

**TOWN OF JAMESVILLE**  
**SPECIAL BOARD MEETING 08/03/2022**  
**MINUTES**

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The following is an account of the minutes taken at the Special Board Meeting held between 6:00 p.m. & 7:27 p.m. on 08/03/2022 at the Martin County Supreme Courtroom, 305 East Main Street, Williamston, NC 27892. This was a Joint Meeting between the Jamesville Town Board and the Martin County Board of Commissioners. Due to the COVID-19 Pandemic, social distancing measures were made available to all. Virtual Meeting Access was not available due to the limited internet access and capabilities within the Courtroom.

**Attendees**

- Craig Tucker - Mayor
- Willis Williams - Mayor Protem
- Rachel Craddock - Commissioner
- Larris Tolson - Commissioner
- Mary Allen – Commissioner
- Kimberly Cockrell – Commissioner

Minutes Recorder – Kimberly Cockrell, Town Clerk/Finance Officer

Attendees for Martin County included: Chairman Ronnie Smith, Vice Chairman Dempsey Bond, Jr., Commissioner David “Skip” Gurganus (via telephone), Commissioner Emily Biggs, Commissioner Joe R. Ayers, County Manager James Bennett and County Clerk Julia S. Rease.

**I. Call to Order**

Mayor Craig Tucker and Chairman Ronnie Smith brought the meeting to order at 6:05pm. Commissioner Larris Tolson requested a moment of silence for Indiana Republican Representative Jackie Walorski and staff members Zachery Potts and Emma Thomson that lost their lives in a head on vehicle collision that afternoon. Chairman Smith continued with asking for a moment of silence. Commissioner Willis Williams offered the prayer. Commissioner Emily Biggs led everyone in the Pledge to Allegiance.

**II. Adopt Agenda**

Chairman Smith asked the County Commissioners for a motion to approve the agenda. Commissioner Biggs moved to adopt the agenda as presented. Commissioner Bonds seconded. Motion unanimously passed. 5 Ayes – 0 Nays  
Mayor Craig Tucker asked for a motion to approve the agenda. Commissioner Larris Tolson made the motion to adopt the agenda as amended. Commissioner Willis Williams seconded. Motion unanimously passed. 5 Ayes – 0 Nays.

**III. Public Comments**

1. No Public Comments

**IV. Martin County Commissioners – future planning**

Chairman Smith opened the discussion with an explanation of what led to the meeting this evening. He met with Mayor Tucker, Commissioner Craddock and Commissioner Williams several months prior talking about relationships, forming partnerships and understanding. He feels that when

everyone can work together we can go to great distances. Communication and sharing information is vitally important.

Mayor Tucker thanked everyone for meeting. He continued that the board had a few questions and concerns to discuss. Jamesville community citizens have brought concerns stating that the Town of Jamesville is standing in the way of them receiving county water. District 3 is underserved at the current time. Jamesville just wants to make sure that the right message is portrayed.

Mayor Tucker went over the water and sewer grants in the amount of \$11.7 million dollars that were recently awarded through NCDEQ. Monies were awarded to replace the Water Treatment Plant, Wastewater Treatment Plant and Sewer Rehab (to include over haul of the Main Sewer Pumping Station and fix sewer lines in need of repair). Jamesville has worked hard to get funded and that they no longer get negative press through word of mouth because Jamesville is on board with the county. The town board is willing to be transparent and cooperate with the future plans within the county.

He continued that Jamesville would like to hear what the County is deciding to do with the recently received federal grant monies and if District 3 would benefit from it. Mayor Tucker opened the floor for other Town Board members with comments or concerns.

Commissioner Tolson stated that we are willing to assist to get water to the surrounding areas that need it. He stated that he comes from Hatteras Island and understands that wells there are not the most proficient way to provide water to a household due to the cost of keeping them maintained. He stated that we are doing everything we can to expand and move into new neighborhoods. We are willing to work with the county to do that.

Commissioner Craddock asked how we fit in and help with the county to get the water down into the lower part of Martin County?

Manager Bennett stated that there will be a meeting on August 9<sup>th</sup> at 4:00pm with NCDEQ and Linda Culpepper will be present.

Chairman Smith stated that Linda Culpepper would be the person that could assist with that question. We all live in a Tier 1 county and when you start looking over the nation and state, whether crime or poverty, things are coming our way to help pull all of us into another positive level. It's going to take a positive attitude and opportunity itself will answer for how we will work together. He continued that positive things are coming to the county but was not able to disclose them at the present time.

Vice Chair Bonds stated that he is look forward to working with everyone and would like to see every citizen in Martin County with quality water. He understands there are people that need water and feels that if everyone works together that we can get it done.

Commissioner Tolson stated that the more people that you can get connected to a system the cheaper the water can be sold.

Mayor Protem Williams stated that it hadn't been too long that he went over the whole county and there was still people in the county using outdoor plumbing. For 2022 that was like a slap in the face. Where there is a density of people the service can be offered cheaper. However, that leaves out the people on the outreach and the rural part of our county has always been on the outreach. Unless we work together a few people will have it good for a while but then eventually everybody

will sink to the bottom. He stated that everybody needs to work together to benefit everyone. He is excited that our little town can help others.

Commissioner Biggs is glad that everyone is on the same page and has the same vision to get there.

Commissioner Ayers appreciates the efforts of coming together and meeting. It's obvious that the town has done their homework on how to get the grants. He is very impressed with the hard work and appreciate the willingness to come in and help your neighbors.

Commissioner Gurganus congratulated Jamesville and said that you folks have worked hard. He has spent 28-29 years of his life in Jamesville and the residents took him in and treated him like he belonged there which comes with much appreciation. He is very excited. You get a varied response when people start talking about water in Martin County. They vary from some think it's good and other think it's not. He feels that the citizens don't have confidence in the system. He doesn't know much about the water system and trust the other board members to do what is best for the county. He is hoping that everyone working together will instill the confidence in the end user.

Manager Bennett stated that he had heard of the award that Jamesville received and thinks its awesome. He stated that everyone can communicate with Linda Culpepper on August 9<sup>th</sup>.

Chairman Smith mentioned that things just don't happen that there is a lot of work that goes into it all. He wanted to thank the federal and state administrations for their assistance. He has received some schooling on how the scoring works for the grants. The need has always been there. It's the right combination of events along with prayer that makes things happen. Out of 369 counties in NC, 89% of them are rural. Rural areas across the United States have been left out. NC is blessed to have the LGC and UNC SOG to provide resources to help out. We need to move forward with continuing to help each other out so everyone will benefit.

Commissioner Cockrell shared that a citizen inquired about the federal money that Butterfield presented and questioned where is what being allocated?

Manager Bennett stated that the money will be to help District 1 and District 2 improve the line to transmit water. The goal was to close a loop with additional funding. The next round of applications will be submitted in the fall.

Chairman Smith stated that the Butterfield money has not yet been received. The federal government has it in their budget but the county doesn't know when it will be received. The money will be used to close a loop between District 1 and District 2 so there will be no stagnation in the system.

Manager Bennett stated that the Piney woods and Darden's area will be included in the next application for additional funding.

Mayor Tucker asked if there is a plan for funding or potential timeframe for District 3?

Chairman Smith mentioned that it all depends on the next round of funding.

Manager Bennett included that if we don't get funded this next round then we will reapply. There will be workshop on August 16<sup>th</sup> with NCDEQ to give application guidance.

Mayor Tucker asked if they could email the town with the information.

Commissioner Craddock stated that all of the emails need to come to the town's main email address instead of individuals. That way all individuals are notified not just one or two. She stated that has been a problem in the past with the county. Emails have gone to individuals and not forwarded to everyone. We are asking for all correspondence go through the main email address and then it will be forward out from there. The office was not getting a copy of the correspondence for the town.

Chairman Smith stated that all emails goes to Manager Bennett and Clerk Rease.

Commissioner Cockrell inquired if there was an update on the merger/regionalization project?

Manager Bennett mentioned that it is referred as a partnership instead of merger. Linda Culpepper stated that all districts/towns will come together and talk about how it may be able to work.

Commissioner Williams said that he has a chemical engineering degree and is willing to help in any way that he can.

Commissioner Tolson inquired on why some people can get natural gas but others can't?

Chairman Smith stated that if natural gas runs by your house and it was not designated to a particular industry then you can get it. If there are citizens that have it running by their property then they need to inquire as to what it would take to tap on to it. If it's running on the other side of the road there may be a cost to run it under the road.

Commissioner Craddock stated that if everyone on a street would sign up then it wouldn't be a problem with running the lines. Not every street will have enough potential customers to justify the cost of running the lines.

Commissioner Williams stated that it is supply and demand. Everyone needs to come together and use that leverage to get services that we need.

Mayor Tucker mentioned that he has been into the Martin County Innovation Center and stated how amazing the facility was. He continued inviting the County Commissioners to a parade for the Jamesville 14U Softball team. The parade will be on Friday at 5pm lining up at NERSBA and going to the ball park. This will show support for the Jamesville girls that are the 14U World Series Babe Ruth Softball Champions.

Manager Bennett mentioned that they would be inviting the team to the September meeting.

Chairman Smith stated that the NERSBA school is a gold mine. Commissioner Bonds was involved in bring the school to Martin County from Roper. His son graduated from there few years ago and is now in dentistry. He has a grandson that graduated from there and went into college as a junior. Jamesville has the only early college in Martin County.

Mayor Tucker piggy backed off of Chairman Smith that he would like to see them partner with NCSU and use the old Coats and Clark building to have a hydroponics class with Aqua ponds. They could raise their own produce with fruits and vegetables and sell it to the general public like a farmer's market. This could be a project for the students. They could use the large field to plant the crops.

Manager Bennett stated that they had sent out letters to all of the towns requesting letters of support for broadband. They will be meeting with a broadband provider the next day. Any support that they can provide to the state is appreciated.

Mayor Tucker inquired if the company would offer a better package if they had all of the towns on board?

Chairman Smith said they had been putting pressure on the state legislatures requesting permission for the counties to pick out the best provider for their county. They will have to partner with other counties to benefit everyone. They look at details like cost per mile, cost per customer. They may end up with a provider that doesn't benefit the majority of the citizens but rather a cluster of citizens. That is what the broadband support letters going to the legislators are for. If we are buying a product, at least allow us to buy a product that we want and that the majority of people can benefit from.

Commissioner Craddock mentioned that she had heard that over in the Oak City and Hamilton areas that individuals had to go down the road to obtain signal to even use their phones. She also stated that individuals were having problems getting mail delivered to their homes.

Commissioner Gurganus stated that with broadband and cell phone service they are about all in the same. One reason the county has such poor cell phone reception is due to all towers being required to be tied into fiber optic cables for it to work. We don't have much fiber optic cables in the county. There is some availability to schools and municipalities but once you are about a mile outside of the city limits you have nothing. This broadband is so important to reach the underserved citizens in the county. Once the county has fiber optic established then they can erect towers. We are all in one accord and fighting to get it done.

## **V. Board Comments**

1. None

## **VI. Adjourn**

Commissioner Larris Tolson moved to adjourn at 7:27 p.m. A second was given by Commissioner Mary Allen. Motion unanimously passed. 5 Ayes – 0 Nays.

Respectfully submitted by:  
Kimberly Cockrell,  
Town Clerk/Finance Officer