



County of Dare

P.O. Box 1000 | Manteo, NC 27954

MINUTES

DARE COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS MEETING

Dare County Administration Building, Manteo, NC

9:00 a.m., May 7th, 2024

Commissioners present: Chairman Robert Woodard, Sr., Vice Chairman Wally Overman
Rob Ross, Steve House, Bea Basnight, Danny Couch, Ervin
Bateman

Commissioners absent: None

Others present: County Manager/Attorney, Robert Outten
Deputy County Manager/Finance Director, David Clawson
Master Public Information Officer, Dorothy Hester
Clerk, Skyler Foley

A full and complete account of the entire Board of Commissioners meeting is archived on a video that is available for viewing on the Dare County website www.darenc.gov.

At 9:01 a.m. Chairman Woodard called to order the regularly scheduled meeting with appropriate prior public notice having been given. He invited Rev. George Lurie to share a prayer, and then he led the Pledge of Allegiance to the flag.

The Chairman recognized members from the Board of Education, Chairman David Twiddy, Susan Bothwell, Mary Ellon Ballance, Ron Payne and Superintendent Basnight. He also recognized Town of Manteo Mayor Sherry Wickstrom, and Town of Kill Devil Hills Commissioner Ivy Ingram. Lastly, he recognized the Director of the Community Foundation, Chris Sawin.

ITEM 1 – OPENING REMARKS – CHAIRMAN’S UPDATE

Following is a brief outline of the items mentioned by Chairman Woodard:

- The Chairman reported that he feels that his recent trip to Washington D.C. with the Vice-Chairman, Commissioner Couch, and the County Manager to discuss the petroleum issue in Buxton with the staff of Senator Budd and Senator Tillis made progress. Superintendent Dave Hallac had been working with the Army Corps of Engineers out of Savannah for almost eight months without much progress. However, following the trip to D.C., the U.S. Army Corps Savannah District Leadership visited the site with representatives from the National Park Service on May 1st and later met with himself, the Vice-Chairman, County Manager, and Dr. Sheila Davies. The Chairman expressed confidence in the Army Corps' sincerity and willingness to expedite the evaluation process. They have already awarded a contract for the evaluation to begin sooner than originally planned and have committed to being more transparent by providing public announcements and holding a public

meeting at the Fessenden Center on May 14th or May 21st. (There was a consensus to meet on May 14th.) He further explained that despite the fact that there is infrastructure still in place, the FUDS program does not provide funding for its removal, they only address contaminants. He reported that Col. Sturgeon is collaborating with other agencies to determine who can address the infrastructure issue and even though progress has been made, there is still work to be done to mitigate the infrastructure problem. The DEQ has issued a strong statement to the Corps. He emphasized that it is encouraging that the contract is being expedited, and it is important to resolve this issue as soon as possible.

ITEM 2 – PRESENTATION OF COUNTY SERVICE PINS

- 1) Misty Parnell, received a 10-year pin.
- 2) Stephen Allen, received a 10-year pin.
- 3) Kimberly Atwell Rusk, received a 15-year pin.

ITEM 3 – EMPLOYEE OF THE MONTH – MAY 2024

Captain Stephen Burritt received the Employee of the Month award from Jennie Collins who described the many ways that he is an asset to the EMS Department.

ITEM 4 – PUBLIC COMMENTS

At 9:25 a.m. the Manager outlined the procedure for making public comments in Manteo and via the video link to the Fessenden Center Annex in Buxton. Following is a summary of all citizen remarks, which may be viewed in their entirety in a video on the County website:

The following comments were made in Manteo:

1. Debbie Swick proposed a ban on the release of helium balloons in North Carolina and is seeking the support of the Board of Commissioners. She emphasized the importance of considering the impact on wildlife in this process, as balloons can travel up to 13,000 miles and last over 100 years in the environment. She suggested that this issue be added to the next agenda for consideration.
2. Carla Heppert, from the Children and Youth Partnership, announced that the 15th Annual Child Fest on Roanoke Island will take place on May 10th at Festival Park. This event, which initially began as a simple picnic has grown significantly. She noted that there are over 60 exhibitors participating, and the festival aims to offer a variety of free activities for children. She stated that Kids Fest truly embodies the spirit of community in Dare County and is a wonderful opportunity to celebrate and honor our young children.
3. Heather Jennette, representing the Buxton Civic Association, expressed gratitude to the Board for their dedication to the issue at hand and hopes that the Buxton Civic Association can share some of that credit for getting the momentum going. She challenged a few things about FUDS, and stated that their website currently states that their responsibilities include, but are not limited to, cleaning up hazardous toxic and radioactive waste sites, removing munitions and explosives of concern, and munitions constituents and doing building demolition and debris removal. She stated that from their viewpoint that they are responsible for more than just removing one piece of pipe. They feel that there have been years of intentional misdirection from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers in an attempt to deny responsibility. They have

attempted to refute the designation of the site as a FUDS and made claims that the current site is a result of natural force and erosion rather than gross negligence. She asked for the BOC to assist them in keeping the momentum going and to help expedite a solution to these hazards which have the potential to really devastate the community. Chairman Woodard reiterated that the BOC remains committed to addressing this issue without relenting.

4. Scott Hobbs provided an update on Camp Emanuel in Colington, a facility that will be used for recreation, dining, and community outreach. The first phase of construction has been completed, and the second phase is currently in progress. The third phase will involve finishing the interior of the facility. Hobbs invited everyone to come and see the progress that has been made and shared his hope that the facility will be completed by the following summer.
5. Aida Havel stated her pride in the achievements of the Buxton Civic Association in a short period of time. She emphasized that their cause is her cause and supports everything Heather Jennette had previously stated. Havel appreciated her questions being sent to the Army Corps of Engineers and hoped it played a part in their presence. She encouraged everyone to continue putting pressure on the Corps, as they have agreed to potentially remove one pipe and whatever it is attached to, it is clear that more action is needed. Havel stressed the importance of maintaining pressure while the Corps is attentive to the issue. She further discussed the housing issue and mentioned that two citizens had informed her about available land within the county. She suggested that the county should consider purchasing the 14 acres in Rodanthe where the abandoned water park sits and beginning development there.

The following comments were made in Buxton:

6. Susan Sigmon mentioned that she is a property owner in Buxton, NC on Cottage Ave. She expressed her concern as a rental property owner and expressed her gratitude for Commissioner Couch and Buxton Civic Association. She praised the passionate individuals in the Civic Association and National Park Service Superintendent Dave Hallac for their efforts. She highlighted the Army Corps of Engineers' first step in indicating pipe removal and emphasized the need for full remediation of the area rather than just removing the pipe. She urged the community to advocate for nothing less than full remediation of the affected area.

The County Manager closed Public Comments at 9:53 a.m.

ITEM 5 GOVERNOR'S AWARDS FOR VOLUNTEER SERVICE

Shannon Glaser presented the following individuals with the North Carolina Governor's Service Award: Susan Lee, Lisa Minerich, Colette Mainardi, Paul & Cathy Lesiewicz, Lee Goldman, Karen DeBellis, Ginny Flowers, and Marvin Parker. Deborah Swick was recognized as a Medallion Winner, Glaser noted that it is the highest honor in NC.

ITEM 6 – DARE ARTS CELEBRATES 50 YEARS ON THE OUTER BANKS IN 2025

Jessica Sands, the Executive Director of Dare Arts, discussed the organization's mission of promoting the Arts through advocacy, enrichment, and opportunity. She provided an in-depth

overview of the history of the organization, its key accomplishments and missions, and shared details about the plans for the upcoming 50th Anniversary Celebration in 2025.

ITEM 7 – PROCLAMATION – EMS WEEK MAY 19th-25th

Chief Jennie Collins expressed her gratitude to the Board for their support of the EMS Department. She highlighted the importance of their recognition and appreciation for the hard work carried out by the department.

MOTION

Commissioner House motioned to adopt the Proclamation naming May 19th-25th as EMS Week in Dare County.

Commissioner Bateman seconded the motion.

VOTE: AYES unanimous

ITEM 8 – PROCLAMATION – OLDER AMERICAN'S MONTH 2024

Every May, the Administration for Community Living (ACL) leads the celebration of Older American's Month (OAM). This year's theme, "Powered by Connection," focuses on the profound impact that meaningful connections have on the well-being and health of older adults — a relationship underscored by the U.S. Surgeon General's Advisory on the Healing Effects of Social Connection and Community.

MOTION

Vice-Chairman motioned to adopt the proclamation declaring May as Older American's Month 2024.

Commissioner House seconded the motion.

VOTE: AYES unanimous

ITEM 9 – PROCLAMATION – JUNE 15TH TO BE NAMED AS WORLD ELDERS ABUSE AWARENESS DAY

Every year on June 15, World Elder Abuse Awareness Day (WEAAD) is commemorated in America and worldwide. Through WEAAD, awareness is raised about the millions of older adults who experience elder abuse, neglect, and financial exploitation.

MOTION

Vice-Chairman Overman motioned to adopt the Proclamation declaring June 15th to be named as World Elders Abuse Awareness Day.

Commissioner Basnight seconded the motion.

VOTE: AYES unanimous

The Board Recessed at 10:27 a.m., they reconvened at 10:48 a.m.

ITEM 10 – DHHS – PUBLIC HEALTH OPIOID SETTLEMENT FUNDS PROPOSAL PLAN FOR FY2025

Roxanna Ballinger recognized that May 7th was National Fentanyl Awareness Day. She then gave a presentation on the Public Health Opioid Settlement Plan. She discussed the following: the \$26 billion-dollar agreement reached in July 2021; the \$750 million allocated to North Carolina Local Governments; that North Carolina developed a Memorandum of Agreement to address treatment, recovery support, and harm reduction with the opioid settlement fund; and that Dare County is expected to receive around \$6.2 million over an 18-year period. The presentation also covered stakeholder survey details, responses to local substance use disorder treatment programs, social determinants of health, naloxone and

fentanyl test kits, Dare County Detention Center Services, and feedback and general comments from the survey.

She proceeded to explain the FY2025 Settlement Plan, which included \$68,000 allocated for the Peer Support Specialist, \$75,000 for the Recovery Court Case Manager, \$100,000 for Naloxone and Test Strips for Community Distribution, \$12,000 for Social Determinants of Health, \$50,000 for Linkage to Care, and \$65,000 for Community Initiatives.

MOTION

Commissioner Bateman motioned to approve the Opioid Settlement Plan.

Vice-Chairman Overman seconded the motion.

VOTE: AYES unanimous

The Chairman asked for a motion to amend the agenda to move Item 15 & 16 ahead of Item 11.

MOTION

Commissioner Ross motioned to approve the amended agenda.

Vice-Chairman Overman seconded the motion.

VOTE: AYES unanimous

ITEM 15 – CAPITAL PROJECT ORDINANCE FOR DARE COUNTY SCHOOLS EARLY COLLEGE

Mr. Clawson explained to the Board that the Capital Project Ordinance is in place to approve the architectural contract for Oakley Collier. Their set percentage fee will be based on the existing contract the county has with them for projects and services. The source of funds for this project will come from a future bond issue, likely in 2025, depending on the design time. In summary, the revenue side will be bond proceeds and the expense side will be the architectural contract.

MOTION

Commissioner Ross motioned to adopt the Capital Project Ordinance for Dare County Schools Early College.

Commissioner Couch seconded the motion.

Mr. Outten clarified that by establishing a project ordinance, we can allocate revenue and use funds from it. Simply approving the ordinance does not authorize spending; there is an additional step required before any funds can be used.

VOTE: AYES unanimous

ITEM 16 – EARLY COLLEGE PREP DESIGN CONTRACT

A full account of the Board's discussion and action on this item is archived on a video that is available for viewing on the Dare County website. Following is a brief synopsis –

Mr. Outten explained that the contract is with Oakley Collier, which will allow them to do the design service. He noted that it is a standard contract and there is nothing different than the contracts that have been done with them prior. He emphasized that the contract time is important because if an Early College is going to be done and we are going to do it on the schedule that was discussed at the CIPC meetings, then Oakley Collier has to start now so they can have it ready to go and get everything built by 2026 school year.

Mr. Outten stated that in the CIPC meeting, discussions took place with Superintendent Basnight and members of the School Board about needs of Dare County Schools. At the time, the Board of Commissioners concern was that if the \$25 million was spent for the Early College that it would use up all the capital funds until the 2027/2028-time frame (FY 28.) This indicates that it would be at least three to four years before we can start working on new projects, as we would have utilized all the available funds from the lottery and sales tax designated for schools. Outten mentioned that the schools had indicated that there were no additional projects requiring funding at this time and based on that information, the BOC proceeded with the Early College. However, confusion has risen due to a month or two later, they were presented with a longer-term capital plan including approximately \$29 million worth of capital items.

Superintendent Basnight spoke to the Board about the history on his understanding of the Early College program, emphasizing that it is not a new concept but rather something that was discussed prior to him being hired as Superintendent. He explained that the administration has been transparent throughout the process, including the visit at the Twiford Building with county officials to assess its potential for renovation. After consulting with an architect, it was determined that one building was usable while the other would need to be demolished, with a total estimated cost of \$17 million. In considering the best use of funds, discussions on the possibility of constructing a new building on the COA campus were held, which had an estimated cost of \$21 million. This led to further discussions about the potential benefits of placing it on the COA campus. Basnight noted that all of these details have been shared publicly.

He went on to explain that they did not include the Early College in a Capital Improvement Plan Discussion, it was not a plan tied to the schools CIP in Dare County. He explained that they thought that the use of education lottery funding, which is designated for school construction, was separate from the ongoing needs outlined in the Capital Improvement Plan. Typically, the proposed CIP aims to allocate around \$2 million annually, but this year's budget of \$29 million is an exception. This increase was due to the realization that funds earmarked for First Flight School would be depleted, providing access to additional funds. The \$29 million allocation was not expected to be spent in one year, but rather spread out over time. Items listed beyond the next year in the CIP are subject to change and may be adjusted in the future.

Outten explained that the Board of Commissioners had approved a Capital Improvement Project Plan (CIP) for the schools last year, but some items on the priority list were not included in that CIP. He emphasized the importance of the BOC being aware of all items on the list so they could plan accordingly and avoid any misunderstandings. The list presented was a placeholder for the 2026-2027 year, but not a concrete timeline for completion. The Superintendent provided a detailed overview of the school CIP Priority List, which included projects such as the renovation of the CHSS Cafeteria, upgrades to the MHS Athletic Complex, expansions at FFHS, CHES, FFMS, and FFES, improvements to the MHS Home Locker Room and lighting upgrades. Additionally, the list included projects related to maintenance and transportation, such as Run Hill or Lot Storage. Mr. Outten clarified that the school CIP is initiated by the Board of Education, who then work with the county to determine

funding and timelines for the projects. The county does not make decisions for the schools in this regard.

The Superintendent made it clear that there will be no discussion about closing Manteo High School under his leadership. When asked about the number of students at Manteo High, he stated that there are approximately 500 students. The Chairman then asked about having enough teachers, to which the Superintendent explained that they are not increasing or reducing the number of students in any of the schools, in which you do not lose any teachers by doing that. It is the same number of students just in a different location. The Superintendent emphasized that they are evaluating their actions and reasons behind them. He clarified the misinformation regarding AP classes being eliminated, explaining that while the number of sections may be reduced, the classes themselves will still be offered. By consolidating sections, teachers may have the opportunity to teach additional classes. The Early College program is not closing schools or reducing class options, but rather providing students with another educational option.

The Superintendent explained his interpretation of a CIP, emphasizing that anything beyond the next year is for planning purposes and subject to change. Unexpected issues may arise that require immediate attention, so priorities may shift accordingly. The goal is to create a plan outlining priority for the next two years. Regular evaluations of facilities and programs are conducted to ensure that all resources are used effectively to benefit students in Dare County Schools.

Chairman Woodard inquired with the Superintendent about whether the Early College is the primary focus of the Board of Education. The Superintendent confirmed that based on his understanding, it is indeed a priority for the Board. Board of Education Chairman, David Twiddy, then spoke to the Board, mentioning that the Early College had been a topic of discussion for several years and provided some background on its origins.

Outten explained that the Early College program was brought to them by the previous administration. They had meetings to discuss if they could implement it and what the costs and details would be. The Superintendent and Outten have been in frequent conversations to ensure everyone is aligned on the plan. There are two sources of funds available for school construction - lottery proceeds and a portion of the sales tax designated for schools. These funds can only be used for construction and have a total capacity of around \$25 million currently. Once this is spent, there will not be additional capacity until approximately 2028, when another \$29-\$30 million will be available. The question now is what the Board of Education would like to do with these restricted funds. Outten provided additional details, stating that they had met with the architects around three weeks ago and determined that the estimated cost would be approximately \$23 million. This means there is still about \$2 million available in the fund. \$23 million is designated for the Early College project, while around \$2 million could be allocated for the Manteo Field House. The Board of Education already has \$400,000 set aside for the Field House, which has an estimated cost of \$900,000. In 2028, additional funding will become available for other priority projects on the list, to be determined by the school board. Chairman Woodard asked if the School Board agreed with this plan, to which Chairman Twiddy replied affirmatively. Outten added that the School Board had previously indicated that the remaining priority items could be addressed in FY28.

Commissioner Basnight explained that the idea for the Early College originated during her time as Chairman of the School Board. The plan was always to utilize the old Twiford Campus rather than constructing a new building. She mentioned concerns voiced by community members and inquired about whether a survey had been conducted to gauge community interest in the Early College program. Superintendent Basnight clarified that they have not yet polled the community or students, as their focus is currently on educating the community about what the Early College program entails. He noted that misinformation may affect the results of any potential polls. He emphasized that attendance at the Early College is not mandatory, as students have the option to choose their educational path at the end of their 8th-grade year. The Superintendent highlighted the success of the Early College model in other areas and expressed confidence that Dare County would see similar results. He emphasized the importance of providing students with a variety of educational opportunities, whether they choose to pursue a traditional four-year college, a career, military service, honors courses, AP courses, dual enrollment, or the Early College program.

Commissioner Ross asked if Dare County was the first district in North Carolina to implement an Early College program. The Superintendent responded that the county was actually behind, as 100 out of the 117 school districts in the state already have at least one Early College. Commissioner Ross then expressed concern about whether more advanced students would be taken away from high schools, leaving behind those who may not be as academically strong. The Superintendent assured that while some Early Colleges are focused on specific industries, the Early College in Dare County will be open to all students.

Commissioner Basnight expressed concern over the overcrowding at FFHS, which is currently at 113% capacity and emphasized the need for new classrooms to be built at the school. Mr. Outten suggested that if funds are available in 2028, the process could begin now. Clawson explained that there is a design time to consider, but once approved, the debt could be issued from March to June, with construction potentially starting in 2027. The Superintendent mentioned that the enrollment from FFHS at the Early College program could help reduce the student population. The discussion also touched upon funding and ideas for the MHS Athletic Complex. Outten mentioned that if everything goes smoothly, both the MHS Athletic Complex and the Early College could be constructed. However, if costs increase significantly as they did in previous years, they may need to reconsider due to limited funds.

The Vice-Chairman asked the Superintendent about the future student population in Dare County. The Superintendent mentioned that they currently have slightly fewer than 5,000 students and that number has remained stable for some time. He also noted that there are not many young families moving into the area. The Vice-Chairman and County Manager have talked about this issue, particularly regarding housing affordability for young families. They discussed the possibility of using a demographic test to predict future student numbers, to which the Superintendent mentioned that there are companies capable of providing such projections. The Superintendent addressed the issue of teacher housing, explaining that teachers are currently unable to move into the area and apply to live in Dare County, but despite this restriction, three teachers have expressed interest in working at the Early College and have reached out to him. Chairman Twiddy pointed out that the Department of Public Instruction distributes funding each year according to the number of students. During his eight years on the School Board, the figures have frequently changed, sometimes surpassing

the estimate by 200 students and other times falling short by the same number. When the student population is lower than anticipated, it typically takes around nine months to receive the required funding from the state.

The Superintendent discussed teachers and housing and that teachers cannot move here and apply and live in Dare County, but right now he has already had three teachers reach out to him that they want to be considered for a job at the Early College. Chairman Twiddy stated that the Department of Public Instruction does their funding every year and they give us a base number of our student population and with his eight years on the School Board the numbers have not been close. Some years they have gone way over by 200 kids, and other 200 kids behind. When we have the less number, it takes about nine months to get the funding from the state.

The cafeteria flooding in Hatteras was discussed, as well as potential short-term solutions to alleviate the issue temporarily. Chairman Twiddy noted that despite preparation efforts before storms, the cafeteria has experienced flooding multiple times. The discussions also touched upon drainage problems, the expenses associated with sandbags, and the costs of addressing mold and mildew. Additionally, there was a conversation about how students would be accommodated during flooding events or during renovation, with the proposal of secondary students utilizing the elementary school's cafeteria or having outdoor picnics on pleasant days.

Commissioner Ross exited the room at 11:25 a.m., he returned at 11:27.

Chairman Woodard confirmed that the top priority for the Board of Education is the Early College, and they plan to acquire the necessary funds from the State Education Lottery fund, which amounts to \$25 million. Outten clarified that the county will borrow the money and use the lottery fund to cover the debt service. Additionally, the architects estimated the Early College project to cost around \$23 million, with any remaining funds going towards the Manteo High School field house/Locker Room. The other capital improvement plan (CIP) priorities will be addressed in 2028. Chairman Twiddy expressed his agreement with the plan.

MOTION

Commissioner Ross motioned to approve the Early College Prep Design Contract with Oakley Collier.

Vice-Chairman Overman seconded the motion.

VOTE: AYES unanimous

Chairman Woodard exited at 11:31 a.m., he returned at 11:34 a.m.

ITEM 11 – ALLIANCE HEALTH CONTRACT AGREEMENT - EMS

Outten explained that these agreements have been done previously and stated that the state had negotiated with Medicaid to do Medicaid reimbursements and if someone is on Medicaid they get to select their provider. It was clarified that in order to receive Medicaid reimbursements, it is mandatory to enter into these contracts, which are set terms and cannot be altered. Declining to sign the contract is an option, but it results in non-payment if a patient has Alliance as their provider. Additionally, Outten indicated that similar contracts will be pursued in the future, proposing that the Board authorize him to sign such non-negotiable contracts for Medicare without the need for further approval to expedite the process.

MOTION

Commissioner Ross motioned to approve the Alliance Health Contract. Commissioner Bateman seconded the motion.

Commissioner House asked if the contracts can be put on the consent agenda, Outten responded yes.

VOTE: AYES unanimous

ITEM 12 – REQUEST FROM HOUSING TASK FORCE – AFFORDABLE HOUSING GRANT

Outten explained that the Housing Task Force has requested to put on hold any actions to return the \$35 million grant while they work on developing a plan that is acceptable to Dare County and its towns. The Task Force has held multiple meetings with involvement from the legislative delegation, during which they were advised that if they wish to repurpose the funds, they must do so quickly and with a detailed plan in place. Last week, the technical corrections bill was proposed, repealing all grant language related to affordable housing for Dare County, including House Bill 259. This means that the Task Force no longer has the authority to use the funds and must return them by the end of the fiscal year.

Chairman Woodard stated the importance of fulfilling the Housing Task Force's request to submit a proposal to the legislature. However, given the current circumstances, it seems like a moot issue. Outten mentioned an email he had received from Housing Task Force Chair Donna Creef, indicating that the request may not be needed based off the language in the Technical Corrections Bill, he noted that this email had been sent to all Task Force members. Outten stated that his suggestion was to sit on the money as long as they can to see if anything happens, but once the Governor signs the bill it becomes law.

The Board recessed at 12:40 p.m., they reconvened at 12:49 p.m.

ITEM 13 – PRESENTATION OF MANAGERS FISCAL YEAR 2025 RECOMMENDED BUDGET (Att. 1)

A full and complete account of this agenda item is archived on a video that is available for viewing on the Dare County website www.darenc.com.

Outten gave a presentation on the 2025 Manager's Recommended Budget. He explained that the total budget for the fiscal year 2024-2025 is \$229,647,467, with the General Fund being \$136,171,205 funded by ad valorem taxes. The remaining amount is allocated to the water and sanitation funds, which are supported by generated fees. The budget meets the requirements of the NC Local Government Budget and Fiscal Control Act and reflects the priorities and guidance of the Board of Commissioners. Outten also outlined the purpose and goals of the county's annual budget process.

He highlighted that there are no general fund property tax increases and emphasized the continued delivery of high-quality services to citizens, property owners, and visitors. He went on to outline the key areas of expenditure increases, including \$2,112,176 for a 4% Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA), \$2,497,418 for DCS local current expense, \$444,700 for a 5% rise in health insurance costs, \$438,764 for new positions, \$240,841 for Information Technology Operation Costs, and \$161,166 for insurance premium increases for property liability and workers' compensation. Additionally, he pointed out that the tax base had grown to a taxable value of \$17.7 billion, with a collection rate of 99.68%, and discussed sales and occupancy

tax matters. He clarified that Dare County's tax rate of 40.05 cents stood as the 10th lowest property tax rate overall, with an adjusted effective tax rate of 25.30 cents for 2024, ranking it as the fourth lowest when adjusted for sales to assessment ratios. He also mentioned that the 2025 appropriated fund balance is \$3,921,293 (2.88%) which falls within the Board's established policy of maintaining a fund balance of 3% or less.

Outten then reviewed expenditures for non-profits, the 2025 Capital Investment Fund, Disaster Recovery Fund, E911 Fund, Beach Nourishment Fund, Sanitation Fund, Water Fund, Insurance Fund, Fleet Maintenance Fund. He announced that the Water CIP will be presented to the Board on June 3rd, and the Capital Plan, once approved, will be included in the final budget document.

Lastly, he stated that three Volunteer Fire Departments have requested rate increases as follows: - The Rodanthe, Waves, Salvo Volunteer Fire Department is requesting an increase of 2 cents, from \$0.0755 to \$0.0955. - The Southern Shores Fire Department is requesting an increase of 0.39 cents, from \$0.0484 to \$0.0523. - The Roanoke Island Fire Department is requesting an increase of 0.55 cents, from \$0.0366 to \$0.0421. Elaine Hooper spoke on behalf of the RWSVFD, Chief Limbacher spoke on behalf of the SSVFD, and Radcliff Hester spoke on behalf of the RIVFD.

MOTION

Commissioner House motioned to schedule a Public Hearing for June 3rd, 2024.

Commissioner Couch seconded the motion.

VOTE: AYES unanimous

ITEM 14 – AMENDMENTS TO CAPITAL PROJECT ORDINANCES FOR EMS PROJECTS PHASE 1 & 2 (SERIES 2024 LOBs & SERIES 2023A LOBs)

Clawson informed the Board will need to adopt a Capital Project Ordinance Amendment for the 2023 projects. He stated that the estimates have been updated with Barnhill again and there is a plan to increase the savings by \$245,000. The original estimate of \$830,000 would increase to a total of \$1,075,000, which will now be available for the 2024 projects. Additionally, it was initially anticipated to use \$125,000 of interest income over budget, so the total amount that will be redirected from the 2023 projects and bond issues towards the 2024 projects is now \$1.2 million.

He then informed the Board that an amendment for the 2024 projects is needed due to budgeting sales tax in the budget for all three projects has actually reduced the total. The only increase in expenses is the addition of \$106,290 to cover the cost of painting the Manns Harbor Volunteer Fire Department and community building, as well as replacing and upgrading the overhead doors of the fire department with the same type used on the EMS Station. The overall decrease in project expenses amounts to \$71,932. There have also been changes on the revenue side, with a reduction in debt proceeds by \$3.2 million and an increase in the original premium issued by \$2,666,000.

MOTION

Vice-Chairman Overman motioned to approve the amendments to the Series 2023A LOBs Capital Project Ordinance and to the Series 2024 LOBs Capital Project Ordinance.

Commissioner Basnight seconded the motion.

VOTE: AYES unanimous

Clawson noted that Dare County received an Aa1 rating by Moody's Rating.

Dave Clawson left the meeting at 1:39 p.m.

ITEM 17– CONSENT AGENDA

The Manager announced the items as they were visually displayed in the meeting room.

MOTION

Commissioner House & Commissioner Couch motioned to approve the Consent Agenda.

- 1) Approval of Minutes (04.02.24 & 04.09.24) **(Att. #2)**
- 2) Tax Collector's Report
- 3) Budget Amendment – 911 Board PSAP Grant
- 4) Budget Amendment – Oregon Inlet Administration
- 5) Budget Amendment – Baum Center
- 6) Budget Amendment – Sanitation Department
- 7) Grant Certification – No Overdue Tax Debts **(Att. #3)**
- 8) DHHS – Public Health – ARHC Mini Grant
- 9) Motorola Service Agreement – Sheriff
- 10) Dropcounter Subscription for Water Use Customer Portal
- 11) Cape Hatteras Electric Cooperative Contract for Burrus Field
- 12) Systel Business Equipment Co., Statement of Work
- 13) NC Governor's Highway Safety Program – Local Government Resolution (Personnel Overtime) **(Att. #4)**
- 14) NC Governor's Highway Safety Program – Local Government Resolution (Law Enforcement Liaison) **(Att. #5)**

Vice-Chairman Overman seconded the motion.

Commissioner Ross stated that he submitted minor typographical corrections that were accepted by the Clerk, they do not change the content and requested that the motion include those amendments. The makers of the motion agreed to the amendment.

VOTE: AYES unanimous

ITEM 18 – BOARD APPOINTMENTS

- 1) Stumpy Point Community Center Board
Postponed to a later date.

- 2) Veterans Advisory Council

Vice-Chairman Overman motioned to reappoint Dr. Kevin Wallace and Justin O'Sullivan.
Commissioner House seconded the motion.

VOTE: AYES unanimous

The Chairman recommended Christian Hayman to fill the Ex-Officio Seat held by Former Commissioner Jack Shea.

Commissioner House seconded.

VOTE: AYES unanimous

- 3) Zoning Board of Adjustments

Vice-Chairman Overman motioned to reappoint Jay Hart.

Commissioner Couch seconded the motion.

VOTE: AYES unanimous

4) Upcoming Board Appointments

The upcoming Board appointments for June, July and August, 2024 were announced.

ITEM 19 – COMMISSIONERS’ BUSINESS & MANAGER’S/ATTORNEY’S BUSINESS

Following is a brief summary outline of the items mentioned by Commissioners and the County Manager during this segment:

County Manager: None

Public Information Officer Dorothy Hester:

- Gave the three dates for hazardous material pick up events at the Kitty Hawk Town Hall, Buxton Transfer Station, and the Public Works Facility on Roanoke Island.
- Announced that it was Hurricane Preparedness Week and there is a hurricane prep guide on the Dare County Website.
- Reminded everyone about Re-Entry passes.

Commissioner Couch

- Stated the himself and the County Manager have been monitoring a situation with the water line in Buxton, there is no danger currently, but a long-term solution is needed. He received a call from the electric co-op because they are concerned and they have to do an environmental review and it has been delayed. They have asked to start a dialogue with the County Manager and himself. It's important to note that erosion is not just happening on the ocean side, but also on the sound side. He suggested an introductory call with the EVP, Co-op, Park Service, and Avon Property Owners Association to work towards a solution. Outten explained that William Nash has been monitoring this for a while, and there is currently no danger or issues, but this area is eroding. He noted that they have been discussing potential solutions with the Park Service and DOT.

Commissioner Bateman

- Had the opportunity to give the Opening Remarks at the Rod and Custom Car show and explained that the group had donated \$125,000 to support non-profit organizations and the Children and Youth Partnership.
- Participated in the first Suicide Awareness Walk in Dare County and stated there was a good turnout.
- He was pleased to see Sheriff Doughtie's letter on a friend's refrigerator, which praised their child for achieving Honor Roll status.
- Stated that 85% of all individuals incarcerated in the Manteo Detention Center are in there due to substance abuse and the funds allocated from the Opioid Crisis for that purpose are useful.

Vice-Chairman Overman

- Congratulated Service Pins Recipients and the EOM, Captain Stephen Burritt.
- Expressed gratitude to the Governor’s Volunteer Service Award Recipients.

- On April 18th Dr. Steven Lloyd was at Jenette's Pier and did two presentations on substance abuse and mental health. He noted that videos of those presentations will be available shortly.

Commissioner House

- After speaking with numerous constituents about the ban on releasing balloons, he conducted research and held discussions with the Town of Duck. With consensus of the Board, he asked to consult with the County Manager/Attorney to proceed with implementing this ordinance. It is important to note that beginning on April 30th, the Marine Life Protection Act (House Bill 992) proposed the same balloon ban ordinance.
- Our Day in History: In 1867 Alfred Nobel patented dynamite.
- Pet of the Week: Fred, a five-year-old dog, is available for adoption at the OBX SPCA.

Commissioner Ross:

- Thanked the County Manager, Dave Clawson and Sally DeFosse for the Budget Presentation and the extraordinary credit rating.
- The Oregon Inlet Fishing Pier is open, stated that he had dinner at Sea Chef and gave compliments to the staff.
- On Friday May 10th a banquet will be held at Jenette's Pier for the Dare County Shooting Team.

Commissioner Basnight

- Announced that it was Teacher Appreciation Week and gave appreciation to all the teachers and that she is excited that the county is proposing a pay increase for them.
- Stated that she is pleased with the power of our community in regards to the passed proclamations and the presentation from Dare Arts.
- She acknowledged and expressed gratitude to the Parks and Recreation Department for their hard work in preparing for the baseball tournament. Approximately 40 teams participated in the event and she stated that the fields were well-maintained and looked nice. She also mentioned that participants from out of town thoroughly enjoyed coming here for tournaments.
- There was a nice article in the Coastland Times about In regards to the Saving Lives Task Force and stated that the Dare County ABC Board supports alcohol absence education within the schools.
- Wished all mothers a Happy Mother's Day.

Chairman Woodard asked the County Manager what the status at the Baum Center in regards to pickleball. Outten responded that they have hired an engineer and he is designing the facility so we can move forward with permitting.

At the conclusion of the meeting, Chairman Woodard asked for a motion to adjourn.

MOTION

Commissioner House motioned to adjourn the meeting.

Commissioner Couch seconded the motion.

VOTE: AYES unanimous

At 2:09p.m., the Board of Commissioners adjourned until 9:00 a.m., June 3rd, 2024.

Respectfully submitted,



APPROVED:

By: *Skyler Foley*
Skyler Foley, Clerk to the Board

By: *Robert Woodard, Sr.*
Robert Woodard, Sr., Chairman
Dare County Board of Commissioners

Note: Copies of attachments (Att.), ordinances, resolutions, contracts, presentations, and supporting material considered by the Board of Commissioners at this meeting are on file in the office of the Clerk. Attempts have been made to accurately spell each podium speaker.