



# THE RANDOLPH RECAP

JULY 11, 2022

COMMISSIONER MEETING AGENDA SUMMARY

## AGENDA ITEMS:

- Public Comment
- Detention Center Renovations
- Public Health Space Needs Study
- Lancaster Customworks, Inc.
- Historic Courthouse Museum Design Addendum
- Tax Assessor/Collector Yearly Updates and Reappointment
- Human Resources Updates
- Proposed USDA/REMC Loan for Farm, Food, and Family Education Center
- Consider Abolishment Current Fire Protection County Service Districts
- Ambulance Purchase Considerations



Critical issues facing our community and county government have never been greater as we progress in the 3rd decade of the 21st Century. The Randolph County Board of Commissioners holds regular public meetings on the first Monday of each month, beginning at 6:00 pm, in the 2nd Floor Meeting Room at the Historic Courthouse, 145 Worth Street, Asheboro, N.C. At each meeting, issues impacting our county and citizens are presented and evaluated by the County Commissioners.

Randolph County government is committed to providing citizens with the opportunity to access information and obtain the latest news and public updates regarding the county and its government. The Randolph Recap is a new addition to the Randolph County web page. It will provide monthly highlights and summaries from County Commissioner meetings. It will also highlight information on current issues facing the County Commissioners and the Departments and agencies of Randolph County government. The Randolph-Recap will serve as one of the various communication outlets, including Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and print media, that will update and communicate with our Randolph County citizens.

We hope the Randolph Recap is helpful to you and would appreciate your input and comments as we move forward.



**Hal Johnson**  
Randolph County Manager



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### Public Comment

- Jane Ledwell-Gant, Randolph County resident, raised concerns over commissioner's handling of the ongoing issue of the Confederate Statue on the historic courthouse lawn. **"The NAACP has been extremely respectful to this committee. We have not attempted intimidation or threats to anyone. We only ask to be heard. Did you not take an oath to support all members of this community,"** asked Gant?
- Franklin Suggs, Randolph County resident, questioned the true meaning of southern heritage. **"That monument outside celebrates only the heritage descended from men who served in the Confederate Army or otherwise associated with the Confederate cause."** Mr. Suggs said that the Native Americans, Europeans, Quakers, and enslaved Africans, were all integral in contributing to Southern heritage.
- Kevin Price, Randolph County resident, read a biblical scripture from the book of Luke. He then posed a question to commissioners. **"How many of you would like to be treated like black people are in America today,"** asked Mr. Price?

### Detention Center Renovation Project Updates

Recently, the state approved moving forward with Phase 3 of the Randolph County Detention Center Renovation Project. Unfortunately, the contractor (Bordeaux Construction) will need more time than originally anticipated for completion. The need for a timeline extension is due largely to postponing the maintenance building to Phase 4. Bordeaux Construction has also funded multiple expenses from their contingency and requests a change order to replace those funds.

**"We started talking about this project in August of 2016, and we are now six years in and we are still a year out from completion. I know it's an occupied facility, which makes for a challenging work environment with COVID-19 issues. But, we need to get this thing done. We're anxious to get this done,"** said Vice-Chairman Allen.

**"There was a lot of frustration surrounding this project, and I appreciate everyone's patience on all sides of the table. I think everybody has put their heads together and found some dollars, and we aren't having to dip back into another budget allocation thankfully,"** said Commissioner Kidd.

*Commissioners awarded a change order to Bordeaux Construction to add \$322,796 in funds, a four-month time extension to the contract, authorized the County Manager to sign the change order, and approved the associated budget amendment.*



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### Public Health Space Needs Study

Recently, Smith Sinnett Architecture completed a Space Needs Study for the Health Department. The study was conducted to investigate the future needs of the Health Department and assess ways of making the space more efficient.

**“Certainly, to cover the cost of the contract we can use [ARPA] funds. As things develop and we get the bids in we can finalize what the total project scope is going to be and how we are going to pay for it,”** said Will Massie, Assistant County Manager/Finance Director.

**“This is at the point where staff has done the best they can to manage the space. All of our conversations have been devoted towards the citizens of the County. It is focusing money there so they can offer better services to the county. They want to prioritize the services that they offer citizens,”** said Robert Carmac, Architect, Smith Sinnett.

*Commissioners approved an addendum to the contract with Smith-Sinnett to add \$185,000 for the design, bidding, and construction administration, of the Department of Public Health renovation project and authorized the county manager to sign the contract.*

### Lancaster Customworks, Inc.

Lancaster Custom Crafted Upholstery is a high-end upholstery manufacturer in Archdale. The 30+-year-old company has enjoyed multiple consecutive years of growth and has outgrown its current facility. Lancaster is currently considering the construction of a new facility. Two locations are being considered for the new construction project; Archdale and a site in Virginia.

If the Archdale site is selected, the full investment of the project is anticipated to exceed \$5 million in real property and \$731,000 in new mechanical and electrical services. The company will retain its current full-time workforce of 25 employees and plans to create an additional 27 new jobs over five years related to the expansion project. The average annual wage of the new jobs will be at least \$46,000, which exceeds Randolph County’s average annual private-sector wage of \$40,522. The company has requested consideration of local incentives from Archdale and Randolph County to aid in its decision-making process.

Based on incentive calculation equal to 60% of anticipated tax revenue over five years and additional considerations by the City of Archdale, Lancaster is eligible for a total cash incentive from the City of Archdale and Randolph County of up to \$120,700 over five years. Randolph County’s portion of the incentive would be \$79,000, and Archdale’s would be up to \$41,700.

**“We really believe this is a great economic development project. It’s a good project in any community, but what sets this one apart is the opportunity we have as a community to keep a great business here and allow it to grow right here in Randolph County,”** said Kevin Franklin, Director, Randolph County Economic Development.

*Commissioners voted unanimously to approve a resolution authorizing Randolph County to enter into an economic development incentive contract for Lancaster Customworks, Inc.*



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### Historic Courthouse Museum Design Addendum

Last fall, Randolph County Commissioners awarded a contract to Hobbs Architects for design, bidding, and construction administration for the Historic Courthouse Museum. At the County's request, the contractor was asked to include a proposal for replacement of an aged HVAC unit in the design. The survey found that the addition of an elevator would cause an existing catch drainage basin to require relocation, the need for a modified parking area, and the services of a Civil Engineer.

**"I see the wisdom of the work that has been done in this space in that we are able to use it in different capacities. We are very fortunate to have this size space for our people to come. This is a lot cheaper than having to build a space now and it is accessible for our citizens,"** said Commissioner Haywood.

*Commissioners approved an addendum to the contract with Hobb's Architecture to add \$44,950 for designing the replacement of the upstairs HVAC, as well as including civil design to the contract, and authorizing the County Manager to sign the contract.*

### Tax Assessor/Collector Matter

Deborah Hill, Randolph County Tax Administrator, presented the 2021-2022 Annual Tax Settlement Report to the board at the July Commissioners meeting. The overall 2021-2022 collection percentage for all tax districts on real estate, businesses, and individual personal property was 99.24%.

**"99.24% is an amazing amount of percentage of collections. It helps this county tremendously,"** said Commissioner McDowell.

*Commissioners approved a motion to reappoint Deborah Hill as tax assessor and collector for a new four-year term ending July of 2026 and also to charge Deborah Hill to collect the taxes.*

### Human Resources Updates

Human Resources Updates – Jill Williams, Randolph County Human Resources Director, requested the commissioner's approval of the 2022-2023 Randolph County Classification plan to take effect on July 1, 2022. The five tables of the classification plan include; Emergency Services, General Employees, Law Enforcement, Medical, and Tourism Development Authority.

*Commissioners approved the motion to adopt the 2022-2023 Classification Plan as presented.*

*Commissioners also approved the request to reclassify its part-time Office Assistant III position to full-time Elections Program Specialist for the Board of Elections.*





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### Proposed USDA/REMC Loan for Farm, Food, and Family Education Center

Proposed USDA/REMC Loan for Farm, Food, and Family Education Center – During the initial planning phase for the Agricultural Center, Randolph Electric Membership Corporation applied for two USDA Rural Development loans for the project (\$2 million each). One for the arena facility and one for the event center. The County has received approval to move forward using these proceeds for the revised Farm, Food, and Family Education Center. The loans are expected to be repaid to REMC over ten years, with zero percent interest.

**“There is not a more eager partner in the county, maybe the state, than REMC on this project. We have a great partner, and they are very eager to get the ball rolling and start helping in any way they can as soon as possible. Thank you,”** said Commissioner Kidd.

*Commissioners approved a motion to set a public hearing on the proposed debt for an August 1st meeting and approved the submission of applications to the Local Government Commission for both \$2M loans.*

### Consider Abolishment of Current Fire Protection County Service Districts

Several years ago, Randolph County Commissioners created county service districts for fire protection and first responder, rescue, and emergency services. These districts were created with a fifteen-cent cap on the tax rate to mirror the rural fire protection districts they were replacing. Recently, a few of the fire departments servicing these districts indicated the need to request a tax rate above the fifteen-cent cap, and it is expected that others will need to do so in the future. To remove the fifteen-cent tax cap the current districts will need to be abolished and replaced with districts that do not have the cap. Any changes made will become effective July 1, 2023. A public hearing was held, in which no speakers came forward to give comments during the hearing.

**“This is not a tax increase. The same process is still followed. It has to come before the elected body of county commissioners. They have to approve any other requests. The \$1.50 includes any of the other taxes collected, in particular the property tax. The sum or total of all those taxes cannot exceed \$1.50. So, it is not all related to fire tax either. But it puts every fire department here under the same guidelines and same rules of the organization,”** said Chairman Frye

**“To clarify, none of these fire departments that we are talking about tonight have requested anything or an increase in budget,”** said Commissioner Kidd.

- East Side Fire Protection Service District – Commissioners adopted a resolution to set a public hearing on the matter and directing the associate county attorney to oversee the publication of mailing required notices and preparation of required reports for the East Side Fire Department as presented.
- Level Cross Fire Protection Service District - Commissioners adopted a resolution to set a public hearing on the matter and directing the associate county attorney to oversee the publication of mailing required notices and preparation of required reports for Level Cross Fire Department as presented.
- Randleman-Sophia Fire Protection Service District - Commissioners adopted a resolution to set a public hearing on the matter and directing the associate county attorney to oversee the publication of mailing required notices and preparation of required reports for Randleman-Sophia Fire Department as presented.
- Tabernacle Fire Protection Service District - Commissioners adopted a resolution to set a public hearing on the matter and directing the associate county attorney to oversee the publication of mailing required notices and preparation of required reports for Tabernacle Fire Department as presented.



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## Randolph County Emergency Services Ambulance Purchase Considerations

Donovan Davis, Chief, Randolph County Emergency Services, requested the commissioner's approval to purchase two 2022 Ford Ambulances by participating in a competitive group purchasing program. The Houston-Galveston Area Council's competitive bidding program has bid this ambulance type as required for the lowest available pricing. The HGAC contract is at least ten percent cheaper and includes all needed equipment as opposed to other contract options.

The most cost-effective price is \$286,541 per ambulance from Northwestern Emergency Vehicles. The Board discussed the need for two additional replacement ambulances that were not funded in the FY23 Budget. Chief Davis restated the need to catch up on the planned replacement schedule due to the condition of the existing fleet.

*In the Coronavirus Recovery Fund, the board approved a project amendment to move \$1.1 million from qualifying COVID-19 recovery funds to public safety salaries, which will free up General Fund monies for the \$500,000 budgeted public safety merit plan and \$600,000 for the two additional replacement ambulances.*

*The board then approved a motion to purchase four 2022 Ford F450 4x4 Trauma Hawk Type I ambulances from Northwestern Emergency Vehicles Inc., of West Jefferson, NC, for the total amount of \$1,146,164.*