG-DR) and any other CDBG program funding for a project in our community.

PUBLIC HEARING CALLED to ORDER:

At 6:30 P.M., Chairman James E. Prevatte called the Public Hearing to order and stated the Public Hearing was for a Community Development Block Grant/Disaster Recovery (CDBG-DR). The purpose of this Public Hearing is for public input on local community development and needs in relation to the Community Development Block Grant/Disaster Recovery (CDBG-DR) and any other CDBG program funding for a project in our community. Chairman Prevatte requested that Michael H. Stephens, County Attorney/Interim County Manager, orally read the Policy on Comments at Public Hearings. Mr. Stephens orally read the policy in its entirety.

COMMENTS:

Bob Mitchell, The Adams Company: stated the following:

1. We have been asked to assist the County in creating the grant and getting it sent to the folks that can approve the grant and getting the money set aside for us;
2. The maximum amount that will be allowed for each individual county is \$1 million and it is designed to help those who had some unmet needs when it came to hazard of Hurricane Matthew;
3. The process has come down to seven (7) projects after the process that was developed by the County;
4. This grant requires two (2) public hearings which have been conducted;
5. The application is due October 20, 2017; **and**
6. This is an 100% grant.

PUBLIC HEARING CLOSED:

At 6:39 P.M., Commissioner Russ made a motion to close the Public Hearing, seconded by Commissioner Bullard. The motion unanimously passed.

6:39 P.M.

REGULAR SESSION:

Agenda Items #1, #2 and #3:

**MEETING CALLED to ORDER, INVOCATION and
PLEDGE of ALLEGIANCE:**

At 6:39 P.M., Chairman James E. Prevatte called the October 16, 2017 Columbus County

Board of Commissioners Regular Session Meeting to order. The invocation was delivered by Vice Chairman Amon E. McKenzie. Everyone in attendance stood and pledged Allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America which was led by the attending Boy Scouts.

AGENDA ADJUSTMENTS:

Chairman Prevatte stated the following adjustments needed to be made to the October 16, 2017 Agenda:

1. **Agenda Item #21:** Closed Session in Accordance with N.C.G.S. § 143-319.11(a) (3) Attorney Client Privilege needs to be N.C.G.S. § 143-318.11(a) (3) Attorney Client Privilege;
2. **Page 46 of the Board Packet:** the Capital Project Ordinance needs to be changed to \$1,431,218.00; and
3. **Agenda Item #15:** needs to be deleted.

Commissioner McDowell made a motion to approve the above listed three (3) adjustments to the October 16, 2017 Agenda, seconded by Commissioner Russ. The motion unanimously passed.

Agenda Item #4: BOARD MINUTES APPROVAL:

Vice Chairman McKenzie made a motion to approve the October 02, 2017 Regular Session Minutes, as recorded, seconded by Commissioner Burroughs. The motion unanimously passed.

Agenda Item #5: PUBLIC INPUT:

Chairman Prevatte opened the floor for Public Input, and requested that Michael H. Stephens, County Attorney / Interim County Manager, orally read the Policy on Comments at Public Hearings. Mr. Stephens orally read the policy in its entirety. The following spoke.

1. **Jonathan Reid Medford, 120 Tucker Street, Whiteville, NC 28472:** stated the following:
 - I am a volunteer with the Whiteville Primary PTA Board, and last Tuesday, we organized a meeting with the PTA as Whiteville Primary, Edgewood Elementary and Central Middle Schools to see what we could do to send a message to this Board of Commissioners;
 - We decided to start a Petition Drive to keep two (2) school systems in Columbus County;
 - In just a few short days, we were able to get 1,534 signatures of verifiable Columbus County citizens;
 - There are fourteen (14) zip codes in Columbus County and everyone of them is represented in this petition;
 - The biggest contingent in Columbus County, outside of Whiteville is the Chadbourn - Cerro Gordo;
 - Many of these citizens elected to include a message about why they are passionate about this topic;
 - I hope you read these comments and take these words to heart;
 - I would like to say a few brief remarks of my own, I have heard that you plan to pass this responsibility onto the State and I don't think this is an issue that Danny Britt and Brendon Jones are going to want to champion;
 - Even if, for some reason, they were actually motivated to move this up the chain, they would have an uphill battle on their hands;
 - Forcing a merger on Whiteville City Schools would not set well with the city school districts;
 - Whiteville City Schools would not be alone in this fight, and should this Board make a reckless decision tonight, there are no guarantees;
 - A vote to pass this issue onto the State is a high-stakes gamble;
 - You're gambling with hundreds of thousands of velocity dollars and federal revenue, and thirty families who lose their jobs and possibly have to leave the county, and I ask why;
 - Both school systems receive equitable distribution dollars to fund things that are equally dire in both systems;
 - The only logical reason a merger is wanted is so one side can cipher more money and eliminate the competition;
 - That is not equitable, and it is not for the students;
 - A vote to pass this issue onto the State is a vote against fairness, a vote against state and federal revenue, a vote against thirty (30) families and their jobs and a vote against the ones

who will ultimately lose, students;

-Passing this onto the State is a lose-lose situation for both sides; **and**

-I ask that you take both resolutions for informational purposes, and let issue die.

2. **David C. Jordan, 223 Summit Drive, Whiteville, NC 28472:** stated the following:

-I have taught the majority of all of these people;

-I taught at Whiteville City Schools for twenty-two (22) years;

-I have worked in small and large rural districts;

-The facet that needs to be addressed the most is the impact it will have on students; **and**

-Merger depresses and has a negative effect on student achievement.

3. **Marlando Demante Pridgen, 820 Toon Road, Whiteville, NC 28472:** stated the following:

-Thank you for the opportunity to speak;

-In a decisive situation that we are looking at now, when there are different interests between Boards of Education Governing Bodies, it is a paramount responsibility of yours that you provide unified interest for the success of our students;

-We have not heard from either side as far as the unified interest for the education for the students of this county;

-I am interested to know what is your vision for the future of education for the students unified for this county;

-Our education system is very dependent upon economic development in this area;

-Many families will be impacted by this merger;

-This discussion needs to be carried into further dialogue - what are the real needs that our systems need; **and**

-I hope you let the constituents see that you have the vision you see as a unified education for the students.

4. **Tim Clyde Blackmon, 103 N. Madison Street, Whiteville, NC 28472:** stated the following:

-I would like to say that the idea of the merger sucks;

-The purpose of the Commissioners is to do what the people want;

-I have talked to many people, and I have not heard anyone that has stated they were in favor of the merger;

-You have to think of your political career also, and there will be a vote coming **up; and**

-I am very much against merger.

7:00 P.M.

PUBLIC HEARING (#2): Proposed Columbus County Community Transportation Program Application: the purpose of this Public Hearing is to receive comments and input from all interested parties.

PUBLIC HEARING OPENED:

At 7:00 P.M., Chairman Prevatte opened the Public Hearing, and stated the Public Hearing is for the Proposed Columbus County Community Transportation Program Application, and the purpose of the Public Hearing is to receive comments and input from all interested parties.

COMMENTS:

Joy Jacobs, Public Transportation Director: stated the following:

1. The Columbus County Transportation helps transport people back and forth to doctor appointments, work, school, and whatever the need is;
2. It is time to apply for the grant for the fiscal year of 2019; **and**
3. This is to discuss any questions or comments on the application.

PUBLIC HEARING CLOSED:

At 7:02 P.M., Commissioner Burroughs made a motion to close the Public Hearing and resume Regular Session, seconded by Commissioner Byrd. The motion unanimously passed.

ADDITIONAL PUBLIC INPUT:

1. Letter received from business owner:

Chairman Prevatte orally read the following letter received from a concerned business owner.

October 13, 2107

Dear Columbus County Board of Commissioners

As a concerned business owner in Whiteville, NC, I am excited to hear that there is a possibility that our entire county can work together. Education is the key to growth in Columbus County's future and it starts with us as leaders; both business leaders and county leaders. I am asking that all commissioners have an open mind and not for or against the 2 education systems working together. We have a moral obligation in life to try and make a difference!!! This is the time and opportunity for Columbus County, and as residents and leaders, everyone should be willing to at least be open to change and communication. The CC Board of Education took a big step last week when they unanimously voted for a resolution to work together and possibly merge or consolidate with the City Schools. The disappointing part however, is that the City Schools did not take the same opportunity to at least be open to discuss it. We have the opportunity to show everyone right now that WE, "The People of Columbus County", are going to work together as one unit for the betterment of future generations. What we do now can impact generations for years to come. At least vote to work together and bring in independent advisors to evaluate the "pros" and "cons of having one strong education system for the future. Make it a WIN for everyone. I hope everyone will try to make a difference TOGETHER and bring the entire county as one to grow for our future. The main question is "wouldn't you want your children or grandchildren to want to move back to Columbus County" ???? Don't we want Columbus County to grow in the future ??? Can we work together as one? We need this to attract the workforce necessary for today's business needs. We need skilled and technology savvy employees for the future. They are not moving back to Columbus County, but we can change that!!! Change is opportunity... Let's all come together and do our part!!!

Concerned Business Owner

2. **Justin Smith, 118 W. College Street, Whiteville, NC 28472:** stated the following:

- I am a Whiteville resident;
- I am here tonight as a parent of a student in Whiteville City Schools;
- I applaud you for all that you have done for education; **and**
- I think we are in the right direction and let's keep going in that direction.

3. **Wess White:** stated the following:

- I am here as a concerned parent, and I live in the Whiteville School District;
- My interest is in my children, I have a 5 year old, 4 year old and a 2 year old children;
- Our school board has managed our system well, financially and academically;
- Whiteville City Schools have classes for academically gifted children, but Columbus County Schools do not have these classes; **and**
- I like the Whiteville City Schools system and I am afraid of what could happen.

4. **The Honorable Terry Mann, Mayor of Whiteville, 203 Elm Street, Whiteville, NC 28472:** stated the following:

- Thank you for the additional time for public input;
- My philosophy in this county as to why we are not progressing like we should is, because there is a division in this County and it is Whiteville against the County and the County against Whiteville;
- Whiteville has four (4) different Commissioners on the Board, and that is how the school board would be and Whiteville would not get a thing; **and**
- If the systems are merged, Whiteville would not get a thing, and I don't know what could be done about the division.

Agenda Item #6: COLUMBUS COUNTY SCHOOLS - RESOLUTION REGARDING the CONSOLIDATION of COLUMBUS COUNTY SCHOOLS and WHITEVILLE CITY SCHOOLS:

Alan Faulk, Superintendent of Columbus County Schools, requested Board's acceptance of the following Resolution Regarding the Consolidation of Columbus County Schools and Whiteville

City Schools.

**RESOLUTION REGARDING the CONSOLIDATION of
COLUMBUS COUNTY SCHOOLS and WHITEVILLE CITY SCHOOLS**

WHEREAS, Columbus County has two (2) public school systems; **and**

WHEREAS, the student population in the county continues to decrease; **and**

WHEREAS, Columbus County School district serves students in approximately 862 square miles and Whiteville City Schools district serves students in approximately 92 square miles; **and**

WHEREAS, the Columbus County Schools district serves approximately 6000 students and Whiteville City School district serves approximately 2400 students; **and**

WHEREAS, Columbus County School district has eighteen (18) school sites and Whiteville City School district has four (4) school sites; **and**

WHEREAS, the Columbus County Schools received approximately \$50,000.00 less local capital funding for facility maintenance and improvements in the 2017-2018 budget; **and**

WHEREAS, approximately 75% of Columbus County and Whiteville City school facilities are over 50 years old; **and**

WHEREAS, a gradual decline in student enrollment has given emphasis to the need to consolidate school facilities, a condition exacerbated by the fact that capital funding has been inadequate to maintain older dilapidated buildings; **and**

WHEREAS, state and federal grant funding formulas have been complicated by the condition that the Board of Commissioners must fund two LEA districts (Columbus County Schools and Whiteville City Schools) proportionally when grants are awarded; **and**

WHEREAS, the capital funding allotments provided by the Board of Commissioners to Whiteville City Schools and Columbus County Schools have been based on average daily membership without regard to the age, number, and/or condition of the facilities; **and**

WHEREAS, the Board of Commissioners have not established a list of prioritized school construction needs within the county as a whole; **and**

WHEREAS, the current funding plan to construct new school facilities for Columbus County Schools does not meet the needs of the district, and the financing burden for said new construction will be shouldered entirely by the Columbus County Board of Education which will leave little funding for the maintenance and repair of existing facilities; **and**

WHEREAS, the above conditions have placed the Columbus County Schools infrastructure into a state of critical need which can only be addressed by immediate action to benefit the children now and for generations to come; **and**

NOW, THEREFORE, IT IS HEREBY RESOLVED:

The Columbus County Board of Education, for the reasons herein noted, support the consolidation of Columbus County Schools and Whiteville City Schools.

/s/ **MONTE HERRING**, Chairman
/s/ **RANDY COLEMAN**, Member
/s/ **WORLEY EDWARDS**, Member

/s/ **BARBARA YATES LOCKAMY**, Vice Chair
/s/ **JUNIOR DEW**, Member
/s/ **ALAN FAULK**, Secretary

This is to certify this is a true and accurate copy of the Resolution adopted by the Columbus County Board of Education on the 9th day of October, 2017.

/s/ **BONITA PRIDGEN**
Clerk/Secretary

DATE: 10-9-2017

Agenda Item #7: WHITEVILLE CITY SCHOOLS - RESOLUTION REQUESTING the

**COLUMBUS COUNTY BOARD of COMMISSIONERS and the
NORTH CAROLINA GENERAL ASSEMBLY to NOT CONSIDER the
COLUMBUS COUNTY BOARD of EDUCATION PROCLAMATION
SUPPORTING MERGER of the TWO PUBLIC SCHOOL SYSTEMS
into ONE PUBLIC SCHOOL SYSTEM:**

Kenny Garland, Superintendent of Whiteville City Schools, requested Board's acceptance of the following Resolution Requesting the Columbus County Board of Commissioners and the North Carolina General Assembly to not consider the Columbus County Board of Education Proclamation Supporting Merger of the Two Public School Systems into One Public School System.

**RESOLUTION REQUESTING the COLUMBUS COUNTY BOARD of
COMMISSIONERS and the NORTH CAROLINA GENERAL ASSEMBLY to not
CONSIDER the COLUMBUS COUNTY BOARD of EDUCATION PROCLAMATION
SUPPORTING MERGER of the TWO PUBLIC SCHOOL SYSTEMS
into ONE PUBLIC SCHOOL SYSTEM**

WHEREAS, the Whiteville City Schools was established in 1945; **and**

WHEREAS, the Whiteville City Schools supports 2314 students in grades PK-12; **and**

WHEREAS, the Whiteville City Schools serves 27.74% of the K-12 public school population of Columbus County, NC; **and**

WHEREAS, the Whiteville City Schools has maintained consistent enrollment; **and**

WHEREAS, in the 2017-218 school year, Whiteville City Schools current enrollment exceeds projected enrollment as defined by the North Carolina public schools planning allotment; **and**

WHEREAS, the Whiteville City Schools supports five schools on four campuses in the system; **and**

WHEREAS, the Whiteville City Schools averages 578 students on each campus; **and**

WHEREAS, the Whiteville City Schools receives the same per pupil allotment from the Columbus County Government as Columbus County Schools; **and**

WHEREAS, the residents of the Whiteville City Schools district pay .805 dollars per \$100 in Columbus County property taxes; **and**

WHEREAS, the residents of the Whiteville City Schools district pay the same rate of county property taxes as other residents of Columbus County; **and**

WHEREAS, the Whiteville City Schools has cooperated with the Columbus County Commissioners in an effort to address needed renovations at Whiteville High School, the oldest traditional high school in Columbus County; **and**

WHEREAS, the Whiteville City Schools is financially stable; **and**

WHEREAS, the Whiteville City Schools results from the North Carolina Schools Accountability Model demonstrate a system wide performance above the statewide average in grade level proficiency and college and career readiness; **and**

WHEREAS, according to the North Carolina Public Schools Allotment Manual, a merger of the two systems would demonstrate in a significant loss of state funding; **and**

WHEREAS, the Whiteville City Schools Board of Education deems it in the best interest of the students of the Whiteville City Schools as well as the parents, teachers, taxpayers, citizens and voters of Columbus County that there be adequate support for the continuing of two public school districts in Columbus County; **and**

NOW, THEREFORE, IT IS HEREBY RESOLVED:

The Whiteville City Schools Board of Education, for the reasons herein noted, oppose the consolidation of Whiteville City Schools and Columbus County Schools.

/s/ COLEMAN D. BARBOUR, Chairman	/s/ CARLTON PRINCE, Vice-Chairman
/s/ REVEREND DAVE FLOWERS, Board Member	/s/ GREG MERRITT, Board Member
/s/ KANDLE ROGERS, Board Member	/s/ CHARLES K. GARLAND, Secretary

This is to certify this is a true and accurate copy of the Resolution adopted by the Whiteville City Schools Board of Education on the 9th day of October, 2017.

/s/ HEATHER DOWLESS
Clerk/Secretary

DATE: 10/9/17

RECESS REGULAR SESSION and enter into PUBLIC HEARING NUMBER 3:

7:30 P.M.

PUBLIC HEARING: **Planning Department Application to Re-zone Parcel #25550 and Text Amendment:** the purpose of this Public Hearing is to receive oral and written comments regarding an application by Cooperative Solar, LLC to re-zone Parcel #25550.

PUBLIC HEARING OPENED:

At 7:30 P.M., Chairman Prevatte opened the Public Hearing and stated the Public Hearing is for the Planning Department Application to Re-zone Parcel #25550 and Text Amendment, and the purpose of this Public Hearing is to receive oral and written comments regarding an application by Cooperative Solar, LLC to re-zone Parcel #25550.

COMMENTS:

Cullen John Morris, Cooperative Solar: stated the following:

- I am here on behalf of Cooperative Solar who has applied on behalf of Pat Garrell to re-zone a portion of her property that is currently zoned Residential/Agricultural to Industrial;
- The property is basically split in half and we feel it is difficult for Pat to market her piece of property for potential future use;
- Cooperative Solar would eventually build a small solar facility on the property; **and**
- The solar facility on the remaining property is owned by Strata Solar and we are not familiar with Strata.

Barbara Larrimore, 5403 Chadbourn Highway: stated the following:

- This property that they are wanting to re-zone is right beside my house; **and**
- I am opposed to putting solar panels right near my house.

NO NAME STATED (AUDIENCE): stated the following:

- What happens ten (10) years from now when the panels are obsolete?
- Who is responsible for cleaning them up if the company backs away? **and**
- The reason for the solar panels is you get tax money off of them.

Cullen John Morris: stated the following:

- We have a ground lease in place with Ms. Garrell;
- We are responsible for paying the rent to her and the property taxes;
- We are responsible for presenting de-commissioning plan if requested which essentially states that we will pay to have the equipment removed;
- The lease we have with Ms. Garrell requires us to return the land in the same state as we found it; **and**
- The facility is made up of aluminum, steel and copper which will basically have scrap value.

Commissioner Burroughs: Do you have a performance Bond? Mr. Morris replied stating no.

Pat Garrell: stated the following:

- The land is landlocked;
- There is a huge buffer between this land and Ms. Larrimore's property;
- I do not have any intention to remove the trees;
- The solar panels do not have any harm to them, and would be an addition to the county;
- I pay more taxes due to the solar panels; **and**
- I would like your approval.

NO NAME STATED (AUDIENCE): stated the following:

- I have multiple businesses and I have turned down an 150 acres lease before to a solar panel business and there is a reason for that;
- If the solar panels are leased, and they file for bankruptcy, you are stuck with the situation; **and**
- If the landowner cannot pay the taxes, you are stuck with the situation at that time.

PUBLIC HEARING CLOSED:

At 7:50 P.M., Commissioner Byrd made a motion to close the Public Hearing, and resume Regular Session, seconded by Commissioner Burroughs. The motion unanimously passed.

ADDITIONAL PUBLIC INPUT (Continued):

1. **Amanda Tedder, 206 Pine Street, Whiteville, NC 28472:** stated the following:
 - I have been employed with Whiteville City Schools for sixteen (16) years;
 - Whiteville City Schools are in good shape; **and**
 - The problem is communication.
2. **Carlton Prince, 321 Fuller Street, Whiteville, NC 28472:** stated the following:
 - I have been in Columbus County since 1962;
 - Whiteville High School was established in 1945, and burned on December 17 or 18, 1958;
 - The State made a decision to build Whiteville High School back on the same site; **and**
 - There is a large need in Columbus County for all to communicate well.
3. **Michelle Strickland, 145 Timber Cove Drive, Whiteville, NC 28472:** stated the following:
 - I have been a teacher for twenty-one (21) years;
 - I came tonight to fight for the children;
 - We teachers are in the trenches with the children daily to see situations on a first-hand basis, and we need to be asked how we feel; **and**
 - A good teacher does care about what happens to the children, and providing them with the best education that is within our reach.
4. **Shawn Lewis, 5732 Seven Creeks Highway, Nakina, NC 28455:** stated the following:
 - My daughter has been in the charter school and the city schools, and is now at Williams Township School;
 - Williams Township School does have an academically-gifted program and she has excelled in this program;
 - I attended East Columbus High School;
 - We all need to be as one; **and**
 - The most important issue is what is best for everyone.
5. **Dwight Burleson, 1023 S. Lee Street, Whiteville, NC 28472:** stated the following:
 - I am a thirty (30) years retired Whiteville High School teacher;
 - I have positives and negatives regarding the merger of the two (2) systems;
 - The county schools have need, and the city schools have needs; **and**
 - The most important thing is that both systems work together.
6. **Jack Coleman, 148 Delco Road, Delco, NC:** stated the following:
 - I am a proud father of five (5) children and one on the way;
 - We need to figure out how to educate our children and get them prepared for jobs and for the future;
 - What is the county doing to prepare for the future?; **and**
 - Our children are the most important thing to consider.
7. **Commissioner Ricky Bullard:** stated the following:
 - I have served on the school board for twelve (12) years, and the interests of the children are in my heart also;
 - There are a lot of hard times serving as an elected official, but I have chose to do it;
 - I am here for the best interest of the County in lots of ways; **and**
 - Before I came to this meeting, I said Lord whatever happens, it is your will, you have control.

MOTION:

Commissioner Bullard made a motion to inform Britt and Jones of the two (2) resolutions that we have, one from the County Schools, and one from the Whiteville City Schools, to demonstrate their needs, seconded by Commissioner Byrd.

MOTION WITHDRAWN:

After discussion was conducted, Commissioner Bullard withdrew his motion and Commissioner Byrd withdrew his second.

SUBSTITUTE MOTION:

Commissioner Bullard made a motion to request the Columbus County Schools and the Whiteville City Schools to forward a copy of their Resolutions to Senator Britt and Representative Jones for informational purposes, seconded by Commissioner Byrd. The motion unanimously passed.

ADDITIONAL PUBLIC INPUT (CONTINUED):

1. **Ronnie Wilson, 2448 Old Lumberton Road, Whiteville, NC 28472:** stated the following:
 - I am the pastor at Western Prong Baptist Church;
 - I have been in this area for ten (10) years;
 - From what I heard, we are just kicking the can down the road;
 - I was part of a merger in Kings Mountain City Schools;
 - The merger was not good for the citizens of Kings Mountain;
 - The city schools are experiencing high test scores and have a vision;
 - The county schools are experiencing low attendance at their sports activities;
 - The county school buildings are in bad physical condition;
 - We got some major problems with our schools and industry;
 - We need to pray for our schools and our leaders, and work together; **and**
 - In life, you will need to make some tough choices.

2. **Commissioner Charles T. McDowell:** stated the following:
 - I would like to clarify the idea that we need to vote tonight;
 - There is no time that has to pass between votes;
 - The idea that we are going to solve this with a vote is a dream;
 - I taught school for thirty-two (32) years;
 - You have to motivate your children and solidify pride in a school;
 - Rivalry is good because it forces you to improve;
 - The issue is establishing pride in our schools and our communities;
 - If we need to make a difference, we have to do it together;
 - A building does not educate children;
 - You need to find a positive item to discuss; **and**
 - A building does not do it, communication does.

3. **Lyndon Merritt, 147 Antioch Church Road, Whiteville, NC 28472:** stated the following:
 - I am 57 years old, and I have heard this information my whole entire life;
 - It is absolutely ridiculous to keep bringing this up over and over again;
 - It takes common sense to understand that if you have got a successful system that is working, test scores are up and we are doing well, and all of a sudden, 72 years that Whiteville City Schools have existed, all of a sudden that is gone with one little vote for a merger where there is absolutely no proof whatsoever that is going to better the county school system, or is going to bring more money;
 - With the study being done, it showed it will cost you money and eliminate jobs for the community;
 - What we would like to see is to quit kicking this down the road, we are doing well, our scores are up, we have a community that could be abolished;
 - What is the motivating purpose behind this argument all the time, it is not going to save money, it is not going to educate children, people educate children;
 - It starts at the top, it starts here, then Board of Educations, superintendents, principals, and then teachers and pride;
 - Let's start winning educationally, academically, athletically or whatever it may be;
 - This will come from a community;
 - Merging Whiteville City Schools with the Columbus County Schools will not fix any problems or challenges that exist in the county schools;

- There has not been a shred of evidence to show the benefits;
- Education is what it is about, Whiteville City Schools are successful, and you are going to take that success and gamble with it;
- I will say to let the Columbus County Schools fix their own problems; **and**
- Do your job from the top down.

4. **Jonathan Williams, Assistant Superintendent, Columbus County Schools:** stated the following:

- We all need to pray and unity is badly needed;
- Columbus County Schools do not want a hostile take over;
- Relative to the test scores that have been referenced to in our schools, the Columbus County Schools have done well also;
- The County Board of Education and the City Board of Education work well together; **and**
- We will work good together because our students always come first.

5. **Greg Merritt, City School Board Member:** stated the following:

- I am going to talk about something that has not been heavily discussed;
- This issue is money and it is the reason we are in this situation here;
- There are eighteen (18) schools in the County School System and two thousand, five hundred (2,500) less students;
- They are bleeding money running all of the little community schools;
- Merging Whiteville in that system is not going to fix that problem;
- In education, you need to handle the business end in a workable manner; **and**
- The gentlemen in Raleigh is saying this is a local issue and state you men need to do your job, and put this issue to bed.

MOTION:

Commissioner Russ made a motion to **not** merge the school systems and leave as they are, seconded by Commissioner McDowell.

A roll-call vote was taken with the following results:

AYES: Chairman Prevatte, Commissioners Byrd (Pass/Bye), Russ, Burroughs (Pass/Bye) and McDowell; **and**

NAYS: Vice Chairman McKenzie (Pass/Bye) and Commissioner Bullard.

The motion passes on a five (5) to two (2) vote.

RECESS REGULAR SESSION for FIVE (5) MINUTE BREAK:

At 8:43 P.M., Chairman Prevatte announced that Regular Session would be recessed for a five (5) minute break.

REGULAR SESSION RESUMED:

At 8:56 P.M., Chairman Prevatte announced that Regular Session would be resumed.

Agenda Item #8: CDBG-DR APPLICATION - APPROVAL of APPLICATION DOCUMENTS:

Floyd Adams, The Adams Company, requested Board approval of the following documents for the CDBG-DR application:

- A. State CDBG - DR Program;
- B. Application Summary for CDBG-DR Funding;
- C. Disclosure of Civil Rights Complaints/Lawsuits;
- D. Certifications Regarding Debarment, Suspension and Other Responsibility Matters;
- E. Federal Certifications; **and**
- F. County Certification as Lead Agency.

(The second required Public Hearing was conducted at 6:30 P.M. on this date prior to the meeting.)

Vice Chairman McKenzie made a motion to approve the above listed (6) documents for the

CDBG-DR application, seconded by Commissioner McDowell. The motion unanimously passed.

Agenda Item #9: EMS COMMUNICATIONS PROJECT - JVC KENWOOD:

Ron Runyan, JVC Kenwood, requested payment of sixty-six thousand, seven hundred seventy-eight and 00/100 (\$66,778.00) dollars for services rendered. Mr. Runyan stated the following:

1. I have dealt with the County Attorney, the Finance Officer and the 911 Director last week;
2. We went over exactly where the project is;
3. We realized the three (3) outstanding issues which are:
-Finishing the drawings;
-Programming templates themselves; and
-The alarm system itself; **and**
4. We are asking you for your final payment with a hold back of ten (10%) percent.

MOTION:

Commissioner Bullard made a motion to pay twenty-four thousand and 00/100 (\$24,000.00) dollars to JVC Kenwood, and hold the balance of fifty thousand, one hundred ninety-eight and 00/100 (\$50,198.00) dollars until the work is finished, seconded by Commissioner Byrd.

SUBSTITUTE MOTION:

Vice Chairman McKenzie made a substitute motion to pay JVC Kenwood fifty (50%) percent of the balance of seventy-four thousand, one hundred ninety-eight and 00/100 (\$74,198.00) dollars, which equates to thirty-seven thousand, ninety-nine and 00/100 (\$37,099.00) dollars, seconded by Commissioner McDowell.

A roll-call vote was taken with the following results:

AYES: Vice Chairman McKenzie, Commissioners McDowell, Burroughs and Russ; **and**
NAYS: Chairman Prevatte, Commissioners Bullard and Byrd.

The Substitute Motion passes on a four (4) to three (3) vote.

Agenda Item #10: PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION - NCDOT GRANT RESOLUTION and ASSOCIATED DOCUMENTS:

Joy Jacobs, Public Transportation Director, requested Board approval and authorization for Chairman to sign the Community Transportation Program Resolution, and all related documents for the FY2019. (The required Public Hearing was conducted at 7:00 P.M. on this date.)

COMMUNITY TRANSPORTATION PROGRAM RESOLUTION
FY 2019 RESOLUTION

Section 5311 (including ADTAP), 5310, 5339, 5307 and applicable State funding, or combination thereof.

Applicant seeking permission to apply for Community Transportation Program funding, enter into agreement with the North Carolina Department of Transportation, and to provide the necessary assurance and the required local match.

A motion was made by Commissioner Giles E. Byrd and seconded by Commissioner Charles T. McDowell for the adoption of the following resolution, and upon being put to a vote was duly adopted.

WHEREAS, Article 2B of Chapter 136 of the North Carolina General Statutes and the Governor of North Carolina have designated the North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) as the agency responsible for administering federal and state public transportation funds; **and**

WHEREAS, the North Carolina Department of Transportation will apply for a grant from the US Department of Transportation, Federal Transit Administration and receives funds from the North Carolina General Assembly to provide assistance for rural public transportation projects; **and**

WHEREAS, the purpose of these transportation funds is to provide grant monies to local agencies for the provision of rural, small urban, and public transportation services consistent with the policy requirements of each funding source for planning, community and agency involvement, service design, service alternatives,

training and conference participation, reporting and other requirements (drug and alcohol testing policy and program, disadvantaged business enterprise program, and fully allocated costs analysis); **and**

WHEREAS, the funds applied for may be Administrative, Operating, Planning, or Capital funds and will have different percentages of federal, state, and local funds; **and**

WHEREAS, non-Community Transportation applicants may apply for funding for “purchase-of-service” projects under the Section 5310 program; **and**

WHEREAS, COLUMBUS COUNTY hereby assures and certifies that it will provide the required local matching funds; that its staff has the technical capacity to implement and manage the project(s), prepare required reports, obtain required training, attend meetings and conferences; and agrees to comply with the federal and state statutes, regulations, executive orders, Section 5333 (b) Warranty, and all administrative requirements related to the applications made to and grants received from the Federal Transit Administration, as well as the provisions of Section 1001 of Title 18, U. S. C.

WHEREAS, the applicant has or will provide all annual certifications and assurances to the State of North Carolina required for the project.

NOW, THEREFORE, be it resolved that the *Chairman, of Columbus County Commissioners is hereby authorized to submit a grant application for federal and state funding in response to NCDOT’s calls for projects, make the necessary assurances and certifications and be empowered to enter into an agreement with the NCDOT to provide rural, small urban, and urban public transportation services.

I, **JUNE B. HALL**, do hereby certify that the above is a true and correct copy of an excerpt from the minutes of a meeting of the Columbus County Commissioners duly held on the 16th day of October, 2017.

/s/ **JUNE B. HALL**

Signature of Certifying Official

*Note that the authorized official, certifying official, and notary public should be three separate individuals.

Subscribed and sworn to me: 10-17-2017

/s/ Debra J. Epps

Notary Public *

68 Carucci Drive, Whiteville, NC 28472

Address

Seal

My commission expires (*date*) October 05, 2019.

Commissioner Byrd made a motion to authorize the Chairman to sign the Public Transportation Program Resolution, and all related documents, seconded by Commissioner McDowell. The motion unanimously passed.

Agenda Item #11: AGREEMENT - AMENDMENT to AGREEMENT for SERVICE and OPERATION of WASTEWATER SYSTEM by GRAND STRAND WATER and SEWER AUTHORITY:

Harold Nobles, Public Utilities Director, requested Board approval of the First Amendment to Agreement for Service and Operation of Wastewater System with Grand Strand Water and Sewer Authority.

FIRST AMENDMENT to AGREEMENT for SERVICE and OPERATION of WASTEWATER SYSTEM

This First Amendment to Agreement for Service and Operation of Wastewater System (the “First Amendment”) is made by and between GRAND STRAND WATER AND SEWER AUTHORITY, a body corporate and politic and a consolidated special purpose district of the State of South Carolina (“GSWSA”) and Columbus County, a political subdivision of the State of North Carolina (“COLUMBUS”) to be effective as of the date signed by the last party to sign as set forth hereafter.

WHEREAS, GSWSA and COLUMBUS entered into the Agreement for Service and Operation of Wastewater System as of November 15, 2007 (the “Agreement”); **and**

WHEREAS, in the Agreement COLUMBUS granted to GSWSA a Service Area within which GSWSA would own, operate and manage a Wastewater System; **and**

WHEREAS, the parties have now deemed it to be mutually beneficial to amend the Agreement to expand the Service Area of GSWSA so as to include additional areas within Columbus County in which COLUMBUS wishes to extend the GSWSA Wastewater System.

NOW, THEREFORE, in consideration of the above stated recitals and the covenants and obligations set forth herein, the sufficiency of which is acknowledged by each party to the other, GSWSA and COLUMBUS do hereby agree as follows:

1. Section 2.1 of the Agreement is hereby amended to reflect that the Service Area is now defined as the areas shown as "Existing GSWSA Sewer Service Area in Columbus County, NC" and "Proposed GSWSA Sewer Service Area Addition" as shown on the attached **Exhibit "A"**, which is made a part and parcel hereof by reference hereto.
2. COLUMBUS shall construct the sewer line extension from the existing GSWSA line at the Nakina Middle School located in the original Service Area to the Old Dock School located in the expanded Service Area and upon completion of the sewer line and related facilities will dedicate said wastewater facilities to GSWSA for maintenance pursuant to Section 2.4 of the Agreement.
3. Pursuant to Section 4.2(e) of the Agreement, COLUMBUS shall also construct water lines as necessary to support the expanded Service Area.
4. Each party hereto represents and warrants that each has the right, power and authority to enter into this First Amendment and each has taken all necessary actions by resolutions or ordinance to authorize the execution hereof by the signing parties.
5. All defined terms used herein shall have the meanings set forth in the Agreement unless otherwise specifically defined herein.
6. All other terms and conditions of the Agreement not specifically addressed herein shall remain unchanged.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the undersigned has executed this First Amendment the _____ day of _____, 2017.

WITNESSES:

**GRAND STRAND WATER AND
SEWER AUTHORITY**

By: _____

1st Witness

Fred R. Richardson

Its: Chief Executive Officer

2nd Witness

**STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA)
)
COUNTY OF HORRY)**

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

I, _____, a Notary Public of the County and State aforesaid, do hereby certify that Fred R. Richardson, as CEO of Grand Strand Water and Sewer Authority, personally appeared before me this day and acknowledged the execution of the foregoing instrument.

Witness my hand and official seal this _____ day of _____, 2017.

Notary Public for State of South Carolina
Print Name: _____
My Commission Expires: _____
(NOTARIAL SEAL)

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the undersigned has executed this First Amendment this 16th day of October, 2017.

COLUMBUS COUNTY

By: JAMES E. PREVATTE
Name: JAMES E. PREVATTE
Its: Chairman of Board of Commissioners

ATTESTED BY:

/s/ JUNE B. HALL

Name: JUNE B. HALL

Clerk to Board

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA)

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

COUNTY OF COLUMBUS)

This 17th day of October, 2017, personally came before me, Debra J. Epps, a Notary Public for North Carolina, June B. Hall, who being duly sworn says she is the Clerk of the Board of Commissioners of Columbus County, is acquainted with James E. Prevatte, who is the Chairman of the Board; that she witnessed the signature of the Chairman and the affixation of the official seal of the Board to the foregoing instrument in the presence of the Chairman of the Board in accordance with the order of the Board.

/s/ DEBRA J. EPPS
Notary Public for State of North Carolina
Print Name: DEBRA J. EPPS
My Commission Expires: 10-05-2019
(NOTARIAL SEAL)

Commissioner McDowell made a motion to approve the First Amendment to Agreement for Service and Operation of Wastewater System, seconded by Commissioner Russ. The motion unanimously passed. The referenced Exhibit "A" will be marked as Exhibit "A", and kept on file in the Minute Book Attachments, Book Number 5, in the Clerk to the Board's Office, for review.

Agenda Item #12: SOIL and WATER CONSERVATION - CAPITAL PROJECT ORDINANCE:

Edward E. Davis, Soil and Water Conservation Director, requested Board approval of the following Columbus County Disaster Recovery Act of 2016 Capital Project Ordinance.

**COLUMBUS COUNTY DISASTER RECOVERY ACT OF 2016
CAPITAL PROJECT ORDINANCE**

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

Section 1: The project authorized is Stream Debris Removal under the Disaster Recovery Act of 2016. The project is to be financed with funds provided by the North Carolina Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services – Division of Soil and Water Conservation.

Section 2: The officers of this unit are hereby directed to proceed with the capital project within the terms of the budget contained herein.

Section 3: The following amounts are appropriated for the project:

REVENUES:

81-3498-436030	NC Dept. of Ag. & CS	\$ 1,431,218
TOTAL REVENUES		\$ 1,431,218

Section 4: The following expenditures are anticipated to be available to complete this project:

EXPENDITURES:

81-4965-519001	Disaster Recovery Act of 2016	\$ 1,431,218
TOTAL EXPENDITURES		\$ 1,431,218

Section 5: The Finance Director is hereby directed to maintain within the Capital Project Fund

sufficient specific detailed accounting records to satisfy the requirements of any and all applicable requirements of North Carolina General Statutes.

Section 6: The Finance Director is directed to report periodically on the financial status of each project element in Section 3 and on the total revenues received or claimed.

Section 7: The Budget Officer is directed to include a detailed analysis of past and future costs and revenues on this capital project periodically to the Board.

Section 8: Copies of this capital project ordinance shall be furnished to the Budget Officer and the Finance Director for direction in carrying out this project.

Adopted this 16th day of October, 2017

COLUMBUS COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

/s/ **JAMES E. PREVATTE, Chairman**

/s/ **JUNE B. HALL, Clerk to the Board**

Commissioner Byrd made a motion to approve and adopt the Columbus County Disaster Recovery Act of 2016 Capital Project Ordinance, seconded by Commissioner McDowell. The motion unanimously passed.

Agenda Item #13: SOCIAL SERVICES - MONTHLY ADMINISTRATIVE UPDATE:

Algernon McKenzie, Social Services Director, delivered the following Monthly Administrative Update.

On September 7, 2017 we held our monthly agency staff meeting. During the meeting, staff was given information on our duty to work during hurricanes. I requested staff make sure their phone numbers and addresses were up-to-date. I also informed them we were preparing a schedule for shelter duty and it would be sent out to all staff, as we were preparing for the possibility of impacts from Hurricane Irma.

Staff was informed of the plans to have our new computers installed in the next two weeks.

Staff was also encouraged to complete the enrollment for their health insurance before October 31, 2017; or they will not have health coverage in January 2018.

Finally, staff was informed about the 2017 Social Services Institute to be held October 18 – 20, 2017 in Hickory, North Carolina. All interested staff was encouraged to let their supervisor know as soon as possible; so early registration could be completed before the deadline.

On September 14, 2017 I attended our monthly Executive Director's Board meeting in Raleigh, North Carolina. During the meeting, we received an update from the Medicaid representative about the State's Medicaid Report Card. Seventy counties passed their timeliness requirements for application processing in the Medicaid program. I am proud to say Columbus County was included in those that passed. We learned the Affordable Care Act health insurance enrollment period will be shorter this year. It will be from November 1, 2017 through December 15, 2017.

There was a lot of discussion about House Bill 630; which will require counties to enter an agreement with DHHS to meet performance standards in all program areas that are administered by local DSS agencies. There are some programs that have no standards at this time. The State will be working with counties on this process as there is still much work to be done concerning this requirement. This will give all 100 counties the opportunity to have input in this process. DHHS is hiring a third party vendor to evaluate all DHHS programs. A survey will be sent to all DSS Directors to complete from the Director's Association.

Lastly, we received an update from the five counties that are piloting the NCFast Child Welfare System. All of the Directors stated they have encountered several issues with the system and have communicated 26 issues that need to be fixed to the NCFast Team at DHHS. They informed us staff will need to spend a lot of time completing the online training sessions and will have to learn how to navigate through the different screens to put in their case information. They told us converting Foster Care case information has been very difficult because it is requiring more information than we were previously told by the NCFast Team. Overall, the new system will be

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good to work in once the problems are fixed and staff can become comfortable working in the system. The NCFAST Team has committed to working with counties and have been working to resolve the issues.

On September 20, 2017 Melinda Lane, Social Work Program Manager and I traveled to Wilmington, North Carolina to meet with the pediatric and social work staff at the Nunnelee Pediatric Specialty Clinic. This was an effort to share information about our services for children; explain our procedures in Child Welfare and coordinate services for children served by both agencies. This will hopefully help us improve outcomes for children with health issues.

On September 26 - 28, 2017 we had our Child Welfare Program Review. The State reviewers and our Child Welfare Supervisors worked together reviewing cases. They also met with the Social Work Staff, the Program Manager and myself before they left; to give us some suggestions to help us continue to make improvements in our program. During this review, there were several strengths and improvements noted; however, there are still improvements that are needed around safety, family engagement, policy and documenting all efforts made with families. We now have our Transitional unit established and will be able to monitor cases a little closer. We have requested help from the program monitors to help us in developing activities to help us with continuous quality improvements in Child Welfare.

During the month of September; while our new computers were being installed, the programmers found there was an issue with our server; which controls all system operations. We were informed our server was on the verge of crashing, which would cause us not to be able to use our computers, which is critical to our daily operation. Therefore, we were advised to replace the server. We were able to find a server that was compatible with our system and has the capacity to be upgraded. This was an unexpected expense that was necessary and we were able to move some funds around to cover this purchase, with the approval of the County Manager. Therefore, we may need to request additional funds at the end of the year.

September 2017 Economic Services

PROGRAM	STATISTICS
Food & Nutrition	Applications Taken: 260 Applications Approved: 184 Active Cases: 5,685 Benefits Issued: \$1,349,947 Participants Served: 9,113
Adult Medicaid	Applications Taken: 140 Cases Terminated: 40 Redeterminations: 327 Applications Processed: 156
Family & Children's Medicaid	Applications Taken: 111 Applications Processed: 112 Redeterminations: 407 Total Medicaid Cases: 13,946 Total Individuals Receiving: 22,911
Child Support	Absent Parents Located: 129 Orders Enforced: 931 Active Cases: 3,980 Collections: \$446,745.01

September 2017 Human Services

PROGRAM	STATISTICS
Adult Services (APS)	APS Reports Accepted: 25 County Wards: 28 Number of Payee Cases: 22 Adults Served APS: 25 Number of Medicaid Transportation Trips: 3,226 Amount Requested for Reimbursement: \$63,046.56

Children's Protective Services (CPS)	Reports Accepted: 33 Reports Screened Out: 24 Families Receiving In-Home Services: 16 Children Served: 36 Contacts with Families Monthly: 284 Assessments: 28
Foster Care	Foster Children in Foster Homes: 72 Children Placed Outside County: 16 Agency Adoptions: 0 Pending Adoptions: 5 Total Foster Homes Licensed: 5 Total Children in Foster Care: 77
Work First Employment (TANF)	Applications Taken: 34 Applications Approved: 25 Individuals Receiving Benefits: 231 Entered Employment: 0 Number in Non-Paid Work Experience: 1
Program Integrity	Collections for Fraud: \$6,803.27 New Referrals: 4 Cases Established: 5
Day Care	Children Receiving Day Care Assistance: 516 Children on the Waiting List: 566 Amount Spent on Day Care Services: \$180,566.00

Economic Services Program Narrative

Child Support/Paralegal and Work First Cash/Medicaid Transportation/Maintenance and Housekeeping
Food and Nutrition and Family and Children's Medicaid
Adult Medicaid//Rest Home and Nursing Home/Community Alternatives Program (CAP)

Submitted by Cyndi Hammonds, Income Maintenance Administrator

Reporting Month: September 2017
News/Updates/Vacancies

Food and Nutrition:

USDA has implemented a project titled "Benefit Data Trust Outreach" where the state is sending letters to our active Medicaid clients that are 60 years old and up that are not receiving Food and Nutrition Benefits. In this letter they are encouraging these seniors to call members on this project and they will take an application over the phone and then send it to us to process. Letters for our county began going out to seniors on September 20th and workers have been getting calls asking if these letters are "real". Columbus County has 815 Medicaid recipients that are not receiving Food and Nutrition benefits that could be potentially eligible. This Team continues to meet their overall timeliness compliance timeframes. Our Operational Support Team Representative visited this month and discussed reports, updates and changes. It is a refreshing good change to have a State team member to be coming monthly now.

Adult Medicaid and Family & Children's Medicaid:

The Medicaid Teams have passed their "Report Card" again for timeliness. Family and Children's Medicaid has fully trained staff but Adult Medicaid is still training 3 new workers. Our Operational Support Team Representative visited with us during September and covered updates, discussed reports and answered questions that the Medicaid Team had. These visits are a welcome change from the several years we had no representation while NCFAST was being implemented. These State Team members were universal when NCFAST was implemented but have gone back to being program specific again.

Child Support and Paralegal:

The Child Support Teams continue to struggle as they still have vacancies. We failed our

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compliance timeframes in one area due to staff shortage but continue to work with our State Representative to meet these timeframes as soon as staff are hired and trained. We are currently in the interviewing process. With 3 court days again, they prepared 425 cases to be heard. Some hearings can get lengthy which causes some cases having to be rescheduled for court on another day. Our paralegal prepared 147 orders and reviewed 13 for the Attorney.

Work First Cash/Medicaid Transportation / Interpreter / Maintenance and Housekeeping / Deputy:

- We continue to work with Columbus County Transportation on our new billing process. The State has a check write every Friday, so if bills are submitted weekly they get paid the same week or Friday of the next week.
- Cash Assistance continues to keep their applications and recertifications timely.
- Our Interpreter remains busy throughout the agency and on home visits with social workers.
- Maintenance completed the project of trimming all trees around DSS and the parking lots so none of them are hanging low enough to touch vehicles. Housekeeping remains busy keeping all areas clean.
- Deputy Best continues to do a wonderful and professional job of helping us feel safe throughout each day. He monitors clients coming in and focuses on the parking lots as we continue to see more and more clients coming in for assistance.

HUMAN SERVICES BOARD REPORT

Melinda H. Lane, Program Manager Vacancies/Updates/News for September 2017

Intake/Investigation/Assessment:

The Intake/Investigation/Assessment Unit continues to be fully staffed and busy! New staff are now receiving caseloads and planning for future needed training. A lot of preparation and training is now beginning for this Unit in order to prepare for NCFast going live in January, 2018, along with implementing several other new policies and initiatives. A yearly monitoring was completed in September with great improvements in most areas of this Unit, although there continue to be areas needing improvement and the Program Development Plan will be updated.

In-Home Services:

The In-Home Services Unit continues to be fully staffed after several months without a full staff, although a recent resignation will affect this later in October. A lot of preparation and training is now beginning for this Unit in order to prepare for NCFast going live in January, 2018, along with implementing several new policies and initiatives. A yearly monitoring was completed in September with great improvements in most areas of this Unit, although there continue to be areas needing improvement and the Program Development Plan will be updated.

Foster Care/Adoptions:

The Foster Care/Adoptions Unit is now short-staffed due to the transition to the new Unit. Two available positions are currently open and space is being sought for these staff. A yearly monitoring was completed in September with great improvements in most areas of this Unit, although there continue to be areas needing improvement and the Program Development Plan will be updated.

Transitional Unit:

The new transitional unit is now beginning to take shape. This Unit is now fully staffed and needed trainings are being planned, although space will be an issue for this Unit. A yearly monitoring was completed in September with great improvements in most areas of this Unit, although there continue to be areas needing improvement and the Program Development Plan will be updated.

Adult Services:

The Adult Services Unit has been very busy this past month with increasing caseloads that are requiring the Supervisor to redistribute duties to best help the staff and best serve the clients. This is the first time this Unit has been fully staffed in several months!

Work First Employment:

The Work First Employment Unit continues to transition to the NCFast system. This Unit continues to assist with 200% and with CPS Intake coverage when needed. It has now added

Emergency Assistance inquiries and applications as a part of its responsibilities.

Child Day Care:

The Child Day Care Unit continues to be fully staffed. This Unit continues to work within the NCFAST system dealing with daily issues and updates.

Program Integrity:

Program Integrity continues to work hard to get caught up with program integrity duties and cases. One temporary worker is now assisting with the energy programs on a part-time basis. Plans are now beginning to prepare for the heating season of the Crisis Intervention Program and the need for more temporary staff.

Agenda Item #14: REGISTER of DEEDS - DEPARTMENTAL UPDATE:

Kandance Bullock, Columbus County Registrar, delivered the following Departmental Update.

TOPIC	FISCAL YEAR 2015-2016	FISCAL YEAR 2016-2017	DIFFERENCE
Marriages Issued	\$21,420	\$20,280	(\$1,140)
Excise Tax	\$142,230	\$136,289	(\$5,941)
Deeds & Other Instruments	\$94,023	\$100,062	\$6,039
Deeds of Trust	\$48,468	\$59,264	\$10,796
Certified Births, Deaths, Marriages, plain copies, Plats and UCC's	\$74,146.75	\$74,417.00	\$270.25
TOTAL:	\$380,287.75	\$390,312.00	\$10,024.25

CALENDAR YEAR

TOPIC	2015	2016	2017 (Jan. 1 - Oct. 11)
Marriages Processed	355	350	271
Births Processed	403	378	268
Deaths Processed	572	634	519

Agenda #15: PLANNING - AMENDMENT TO SOUTHEASTERN COMMUNITY

COLLEGE ZONING: Gary Lanier/Samantha Alsup, Planning Department, is requesting Board approval.

DELETED

Agenda Item #16: PLANNING - RE-ZONE PARCEL #25550 from RA-20 TO IND-1:

Gary Lanier/Samantha Alsup, Planning Department, requested Board approval to re-zone Parcel #25550 from RA-20 to IND-1 in the Southeastern Community College zoning area. (The required Public Hearing was conducted at 7:30 P.M. on this date.)

Vice Chairman McKenzie made a motion to approve to re-zone Parcel #25550 from RA-20 to IND-1 in the Southeastern Community College zoning area, seconded by Commissioner Bullard. The motion unanimously passed.

Agenda Item #7: PROCLAMATION - PROCLAMATION of APPRECIATION to the CONCERNED CITIZENS of the LAKE WACCAMAW AREA 20TH ST. JAMES WACCAMAW SIOUAN ANNUAL FESTIVAL:

Hattie Campbell requested Board approval and adoption of the following Proclamation of Appreciation to the Concerned Citizens of the Lake Waccamaw Area 20th St. James Waccamaw

Siouan Annual Festival.

**PROCLAMATION of APPRECIATION to the
CONCERNED CITIZENS of the LAKE WACCAMAWE AREA
20th ST. JAMES WACCAMAWE SIOUAN
ANNUAL FESTIVAL**

The Board of County Commissioners, at their regularly scheduled meeting on October 16, 2017, unanimously adopted the following Proclamation:

BE IT PROCLAIMED THAT WHEREAS, the **St. James Waccamaw Siouan Annual Festival** of Columbus County has made life-long strides to improve the quality of life in their community and county; **and**

WHEREAS, members of the **St. James Waccamaw Siouan Annual Festival** have served on numerous boards, agencies, committees in their church, government and community functions; **and**

WHEREAS, the **Committee** is recognized County and State-wide for leadership in positive endeavors for the general welfare of all people; **and**

WHEREAS, the **Committee** has given unselfishly of their time and energies to help those in need or those with unfortunate situations in a most untiring and caring way.

THEREFORE, BE IT PROCLAIMED by the Board of Commissioners of Columbus County, North Carolina, that they do hereby recognize the true loyal and faithful service to their community and county and congratulate them on this special occasion.

ADOPTED unanimously on this the 16th day of October 2017.

COLUMBUS COUNTY BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

/s/ **JAMES E. PREVATTE**, Chairman, District II

/s/ **AMON E. MCKENZIE**, Vice Chairman, District

/s/ **GILES E. BYRD**, District III

/s/ **P. EDWIN RUSS**, District IV

/s/ **TRENT BURROUGHS** - District V

/s/ **RICKY BULLARD**, District VI

/s/ **CHARLES T. McDOWELL**, , District VII

ATTESTED BY:

JUNE B. HALL, Clerk to Board

/s/ **MICHAEL H. STEPHENS**, County Attorney/Interim County Manager

Commissioner Byrd made a motion to approve and adopt the Proclamation of Appreciation to the Concerned Citizens of the Lake Waccamaw Area 20th St. James Waccamaw Siouan Annual Festival, seconded by Commissioner Russ. The motion unanimously passed.

RECESS REGULAR SESSION and enter into COMBINATION MEETING of COLUMBUS COUNTY WATER and SEWER DISTRICTS I, II, III, IV and V BOARD MEETING:

At 9:28 P.M., Vice Chairman McKenzie made a motion to recess Regular Session and enter into a **combination meeting** of Columbus County Water and Sewer Districts I, II, III, IV and V Board Meeting, seconded by Commissioner Byrd. The motion unanimously passed.

Agenda Item #18: COLUMBUS COUNTY WATER and SEWER DISTRICTS I, II, III, IV and V - APPROVAL of BOARD MEETING MINUTES:

October 02, 2017 **Combination Meeting** of Columbus County Water and Sewer Districts I, II, III, IV and V Board Meeting (**5 sets**)

This information will be recorded in Minute Book Number 2 for each Water District, respectively.

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

At 9:29 P.M., Commissioner Russ made a motion to adjourn the **combination meeting** of Columbus County Water and Sewer Districts I, II, III, IV and V Board Meeting, and resume Regular Session, seconded by Commissioner McDowell. The motion unanimously passed.

Agenda Item #19: CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS:

Commissioner Byrd made a motion to approve the following Consent Agenda Items, seconded by Vice Chairman McKenzie. The motion unanimously passed.

A. Budget Amendment:

TYPE	ACCOUNT	DETAILS	AMOUNT
Expenditures	10-4250-535310	M/R Vehicles-Body Damage	2,881
Revenues	10-3839-489000	Misc Revenues	2,881

B. Tax Refunds and Releases:

<i>Property Value</i>	Amount:	\$260.82	
Coleman, George W & Sara Jane	PROPERTY:	20883	Total: \$299.70
Value: \$32,400.00	Year:	2017	Account: 12-05620 Bill#: 55956
Release portion of value. Should be partially exempt. Release Cerro Gordo Fire(32.40) release Columbus Rescue(6.48)			
<i>Property Value</i>	Amount:	\$70.04	
George, Roosevelt Jr	PROPERTY:	23639	Total: \$71.78
Value: \$8,700.00	Year:	2017	Account: 13-05029 Bill#: 63205
Release portion of taxes as building was torn down. Release Columbus Rescue(1.74)			
<i>Property Value</i>	Amount:	\$12.08	
Norris, Rick	PROPERTY:	93695	Total: \$12.38
Value: \$1,500.00	Year:	2017	Account: 11-01129 Bill#: 80131
Release value for lease/hold on camper. Sold in 2015. Release Columbus Rescue(.30)			
<i>Property Value</i>	Amount:	\$0.00	
Smith, Joel E	PROPERTY:	75179	Total: \$3.00
Value: \$0.00	Year:	2016	Account: 04-14777 Bill#: 24029
Release advertisement cost. Release Bolton Fire(1.82) release Columbus Rescue(1.18)			
<i>Property Value</i>	Amount:	\$89.36	
Vereen, John & Ernest	PROPERTY:	18375	Total: \$207.58
Value: \$11,100.00	Year:	2017	Account: 10-17660 Bill#: 92994
Release value. Hurricane Matthew damage. Release Columbus Rescue(2.22) release Fair Bluff(72.15)			
<i>Refunds</i>	Amount:	\$0.00	
Cedar Grove Baptist Church	PROPERTY:	00000	Total: \$1,724.00
Value: \$0.00	Year:	13-16	Account: 18-00138 Bill#: 99999
Refund user fees. Uses a commercial hauler.			
<i>User Fee</i>	Amount:	\$0.00	
Cedar Grove Baptist Church	PROPERTY:	00000	Total: \$406.00
Value: \$0.00	Year:	2017	Account: 18-00138 Bill#: 99999
Release user fee. Uses a commercial hauler.			
<i>User Fee</i>	Amount:	\$0.00	
Lennon, James Walter	PROPERTY:	21557	Total: \$203.00
Value: \$0.00	Year:	2017	Account: 12-15380 Bill#: 73322
Release user fee. Vacant.			
<i>User Fee</i>	Amount:	\$0.00	
NC Forest Services	PROPERTY:	00000	Total: \$203.00
Value: \$0.00	Year:	2017	Account: 18-01013 Bill#: 98156
Release user fee. Vacant.			
<i>User Fee</i>	Amount:	\$0.00	
Powell, Sammy & Peggy Nealey	PROPERTY:	00000	Total: \$203.00
Value: \$0.00	Year:	2017	Account: 06-29581 Bill#: 82327
Release user fee. Used as storage.			
<i>User Fee</i>	Amount:	\$0.00	
Smith, Mike & Ruth	PROPERTY:	00000	Total: \$203.00
Value: \$0.00	Year:	2017	Account: 03-02639 Bill#: 87886
Release user fee. Lives out of town.			

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<i>User Fee</i>			Amount:	\$0.00
Smith, Rodney		PROPERTY: 00000	Total:	\$1,481.73
Value: \$0.00	Year: 11-17	Account: 06-04854	Bill#:	99999
Release user fees. Never had power at home.				
<i>User Fee</i>			Amount:	\$0.00
Stephens, Helen Faye		PROPERTY: 87926	Total:	\$203.00
Value: \$0.00	Year: 2017	Account: 11-23602	Bill#:	89697
Release user fee. Vacant				
<i>User Fee</i>			Amount:	\$0.00
Walter, L Vann Living Trust		PROPERTY: 84945	Total:	\$152.24
Value: \$0.00	Year: 2017	Account: 01-08177	Bill#:	93558
Release portion of user fee. Vacant since March				
<i>User Fee</i>			Amount:	\$0.00
Wilkerson, Crystal & Rodney		PROPERTY: 21359	Total:	\$203.00
Value: \$0.00	Year: 2017	Account: 12-00223	Bill#:	95726
Release user fee. Vacant.				

Agenda Item #20: COMMENTS:

A. Department Manager:

Edward Davis, Soil and Water Conservation Director: stated the following:

- The Beaver Bounty Program has started back up;
- The Beaver Committee met last Monday night;
- They have chosen to collect both front feet this year and the bounty is \$40.00; **and**
- If you know of any landowners that need this, please let us know.

B. Board of Commissioners:

Chairman James E. Prevatte: stated I have a letter of resignation from Donna Prince from the Community Advisory Committee, and I need your help in finding some volunteers for this committee.

Agenda Item #21: CLOSED SESSION in ACCORDANCE with N.C.G.S. § 143-318.11(A) (3) ATTORNEY-CLIENT PRIVILEGE.

DELETED (per: County Attorney)

Agenda Item #22: ADJOURNMENT:

At 9:35 P.M., Vice Chairman McKenzie made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Commissioner Bullard. The motion unanimously passed.

APPROVED:

JUNE B. HALL, Clerk to the Board

JAMES E. PREVATTE, Chairman

**COLUMBUS COUNTY WATER and SEWER DISTRICTS I, II, III, IV AND V
COMBINATION BOARD MEETING
Monday, October 16, 2017
9:28 P.M.**

The Honorable Columbus County Commissioners met on the above stated date and at the above stated time in the Dempsey B. Herring Courthouse Annex Building, located at 112 West Smith Street, Whiteville, North Carolina, to act as the Columbus County Water and Sewer District I Board.

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT:

James E. Prevatte, **Chairman**
Amon E. McKenzie, **Vice-Chairman**
Giles E. Byrd
Edwin Russ
Trent Burroughs
Ricky Bullard
Charles T. McDowell

APPOINTEES PRESENT:

Mike Stephens, **Interim County Manager / County Attorney**
June B. Hall, **Clerk to the Board**
Bobbie Faircloth, **Finance Officer**

MEETING CALLED TO ORDER:

At 9:28 P.M., Chairman James E. Prevatte called the **combination meeting** of Columbus County Water and Sewer Districts I, II, III, IV and V Board Meeting to order.

Agenda Item #18: COLUMBUS COUNTY WATER and SEWER DISTRICTS I, II, III, IV and V - APPROVAL of BOARD MEETING MINUTES:

October 02, 2017 **Combination Meeting** of Columbus County Water and Sewer Districts I, II, III, IV and V Board Meeting (**5 sets**)

Vice Chairman McKenzie made a motion to approve the October 02, 2017 Columbus County Water and Sewer District I Board Meeting Minutes, as recorded, seconded by Commissioner Russ. The motion unanimously passed.

ADJOURNMENT:

At 9:29 P.M., Commissioner Russ made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Commissioner McDowell. The motion unanimously passed.

APPROVED:

JUNE B. HALL, Clerk to Board

JAMES E. PREVATTE, Chairman

**COLUMBUS COUNTY WATER and SEWER DISTRICTS I, II, III, IV AND V
COMBINATION BOARD MEETING
Monday, October 16, 2017
9:28 P.M.**

The Honorable Columbus County Commissioners met on the above stated date and at the above stated time in the Dempsey B. Herring Courthouse Annex Building, located at 112 West Smith Street, Whiteville, North Carolina, to act as the Columbus County Water and Sewer District II Board.

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT:

James E. Prevatte, **Chairman**
 Amon E. McKenzie, **Vice-Chairman**
 Giles E. Byrd
 Edwin Russ
 Trent Burroughs
 Ricky Bullard
 Charles T. McDowell

APPOINTEES PRESENT:

Mike Stephens, **Interim County Manager / County Attorney**
 June B. Hall, **Clerk to the Board**
 Bobbie Faircloth, **Finance Officer**

MEETING CALLED TO ORDER:

At 9:28 P.M., Chairman James E. Prevatte called the **combination meeting** of Columbus County Water and Sewer Districts I, II, III, IV and V Board Meeting to order.

Agenda Item #18: COLUMBUS COUNTY WATER and SEWER DISTRICTS I, II, III, IV and V - APPROVAL of BOARD MEETING MINUTES:

October 02, 2017 **Combination Meeting** of Columbus County Water and Sewer Districts I, II, III, IV and V Board Meeting (**5 sets**)

Vice Chairman McKenzie made a motion to approve the October 02, 2017 Columbus County Water and Sewer District II Board Meeting Minutes, as recorded, seconded by Commissioner Russ. The motion unanimously passed.

ADJOURNMENT:

At 9:29 P.M., Commissioner Russ made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Commissioner McDowell. The motion unanimously passed.

APPROVED:

JUNE B. HALL, Clerk to Board

JAMES E. PREVATTE, Chairman

**COLUMBUS COUNTY WATER and SEWER DISTRICTS I, II, III, IV AND V
COMBINATION BOARD MEETING
Monday, October 16, 2017
9:28 P.M.**

The Honorable Columbus County Commissioners met on the above stated date and at the above stated time in the Dempsey B. Herring Courthouse Annex Building, located at 112 West Smith Street, Whiteville, North Carolina, to act as the Columbus County Water and Sewer District III Board.

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT:

James E. Prevatte, **Chairman**
Amon E. McKenzie, **Vice-Chairman**
Giles E. Byrd
Edwin Russ
Trent Burroughs
Ricky Bullard
Charles T. McDowell

APPOINTEES PRESENT:

Mike Stephens, **Interim County Manager / County Attorney**
June B. Hall, **Clerk to the Board**
Bobbie Faircloth, **Finance Officer**

MEETING CALLED TO ORDER:

At 9:28 P.M., Chairman James E. Prevatte called the **combination meeting** of Columbus County Water and Sewer Districts I, II, III, IV and V Board Meeting to order.

Agenda Item #18: COLUMBUS COUNTY WATER and SEWER DISTRICTS I, II, III, IV and V - APPROVAL of BOARD MEETING MINUTES:

October 02, 2017 **Combination Meeting** of Columbus County Water and Sewer Districts I, II, III, IV and V Board Meeting (**5 sets**)

Vice Chairman McKenzie made a motion to approve the October 02, 2017 Columbus County Water and Sewer District III Board Meeting Minutes, as recorded, seconded by Commissioner Russ. The motion unanimously passed.

ADJOURNMENT:

At 9:29 P.M., Commissioner Russ made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Commissioner McDowell. The motion unanimously passed.

APPROVED:

JUNE B. HALL, Clerk to Board

JAMES E. PREVATTE, Chairman

**COLUMBUS COUNTY WATER and SEWER DISTRICTS I, II, III, IV AND V
COMBINATION BOARD MEETING
Monday, October 16, 2017
9:28 P.M.**

The Honorable Columbus County Commissioners met on the above stated date and at the above stated time in the Dempsey B. Herring Courthouse Annex Building, located at 112 West Smith Street, Whiteville, North Carolina, to act as the Columbus County Water and Sewer District IV Board.

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT:

James E. Prevatte, **Chairman**
 Amon E. McKenzie, **Vice-Chairman**
 Giles E. Byrd
 Edwin Russ
 Trent Burroughs
 Ricky Bullard
 Charles T. McDowell

APPOINTEES PRESENT:

Mike Stephens, **Interim County Manager / County Attorney**
 June B. Hall, **Clerk to the Board**
 Bobbie Faircloth, **Finance Officer**

MEETING CALLED TO ORDER:

At 9:28 P.M., Chairman James E. Prevatte called the **combination meeting** of Columbus County Water and Sewer Districts I, II, III, IV and V Board Meeting to order.

Agenda Item #18: COLUMBUS COUNTY WATER and SEWER DISTRICTS I, II, III, IV and V - APPROVAL of BOARD MEETING MINUTES:

October 02, 2017 **Combination Meeting** of Columbus County Water and Sewer Districts I, II, III, IV and V Board Meeting (**5 sets**)

Vice Chairman McKenzie made a motion to approve the October 02, 2017 Columbus County Water and Sewer District IV Board Meeting Minutes, as recorded, seconded by Commissioner Russ. The motion unanimously passed.

ADJOURNMENT:

At 9:29 P.M., Commissioner Russ made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Commissioner McDowell. The motion unanimously passed.

APPROVED:

JUNE B. HALL, Clerk to Board

JAMES E. PREVATTE, Chairman

COLUMBUS COUNTY WATER and SEWER DISTRICTS I, II, III, IV AND V
COMBINATION BOARD MEETING
Monday, October 16, 2017
9:28 P.M.

The Honorable Columbus County Commissioners met on the above stated date and at the above stated time in the Dempsey B. Herring Courthouse Annex Building, located at 112 West Smith Street, Whiteville, North Carolina, to act as the Columbus County Water and Sewer District V Board.

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT:

James E. Prevatte, **Chairman**
Amon E. McKenzie, **Vice-Chairman**
Giles E. Byrd
Edwin Russ
Trent Burroughs
Ricky Bullard
Charles T. McDowell

APPOINTEES PRESENT:

Mike Stephens, **Interim County Manager / County Attorney**
June B. Hall, **Clerk to the Board**
Bobbie Faircloth, **Finance Officer**

MEETING CALLED TO ORDER:

At 9:28 P.M., Chairman James E. Prevatte called the **combination meeting** of Columbus County Water and Sewer Districts I, II, III, IV and V Board Meeting to order.

Agenda Item #18: COLUMBUS COUNTY WATER and SEWER DISTRICTS I, II, III, IV and V - APPROVAL of BOARD MEETING MINUTES:

October 02, 2017 **Combination Meeting** of Columbus County Water and Sewer Districts I, II, III, IV and V Board Meeting (**5 sets**)

Vice Chairman McKenzie made a motion to approve the October 02, 2017 Columbus County Water and Sewer District V Board Meeting Minutes, as recorded, seconded by Commissioner Russ. The motion unanimously passed.

ADJOURNMENT:

At 9:29 P.M., Commissioner Russ made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Commissioner McDowell. The motion unanimously passed.

APPROVED:

JUNE B. HALL, Clerk to Board

JAMES E. PREVATTE, Chairman