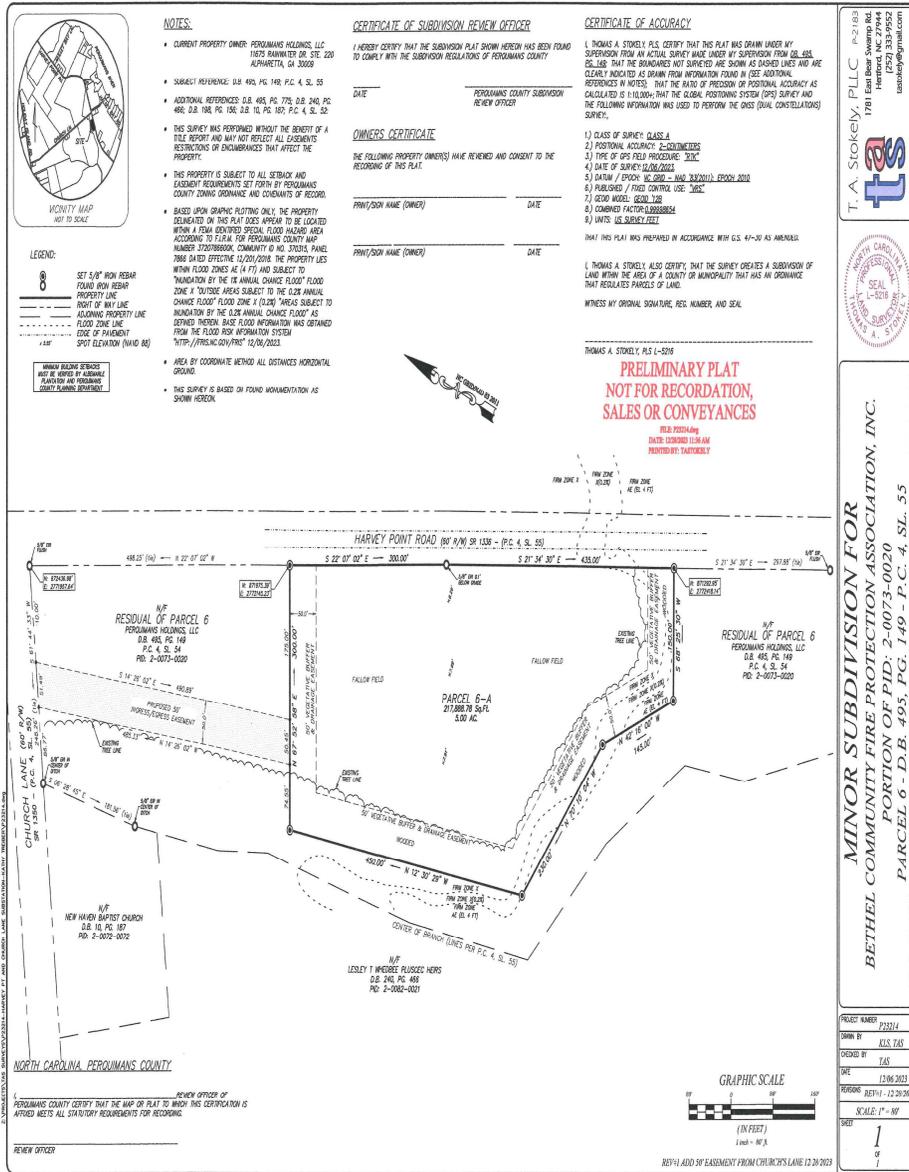


ATTACHMENT B



THIS COPY HAS BEEN REDUCED FROM ITS ORIGINAL SIZE OF 18" x 24"

WORK SESSION
February 19, 2024
7:00 p.m

The Perquimans County Board of Commissioners met in a Work Session on Monday, February 19, 2024, at 7:00 p.m. in the in the Meeting Room of the Perquimans County Library located at 514 S. Church Street, Hertford, NC 27944.

- MEMBERS PRESENT:** Wallace E. Nelson, Chairman Charles Woodard, Vice Chairman
 Timothy J. Corprew Joseph W. Hoffer
 T. Kyle Jones James W. Ward
- MEMBERS ABSENT:** None
- OTHERS PRESENT:** Frank Heath, County Manager Mary P. Hunnicutt, Clerk to the Board

Chairman Nelson called the meeting to order. Commissioner Woodard gave the invocation and Chairman Nelson led the Pledge of Allegiance. Chairman Nelson welcomed everyone to the meeting and explained that no action will be taken during this meeting.

DR. TANYA TURNER, SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS

Chairman Nelson stated that the first item for the work session was to receive an update on the school system from Dr. Tanya Turner, Superintendent, and James Bunch, Assistant Superintendent. Before turning over the meeting to Dr. Turner, County Manager Heath explained that he had a meeting with Dr. Turner, Mr. Bunch, and the architect several days ago and, during that meeting, Mr. Heath asked Dr. Turner if she would come and present an update to the Board during our next Work Session and she agreed. During that meeting, the architect presented a timeline for the construction of the new intermediate school which she will present tonight along with the proposed budget. Dr. Turner thanked the Board for allowing them to come and present this update and distributed several charts showing the timeline and budget. She then reviewed the timeline with the school timeline which appears on their website at <https://abenton8.wixsite.com/perquimans-new-school>. They should begin construction in September, 2024 and the school should be open for students in August, 2026. She also explained that once construction begins, they will present another timeline for the project. Dr. Turner also presented the proposed budget for the project which totals \$61,031,474. Once Dr. Turner presented these documents, County Manager Heath expressed some concerns about the proposed budget. His first concern is that, if they need to go out for bids in June, 2024, then the financing of the project will need to be settled before going out for bids. It is hard for a company to make bids if the project is not fully funded.

He explained that currently we have \$36.9 million. So that means that the school system will have to receive additional grants for the balance of that money or the County will have to borrow it. He further explained that there is approximately a \$24 million debt. To him, it does not make any sense to anticipate the site work to begin in September until we get this matter solved. His question to Dr. Turner and the Board of Education, what is the real chance that they will be receiving additional grant funding. Dr. Turner explained the following possibilities for more grant funding: (1) increase this grant funding to make it \$40 million and (2) another grant that will possibly net \$12 million but no guarantees that they will get the full amount (applications due June 30, 2024, but they have not been told how quick the turnaround will be). Another issue Mr. Heath has is that, if we go out for a loan with a bank for \$24 million and we may only need \$9 million, the bank will base their terms on the larger loan amount and that may create problems for the County and the banks. There are banks that will structure amounts for the maximum amount with the risk that the amount will be less, but you will pay the price with a higher interest rate to have this ability. If we wait to hear from the grant funding, we will be able to request the exact amount and possibly receive a lower interest rate. If we wait until we receive word on these grant funds, then this causes problems with the construction of the building beginning in September. It will push it until the wintertime which runs into bad weather. Commissioner Jones asked if there was any way that the County would not have to raise taxes. Mr. Heath said that he did not think that would be possible. After answering more questions and discussion, the Board thanked Dr. Turner and await to hear responses from the additional grant funding. County Manager Heath will discuss the situation with our new financial advisors.

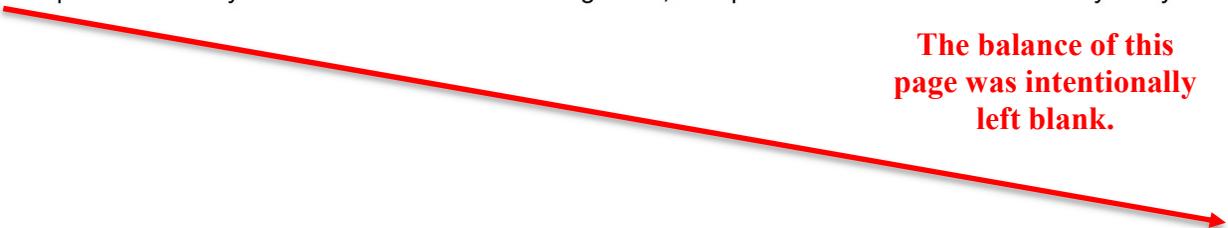
MARINE PARK LEASE RATES

Chairman Nelson recognized County Manager Heath who explained that the County had been receiving some inquiries about leasing property in the Marine Industrial Park and presented an update on the construction of the Marine Basin Project. He wanted to find out what the Board thinks about the rates and how we should proceed with answering these inquiries. He stated that the contractor was able to complete several things before the moratorium went into effect this month and will remain in effect until November, 2024. Mr. Heath explained that the Wanchese Marine Park rates were \$.039 per square foot per year. They have an automatic 2% increase each year. Tonight, he is asking how he needs to proceed with setting up these lease rates. Commissioner Corprew said that he did not have a problem with the rate but felt that we should make a distinction for property rates for land and property along the bulkhead. Commissioner Ward said that he had a contact in Virginia that he could call and obtain their leasing rates.

GATES COUNTY 911 CENTER

County Manager Heath presented an overview of the situation with Gates County 911 Center. On February 8, 2024, Gates County Sheriff contacted his office to initiate the emergency backup communications center protocols to transfer Gates County 911 emergency telephone calls to Perquimans Emergency Services. The Interlocal Agreement of PSAP Centers between Perquimans County and Gates County was enacted at 6:00 a.m. on February 9, 2024. This Agreement allows Gates County to use our 911 Center for no more than 90 days. On February 5, 2024, the Gates County 911 Director resigned. At that time, due to employee turnovers, there were no full-time certified telecommunicators on staff at that time in Gates County. As of his last meeting on February 12, 2024 with Gates County Sheriff and County Manager, there were only a handful of part-time telecommunicators on staff with only two having the EMD certification status. Gates County was able to identify those full-time/part-time certified telecommunicators that were currently on staff at this time to staff our Perquimans County 911 Center to assist with Gates County emergency calls during the 24-hour period. To date, Gates County has had no staff to appear at the Perquimans 911 Center. The NC 911 Board has been made aware of the situation and have reviewed their options and supported the actions taken by Gates County Board of Commissioners. Perquimans County provided back up services for Gates County 911 Center from December 2021 through February 2022. This is the second time that Gates County 911 Center has requested assistance from Perquimans County 911 Center. At that time, the Gates County 911 Center was transferred to Gates County Sheriff's Office, and they were able to get the staff up to required status. On March 8, 2023, the Gates County Board of Commissioners voted unanimously to approve Gates County Sheriff's request to transfer supervision and management of the Gates County 911 Center under the Gates County Sheriff's Office. It is Mr. Heath's understanding that, by the recent assessment by the NC 911 Board in January 2023, the Board deems the Gates County 911 Center to be non-compliant with their NC administrative code requirements due to primarily the identified operational and maintenance records available at the Gates County 911 Center. The NC 911 Board gave the Gates County Sheriff 30 days to bring the Gates County 911 Center into compliance. This proved to be impossible due to the lack of certified personnel to staff and operate the Center. Perquimans County's 911 Center continues to prepare to diligently review the actions and steps to serve the needs of the residents of Gates County. Perquimans County's Emergency Services Director, Jonathan Nixon, has provided a two-page document listing the issues to be addressed and information to be verified by Gates County. Mr. Heath and the Emergency Services staff are having ongoing conversations with Gates County Sheriff, County Manager, Human Resource Director, and other Gates County staff in preparation and recommendation for our meeting today. Gates County Board of Commissioners Vice Chairman, Jonathan Craddock, is Gates County Public Safety Liaison for all Emergency Services in Gates County. Mr. Craddock has participated in their meetings and has heard every recommendation made. Based on Mr. Heath's e-mail information, Gates County Manager and Mr. Craddock have contacted each commissioner for guidance and concurrence to move forward as expeditiously as possible on this situation. It is also Mr. Heath's understanding that the Gates County Board of Commissioners held an Emergency Meeting yesterday afternoon to assess their capacity to handle a standalone 911 Center, having failed twice, and have reviewed the status and guidance of NC State Board leadership and passed the following Resolution to proceed in united fashion which may ultimately lead to a consolidation of Gates County 911 Center and Perquimans County 911 Center similar to our neighbors, Pasquotank & Camden and Dare/Hyde/Tyrell.

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GATES COUNTY NORTH CAROLINA

Gates County Correspondence 2 of 3

Gates County 115 Court Street PO Box 148, Gatesville, NC 27938



Phone (252) 357-3411 Fax (252) 357-1255

RESOLUTION

Gates County Board of Commissioners For the purposes of Transitioning Gates County 911 Communications Center Operations to A consolidated system with Perquimans County

Whereas, local governments throughout the United States are struggling to recruit and retain qualified public safety employees for law enforcement, fire & rescue, emergency medical services and telecommunications; and

Whereas, Gates County has experienced repeated occurrences of staffing shortages in emergency 911 Communications for telecommunications professionals; and

Whereas, the Gates County Board of Commissioners remains committed to supporting all sectors of public safety and law enforcement as evidenced by significant investments in human resources and recent compensation adjustments for county employees; and

Whereas, Gates County has experienced multiple sudden staffing shortages for certified full-time telecommunication employees at all levels including supervisors and director.

Now, Therefore, Be It Resolved that the Gates County Board of Commissioners will take the following immediate steps with adoption of this Resolution to:

- 1) Rescind the March 8, 2023 decision to transfer the Gates County 911 Communications Center to the Office of the Sheriff and re-establishment of oversight under the County Manager or his designee, and
2) Take immediate steps to work toward the consolidation and merger of the Gates County 911 Communications Center as a regional partner with Perquimans County or other entities, with the further approval by the Board of Commissioners; and
3) Direct the County Manager, Finance Director, Human Resources Director, and other related County offices to support this transition with the appropriate planning and budget preparation.

Be It Further Resolved that the Gates County Board of Commissioners recognizes and appreciates the efforts of Sheriff Ray Campbell; and the Board of Commissioners commends the leadership and support of the NC 911 Board and its Executive Director Ms. L.V. Pokey Harris; and the Board of Commissioners extends our grateful appreciation to our neighbors in Perquimans County for their continuous efforts to work collaboratively for the benefit of all citizens of northeastern North Carolina and the counties of Gates and Perquimans especially.

Adopted this day February 18th, 2024 by the undersigned members of the Gates County Board of Commissioners in the 1836 Historic Gates County Courthouse.

Dr. Althea Riddick, Board Chair

Jonathan Craddock, Vice-Chair

Brian Rountree, Commissioner

Linda Hoffer, Commissioner

Emily Truman, Commissioner

Acting Clerk & County Manger

Attest: [Signature] Acting Clerk & County Manger 2/19/2024

Gates County, North Carolina Established 1779 - Home of Merchants Millpond

Gates County, North Carolina Established 1779 - Home of Merchants Millpond

After presenting his information, County Manager Heath recognized Jonathan Nixon, Emergency Services Director, and Julie Solesbee, Assistant EM/PIO/Grant Manager/AEMT, who presented a PowerPoint presentation on what will need to be done to bring the Perquimans 911 Center building and staff up to being able to handle both Perquimans and Gates Counties' emergency calls. After their presentation, the Chairman asked the Board if they had any questions or comments. The following questions/comments were made:

- Commissioner Corprew: Mr. Corprew asked how many hours are we paying for Gates County, are we tracking it, and are we billing Gates County for that. Mr. Nixon said that we were tracking it. Mr. Heath said that we are billing them per the Interlocal Agreement that they are operating under. The only other concern that he has is how are we protected from a liability issue - our priority should be Perquimans County residents. Mr. Heath said that the County has the same governmental immunity that we had before. Essentially, we will be operating as a contracted service.
Chairman Nelson: Mr. Nelson asked if there would be any physical presence at the current Gates County 911 Center. Mr. Nixon said that the present Gates County 911 Center would not have any personnel there. Mr. Nelson also asked about the transferring of equipment, etc. Mr. Nixon explained that the 911 Board would foot the bill to move the equipment from Gates County to Perquimans County. Mr. Nixon said that they would have to coordinate funding from the State. According to our phone and IT contractor, there should be no issues of compatibility with their equipment and Perquimans' equipment. It is Mr. Nixon's understanding that the Gates County E-911 Funds will be coming to Perquimans once the consolidation is complete. The costs not covered by the funds will be funded 50-50.
County Manager Heath: Mr. Heath asked where they planned to place the Gates County personnel in our current location. Mr. Nixon explained where they will place them until next fiscal year budget is approved. Then they plan to do renovations to make it better for them.
Commissioner Ward: Mr. Ward asked if they communicate on the 800 channels. Mr. Nixon explained how their channels worked. Mr. Ward asked if the Fire Departments would be under this consolidation agreement as far as dispatch services. Mr. Nixon said that was his understanding.
Commissioner Hoffer: Mr. Hoffer asked what would happen if Gates County 911 Center resumed services. Mr. Nixon explained that it is his understanding that, once you consolidate, the State will not pay to have the parties become a single unit. Mr. Heath explained that it is a true consolidation - Perquimans County will be taking over Gates County.
Commissioner Ward: Mr. Ward asked if any of the two certified part-time employees expressed an interest in working in Perquimans 911 Center. Mr. Nixon said that they have received one application. He anticipated receiving two more tomorrow morning. He also said that the two full-time certified employees had never resigned from Perquimans County in that they remained on our part-time/fill-in status. Both were working in our 911 Center today.
Commissioner Ward: Mr. Ward asked if he anticipated a Budget Amendment for this change. Mr. Nixon said that yes. Mr. Heath said that they would be increasing the income and expenditure line items.

After all questions and comments were made, County Manager Heath asked if he could make a comment before moving on with the meeting. Mr. Heath said that, if we did not have strong management in our 911 Center, he would not recommend this consolidation. He expressed that opinion to the NC 911 Board when they met with them about this situation. With the help of Jonathan Nixon, Julie Solesbee, Andrea Stoner, and Nakindra Downing, he feels that we can proceed with the consolidation. That is why he recommends and requests that you allow the staff to proceed with whatever needs to be done to consolidate these two 911 Centers. Commissioner Corprew said that he does not have a problem with this because it does not cost Perquimans County a dime and will help Perquimans County in the long run. Commissioner Woodard agrees with Mr. Heath and Mr. Corprew and feels that our strong leadership can handle the change. The contract will be presented at your Regular Meeting for action.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further comments or business to discuss, the Work Session was adjourned around 8:20 p.m. on motion made by Joseph W. Hoffer, seconded by James W. Ward.

Wallace E. Nelson, Chairman

Clerk to the Board
