

# ADOPTED

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Gaston County Board  
of Commissioners

GASTON COUNTY

COMMISSIONER'S COURT

NORTH CAROLINA

NOVEMBER 12, 2024

The Gaston County Board of Commissioners (BOC) met in Regular Session at 6:33 pm on November 12, 2024, immediately following its Work Session, in The Harley B. Gaston, Jr. Public Forum, Gaston County Courthouse.

Chairman Chad Brown presided with Commissioners Bob Hovis, Vice-Chairman; Cathy Cloninger, Kim Johnson, Tom Keigher and Ronnie Worley in attendance.

Commissioner Allen R. Fraley was not in attendance.

Others present included Matthew Rhoten, County Manager; David Goldberg, County Attorney; and Donna S. Buff, Clerk to the Board.

Upon request of Chairman Brown, Commissioner Hovis led those assembled in the Invocation and Commissioner Johnson led in the Pledge of Allegiance during the preceding Work Session.

Public Hearing - RE: Commissioner Keigher - EDC - To Authorize a Gaston County Level One Incentive Grant and Approve the Conveyance of 31.62 Acres of Land (Lot 12) at the Apple Creek Business Park Pursuant to N.C.Gen.Stat. 158-7.1; Authorize Gaston County to Enter Into an Economic Development Agreement (EDA) with Project Wine

Chairman Brown announced the Public Hearings as advertised, explained the procedures to be used, and called for the motion to enter into Public Hearings.

On motion introduced by Commissioner Hovis and seconded by Commissioner Keigher, the BOC unanimously entered into Public Hearings.

Chairman Brown introduced Mr. Donny Hicks, Economic Development Commission (EDC) Executive Director, for comments.

Mr. Hicks stated the request is for the conveyance of lot 12 at Apple Creek for a European project to build a 100,000SF+/- building; the company will invest \$14M and hire 19 people with an average salary of \$43,000+/-; this will be Phase 1 of a potential multiphase project; BOC is also requested to approve a Level One Incentive Grant (for any \$1M - \$15M investment) to combine both for an Economic Development Agreement (EDA).

The land sale will likely be fewer acres because the property in the back abuts unusable, undevelopable property due to water/sewer lines; will have to figure out where to make the sewer connections to provide an easement to the company; the property will be subdivided into 20-22 acres and sold at \$75k/acre.

Chairman Brown called for citizen comment and for questions from the BOC; hearing none, declared the Public Hearing closed.

Chairman Brown called for a motion to approve.

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On motion introduced by Commissioner Worley and seconded by Commissioner Hovis, the BOC unanimously approved **2024-380** as follows:

WHEREAS, North Carolina General Statute 158-7.1 authorizes a county to undertake an economic development project by conveying property to a company in order to induce the company to locate or expand its operations within the county; and,

WHEREAS, Gaston County is the owner and developer of the Apple Creek Business Park, of which Lot 12 is a 31.62 acre tract; and,

WHEREAS, Gaston County and Project Wine will engage in private negotiations and actual acreage to be conveyed will be determined during such negotiations for the conveyance of Lot 12, to the end that Project Wine may construct a manufacturing facility on the tract, and will reach an agreement on the terms for conveyance of the property and for a Level One Economic Incentive Grant; and,

WHEREAS, the Board of Commissioners of Gaston County has held a public hearing to consider whether to approve conveyance of the tract and the Level One Incentive Grant to Project Wine; and,

WHEREAS, Project Wine is considering a total investment of \$14,500,000 to design and build a 100,000 sq.ft. building at Apple Creek, Lot 12, and anticipates creating 19 additional job opportunities with an average annual salary of \$42,554; and,

WHEREAS, North Carolina General Statute §158-7.1 authorizes a County to undertake an economic development project by providing grants for the location of industry; should any grants and incentives be offered by the State of North Carolina and a local match be required, the Local Investment Grant will be used as the match and no additional funds will be obligated by the County; and,

WHEREAS, Gaston County developed an economic grant policy to provide global advanced manufacturing companies and distribution facilities with incentives to develop high quality industries within the County; and,

WHEREAS, it is anticipated that the Company's capital investment in and at the Property and its operations thereat will generate significant ad valorem tax, sales tax and other revenues to the County and will qualify for a Level One Incentive Grant; and,

WHEREAS, the County will prepare a detailed Economic Development Agreement (EDA), between Project Wine and the County, to provide a Level One Incentive Grant, so as to induce the company to provide good job opportunities and capital investment which will enhance the County's ability to attract additional business and industry.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Gaston County Board of Commissioners:

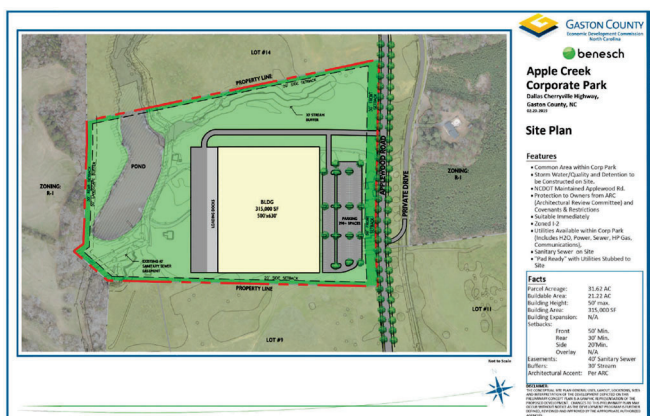
1. Authorizes the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Board of Commissioners to execute the necessary documents to convey to Project Wine the real property more particularly described below:

See Attached Map

2. The conveyance of a 31.62-acre tract to Project Wine will stimulate the local economy, promote business, and result in the creation of a substantial number of jobs in Gaston County. The probable average annual wage at the facility to be constructed by Project Wine is \$42,554. The determination of the probable average annual wage at the facility is based upon materials provided to the County by Project Wine.
3. The fair market value of the property, subject to the covenants and conditions associated with the Apple Creek Corporate Park, is \$75,000.00 per acre. This determination of fair market value is based upon the sales prices of comparable tracts of land, as reported to the Board of Commissioners.
4. As consideration for the conveyance of the property, Project Wine will pay \$75,000.00 per acre, subject to survey, at closing. This facility will generate property tax revenues over the next five years in an amount at least to sufficiently return to the County the total fair market value of the property.

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5. As further consideration for the conveyance of the property, Project Wine has agreed to construct on the property an advanced manufacturing facility at a cost of at least \$14,500,000.
6. The Level One Incentive Grant to Project Wine is approved, and the Chairman, Vice-Chairman or County Manager is authorized to execute any documents necessary to complete an Economic Development Agreement for Project Wine.



Public Hearing - Re: Commissioner Keigher - EDC - To Approve a Gaston County Level Two or Level Three Incentive Grant Pursuant to N.C. Gen. Stat. 158-7.1 and To Authorize Gaston County to Enter Into an Economic Development Agreement (EDA) - Project Exchange

Chairman Brown introduced Mr. Donny Hicks, Economic Development Commission (EDC) Executive Director, for comments.

Mr. Hicks displayed a site plan and noted that the spec building will be built near Hwy. 321 and I-85. He commented this is the first serious project on this site that the County has had in his forty-year tenure.

He reviewed the site plan and advised the entrance to the site is difficult; the road ends at the County's Animal Control Shelter on Wren Turnpike; a different owner owns the parcel between the County's parcel and the parcel the firm is buying; the firm had to work out an arrangement to access the site; there is also only one way in/out which does not meet code.

Staff has been working with the City of Gastonia to provide a secondary entrance via Fairview Rd. to allow Emergency Management to access the road from two directions; the firm has figured out how to get in there to make the site work; the site has been suspended for 40+ years; the site is in an industrial area, across the street from Daimler and Stabilus.

The building should be 300,000SF+/-; the area has a chance to have more manufacturing and warehousing in the location; it is also a new investment into the Hwy. 321 area; staff is offering the firm a Level Two or Level Three since the building may not get built for a while and could eventually qualify for a Level Three grant or whatever is appropriate at the time it will be taxed.

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Chairman Brown called for citizen comment and for questions from the BOC; hearing none, declared the Public Hearing closed.

Chairman Brown called for a motion to approve.

On motion introduced by Commissioner Hovis and seconded by Commissioner Johnson, the BOC unanimously approved **2024-381** as follows:

WHEREAS, Project Exchange is considering a total investment of \$35,000,000 to establish a 305,760 square foot industrial facility on 37.2 acres near I-85 & Hwy. 321, with the expectation to complete this investment on or before December 31, 2026; and,

WHEREAS, North Carolina General Statute §158-7.1 authorizes a County to undertake an economic development project by providing grants for the location of industry; and,

WHEREAS, Gaston County developed an economic grant policy to provide global advanced manufacturing companies and distribution facilities with incentives to develop high-quality industries within the County; and,

WHEREAS, it is anticipated that the Firm's capital investment in and at the Property thereat will generate significant ad valorem tax, sales tax, and other revenues to the County and will qualify for a Level Two or Level Three Incentive Grant; and,

WHEREAS, the County will prepare a detailed Economic Development Agreement (EDA), between Project Exchange, the County and the City of Gastonia, so as to induce the firm to generate significant capital investment in a facility which will enhance the County's ability to attract additional business and industry which provide good job opportunities.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Gaston County Board of Commissioners approves a Level Two or a Level Three Incentive Grant, as determined by County policy, and authorizes the Chairman, Vice-Chairman or the County Manager to execute any documents necessary to complete an Economic Development Agreement for Project Exchange.

Public Hearing - RE: Commissioner Brown - Building & Development Services (Housing Rehab) - Closeout for the Community Development Block Grant - Neighborhood Revitalization (CDBG-NR)

Chairman Brown introduced Mr. David Gale, of Withers Ravenel, and the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Project Manager, for comments.

Mr. Gale presented:

*This is the closeout public hearing for Gaston County's FY 2018 Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Neighborhood Revitalization Program, grant number 18-C-3073. The purpose of this public hearing is to discuss the program performance, allow the citizens of Gaston County an opportunity to make any comments, and closeout the CDBG project.*

*In late 2019 (December), the County received \$750,000.00 in U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) CDBG funding from the North Carolina Department of Commerce (DOC) for grant 18-C-3073.*

*Proposed project activities were rehabilitation repairs for sixteen (16) homes. The County was able to assist four (4) households. All of the housing activities benefitted*

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*low-and-moderate-income (LMI) households directly, for 100% benefit to LMI persons.*

*Program activities are complete, and grant funds are approximately 90% expended. \$606,296.41 of the grant funds were spent towards rehabilitation and \$67,125.00 towards administration fees. The final requisitions for funds were submitted by the November 15, 2024 expenditure deadline and CDBG closeout documents will be submitted to NC Department of Commerce by the deadline of April 25, 2025.*

*This has been a successful project and remained in compliance with the required federal regulations associated with funding.*

Does anyone have any questions/comments?

Chairman Brown called for citizen comment and for questions from the BOC; hearing none, the public hearing closed. He thanked Mr. Gale for his input and work, and thanked Mr. Marc Bolick and the Housing Rehab Team for their hard work and dedication.

Chairman Brown called for a motion to approve.

On motion introduced by Commissioner Hovis and seconded by Commissioner Johnson, the BOC unanimously approved **2024-382**.

Chairman Brown announced the Public Hearings were concluded.

### **Agenda Revision/Approval**

On motion introduced by Commissioner Hovis and seconded by Commissioner Keigher, the BOC unanimously approved the Agenda of November 12, 2024.

### **Citizen Recognition**

No requests.

### **Consent Agenda**

On motion introduced by Commissioner Johnson and seconded by Commissioner Cloninger, the BOC unanimously approved the Consent Agenda as follows:

**2024-383 Commissioner Hovis - BOC - Commendation - To Commend and Recognize Mr. James Ijames, upon His Extraordinary Accomplishments as an Author, American Playwright, Actor, Professor, and Pulitzer Prize Winner**

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**2024-384 Commissioners Brown & Cloninger - Building & Development Services - To Appropriate Restricted Building Inspections Fund Balance to Fund 4 New Full-Time Positions, 3 New Vehicle Purchases, and Equipment/License Purchases (\$559,361) per Budget Change Request:**

Account Description	Account Number	Amount
Fund Balance Appropriated	1000-NDP-000-00000-FBApro-0000000-0000-99-490000-	(559,361.00)
Salaries	1000-GPD-000-00000-000000-0000000-0000-02-510001-	83,911.00
FICA	1000-GPD-000-00000-000000-0000000-0000-02-510100-	6,419.00
Retirement	1000-GPD-000-00000-000000-0000000-0000-02-510101-	12,671.00
401K Contribution	1000-GPD-000-00000-000000-0000000-0000-02-510102-	4,196.00
Health Insurance	1000-GPD-000-00000-000000-0000000-0000-02-510103-	16,080.00
Dental Insurance	1000-GPD-000-00000-000000-0000000-0000-02-510104-	402.00
Life Insurance	1000-GPD-000-00000-000000-0000000-0000-02-510105-	268.00
Employee Training	1000-GPD-000-00000-000000-0000000-0000-02-520011-	3,000.00
Furn/Equip<\$5K	1000-GPD-000-00000-000000-0000000-0000-02-520020-	23,000.00
Vehicle Prep	1000-GPD-000-00000-Fleet1-0000000-0000-02-530052-	30,000.00
Dues & Subscriptions	1000-BDS-230-00000-000000-0000000-0000-02-520012-	12,500.00
Vehicle Prep	1000-BDS-230-00000-Fleet1-0000000-0000-02-530052-	3,500.00
Transfer to CIF Fund	1000-NDP-000-00000-TrfxTo-0000000-0000-98-584000-	252,000.00
Salaries	1000-PWK-191-00000-000000-0000000-0000-01-510001-	69,010.00
FICA	1000-PWK-191-00000-000000-0000000-0000-01-510100-	5,279.00
Retirement	1000-PWK-191-00000-000000-0000000-0000-01-510101-	9,385.00
401K Contribution	1000-PWK-191-00000-000000-0000000-0000-01-510102-	3,450.00
Health Insurance	1000-PWK-191-00000-000000-0000000-0000-01-510103-	16,080.00
Dental Insurance	1000-PWK-191-00000-000000-0000000-0000-01-510104-	402.00
Life Insurance	1000-PWK-191-00000-000000-0000000-0000-01-510105-	268.00
Tool Allowance	1000-PWK-191-00000-000000-0000000-0000-01-510107-	1,340.00
Uniforms	1000-PWK-191-00000-000000-0000000-0000-01-520006-	2,200.00
Furn/Equip<\$5K	1000-PWK-191-00000-000000-0000000-0000-01-520020-	4,000.00
Transfers from General Fund	4000-NDP-000-00000-TrfxFr-0000000-0000-98-481000-	(252,000.00)
Transfer to Gen Govt Capital	4000-NDP-000-00000-TrfxTo-0000000-0000-98-584005-	252,000.00
Transfer from CIF	4005-NDP-000-00000-TrfxFr-0000000-0000-98-484000-	(252,000.00)
Motor Vehicles	4005-GPD-000-00000-Annual-PayAsGo-0000-02-540003-P2501	130,000.00
Motor Vehicles	4005-BDS-230-00000-Annual-PayAsGo-0000-02-540003-P2501	75,000.00
Furn/Equip>\$5,000	4005-BDS-230-00000-Annual-PayAsGo-0000-02-540002-	47,000.00

**2024-385 Commissioner Hovis - County Manager - To Accept Departmental Budget Change Requests as Information as follows:**

ENTRY DATE	DEPT NAME	ACCOUNT	DR/CR	AMOUNT
10/04/2024	Public Works	4005-PWK-000-00000-WSLine-HShiDal-0000-01-540007-AG011	D	25,000
10/04/2024		4005-PWK-000-00000-WSLine-HShiDal-0000-01-540019-AG011	C	25,000
10/08/2024	Library	1000-LIB-000-00000-000000-0000000-0000-04-520002-AG014	C	632
10/08/2024		1000-LIB-000-00000-000000-0000000-0000-04-520007-AG014	C	1,351
10/08/2024		1000-LIB-000-00000-000000-0000000-0000-04-520020-AG014	D	1,983
10/09/2024	ROD	1000-ROD-000-00000-AutoFd-0000000-0000-01-530010-	C	3,320
10/09/2024		1000-ROD-000-00000-AutoFd-0000000-0000-01-520020-	D	3,320
10/10/2024	Comm Svcs	1000-CSS-270-00000-ERAP00-0000000-0000-05-510001-G0088	C	70,000
10/10/2024		1000-CSS-270-00000-ERAP00-0000000-0000-05-510100-G0088	C	7,000
10/10/2024		1000-CSS-270-00000-ERAP00-0000000-0000-05-510101-G0088	C	11,000
10/10/2024		1000-CSS-270-00000-ERAP00-0000000-0000-05-510102-G0088	C	3,000
10/10/2024		1000-CSS-270-00000-ERAP00-0000000-0000-05-510103-G0088	C	10,000
10/10/2024		1000-CSS-270-00000-ERAP00-0000000-0000-05-510104-G0088	C	500
10/10/2024		1000-CSS-270-00000-ERAP00-0000000-0000-05-510105-G0088	C	500
10/10/2024		1000-CSS-270-00000-ERAP00-0000000-0000-05-510106-G0088	C	1,000
10/10/2024		1000-CSS-270-00000-ERAP00-0000000-0000-05-530013-G0088	C	246,915
10/10/2024		1000-CSS-270-00000-ERAP00-0000000-0000-05-530053-G0088	D	349,915
10/11/2024	Public Works	4005-PWK-000-00000-WSLine-HShiDal-0000-01-540007-AG015	C	336,000
10/11/2024		4005-PWK-000-00000-WSLine-HShiDal-0000-01-540016-AG015	D	336,000
10/14/2024	DSS	1000-DSS-271-00000-000000-0000000-0000-05-520011-	C	30,000



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10/14/2024		1000-DSS-271-00000-000000-PreSrv-0000-05-520011-	D	30,000
10/15/2024	Public Works	4005-PWK-192-00000-000000-000000-0000-01-540006-	C	1,877
10/15/2024		4005-PWK-192-00000-000000-000000-0000-01-540016-P2315	D	1,877
10/18/2024		4005-PRK-000-00000-SoPAcs-000000-0000-04-540005-P2412	C	162,522
10/18/2024		4005-PRK-000-00000-000000-000000-0000-04-540016-P2412	D	162,522
10/23/2024	DSS	1000-DSS-270-00000-WrkNum-000000-0000-05-530015-	C	50,000
10/23/2024		1000-DSS-270-00000-000000-Interpr-0000-05-530015-	D	50,000
10/24/2024	HR	1000-HRM-000-00000-EmpRec-000000-0000-01-520005-	C	4,500
10/24/2024		1000-HRM-000-00000-EmpRec-000000-0000-01-530027-	D	4,500
10/24/2024	Health	1000-HLT-250-00000-SmrtSt-000000-0000-05-520002-GSMST	D	600
10/24/2024		1000-HLT-250-00000-SmrtSt-000000-0000-05-520005-GSMST	C	600
10/24/2024	Public Works	4005-PWK-192-00000-000000-000000-0000-01-540006-	C	40,350
10/24/2024		4005-PWK-192-00000-000000-000000-0000-01-540005-P2509	D	40,350
10/25/2024	Comm Svcs	1000-CSS-270-00000-WIOA00-WIOAdlt-0000-05-560011-	C	13,781
10/25/2024		1000-CSS-270-00000-WIOA00-WIOYuth-0000-05-560011-	D	13,781
10/29/2024	Public Works	1000-PWK-192-00000-000000-000000-0000-01-530023-18084	C	5,750
10/29/2024		1000-PWK-192-00000-000000-000000-0000-01-530010-18084	D	5,750
10/29/2024	DSS	1000-DSS-272-00000-AdtSvc-CNotMet-0000-05-560008-	C	31,200
10/29/2024		1000-DSS-272-00000-AdtSvc-Guardin-0000-05-560008-	D	31,200
10/30/2024	EDC	1000-EDC-000-00000-TechPk-000000-0000-07-530010-	C	5,000
10/30/2024		1000-EDC-000-00000-TechPk-000000-0000-07-530023-	D	5,000
10/30/2024	IT	1000-ITS-000-00000-000000-000000-0000-01-530029-EACOU	C	24,484
10/30/2024		1000-ITS-000-00000-000000-000000-0000-01-530029-CISvc	D	24,484
10/30/2024	Public Works	4005-PWK-192-00000-000000-000000-0000-01-540006-	C	424,550
10/30/2024		4005-PWK-192-00000-000000-000000-0000-02-540006-P2309	D	424,550

**2024-386 Commissioner Brown - County Manager - To Authorize the County Manager or His Designee to Negotiate and Execute an Interlocal Agreement with the City of Belmont to Share a Portion of the Costs for the Catawba Street/Keener Boulevard Intersection Improvement as Part of the Crescent Project**

**2024-387 Commissioner Brown - DHHS - Community Support Services - To Confirm Gaston County's Child Fatality Prevention (CFPT) and Community Child Protection Teams (CCPT) will be Combined Into One Local and Single County Team Consistent with and as Required by Changes to the Law via the 2023 Appropriations Act [Section 9H.15. of Session Law 2023-134]**

**2024-388 Commissioner Brown - DHHS - Community Support Services (ACCESS) - To Accept and Appropriate State Grant Funds Awarded Through the North Carolina Department of Transportation for Rural Operating Assistance Program (ROAP) in the Amount of \$245,035 per Budget Change Request:**

Account Description	Account Number	Amount
St Grt Rev: ROAP: EDTAP	1000-CSS-290-29001-000000-000000-0000-05-410001-G0011	(\$151,031.00)
StGrtrRev: ROAP Rural Gen Public	1000-CSS-290-29001-000000-000000-0000-05-410001-G0012	(\$94,004.00)
Fund Balance Appropriations	1000-NDP-000-00000-FBApro-000000-0000-99-490000-	\$245,035.00

**2024-389 Commissioner Brown - DHHS - Health Division - To Accept and Appropriate Additional Federal Grant Funds Received from NC Department of Health and Human Services - Women's and Children's Health Section/Nutrition Services Branch for the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Public Health Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) (\$72,589) per Budget Change Request:**

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Account Description	Account Number	Amount
Salaries: WIC Client Svcs	1000-HLT-251-00000-000000-000000-0000-05-510001-GCLSV	\$72,589
FedGrtRev: WIC Client Svcs	1000-HLT-251-00000-000000-000000-0000-05-410000-GCLSV	(\$72,589)

**2024-390 Commissioner Brown - DHHS - Social Services Division - Proclamation - To Proclaim the Month of November 2024 as Adoption Awareness Month**

**2024-391 Commissioner Hovis - Emergency Management/Fire Services - To Approve the Appropriation of Unified Fire Protection Service District Fund Balance for the Purchase of 7 Starlinks (\$3,294) per Budget Change Request:**

Account Description	Account Number	Amount
Furn/Equip<\$5K	2036-000-000-00000-000000-000000-0000-02-520020-	\$3,294
Fund Balance Appropriated	2036-NDP-000-00000-FBApro-0000000-0000-99-490000-	(\$3,294)

**2024-392 Commissioner Worley - Finance - To Appropriate Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Grant Funds Out of Fund Balance in Order to Refund the State for Unspent Funds in Fiscal Year 2023/2024 (\$739.00) per Budget Change Request:**

Account Description	Account Number	Amount
Psychological Testing	1000-GPD-000-00000-JCPCBd-PsyTest-0000-05-570012-	158.00
Triple P Program	1000-GPD-000-00000-JCPCBd-PositPP-0000-05-570012-	581.00
Fund Balance Appropriation	1000-NDP-000-00000-FBApro-0000000-0000-99-490000-	(739.00)

**2024-393 Commissioner Worley - Finance - Administrative Correction - To Correct Budget Change Request for Resolution 2024-284 Adopted at the 8/27/2024 BOC Meeting per Budget Change Request:**

Account Description	Account Number	Amount
Federal Grant Rev-FY25NCCFW FV	1000-CSS-291-29102-000000-0000000-0000-05-410000-AG026	(42,836.00)
Salaries-FY25 NCCFW FVPSA/ARP	1000-CSS-291-29102-000000-0000000-0000-05-510001-AG026	22,853.40
FICA-FY25 NCCFW FVPSA/ARP	1000-CSS-291-29102-000000-0000000-0000-05-510100-AG026	1,748.29
Retirement-FY25 NCCFW FVPSA/AR	1000-CSS-291-29102-000000-0000000-0000-05-510101-AG026	2,943.51
401K Contr-FY25 NCCFW FVPSA/AR	1000-CSS-291-29102-000000-0000000-0000-05-510102-AG026	559.08
Hlth Insur-FY25 NCCFW FVPSA/AR	1000-CSS-291-29102-000000-0000000-0000-05-510103-AG026	1,654.73
Dental Insur-FY25 NCCFW FVPSA	1000-CSS-291-29102-000000-0000000-0000-05-510104-AG026	43.62
Life Insur-FY25 NCCFW FVPSA/AR	1000-CSS-291-29102-000000-0000000-0000-05-510105-AG026	19.46
TranstnlHous-FY25 NCCFW FVPSA	1000-CSS-291-29102-000000-0000000-0000-05-530053-AG026	13,013.91

**2024-394 Commissioner Worley - Finance - To Amend Gaston County ARPA Grant Project Ordinance 2021-264, to Approve and Appropriate Additional Project Funding (\$16,300,098) to Chapel Grove Waterline Extension, Tryon Elementary School Waterline Extension, and North Belmont Park Waterline Extension. To Approve and Appropriate Estimated Program Income of the Waterline Projects (\$144,000). To Approve the Transfer of the Appropriation of Cancelled/Completed Projects Cherryville Park and Public Safety Campus Respectively (\$192,249) as follows:**

**Section 1:** This ordinance is to establish a budget for a project to be funded by the Coronavirus State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds of H.R. 1319 American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 (CSLRF). Gaston County has received the full \$43,612,126 allocation of CSLRF funds. These funds may be used for the following categories of expenditures, to the extent authorized by state law.

1. Support public health expenditures, by funding COVID-19 mitigation efforts, medical expenses, behavioral healthcare, and certain public health and safety staff
2. Address negative economic impacts caused by the public health emergency, including economic harms to workers, households, small businesses, impacted industries, and the public sector



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3. Replace lost public sector revenue, using this funding to provide government services to the extent of the reduction in revenue experienced due to the pandemic
4. Provide premium pay for essential workers, offering additional support to those who have borne and will bear the greatest health risks because of their service in critical infrastructure sectors
5. Invest in water, sewer, and broadband infrastructure, making necessary investments to improve access to clean drinking water, support vital wastewater and stormwater infrastructure, and to expand access to broadband internet.

**Section 2:** Gaston County Government has elected to take the standard allowance, as authorized by 31 CFR Part 35.6(d)(1) and expend all its ARP/CSLRF funds for the provision of government services.

**Section 3:** The following amounts are appropriated for the project and authorized for expenditure:

Project	Project Allocations		Cost Object	Status/Awarded	Date
	Expenditure Category (EC)	Amount			
CSLRF Project		43,612,126			
AR001 FJC Program	1.11	300,000	200.201	Amended	6/28/2022
AR003 Grants Manager Position	7.1	643,546	200.430/200.431	Amended	4/26/2022
Short-term Emergency Housing Assistance (United Way)					
AR004	2.2	250,000	200.201	Approved	1/11/2022
AR010 Cherryville Park Design		31,619	200.439	Approved	3/22/2022
AR009 N Belmont Park Waterline Extension	5.11	300,000	200.439	Approved	4/26/2022
AR008 Lowell Elementary School Waterline Extension	5.11	234,502	200.439	Amended	9/19/2024
AR005 Chapel Grove Elementary Waterline Extension	5.16	638,500	200.439	Amended	10/22/2024
AR006 Tryon Elementary Waterline Extension	5.16	1,433,000	200.439	Amended	10/22/2024
AR011 Courthouse Video Arraignment System	1.4	136,313	200.470	Approved	7/26/2022
ARPA Project Coordinator (2 positions)					
AR012 ARPA Project Supervisor - Director	7.1	1,755,967	200.430/200.431	Amended	10/22/2024
Revenue Replacement					
AR013 (Standard Allowance)	6.1	10,000,000	200.430	Approved	6/25/2024
AR014 Mobile Shower/Laundry Unit	7.1	229,700	200.439	Amended	7/27/2023
AR016 GREAT Grant	5.2	65,500	200.471	Approved	9/26/2023
AR017 Gaston College	1.4	3,200,000	200.439	Approved	12/12/2023
Homeless Projects:					
Catherine's House					
AR018 Integrated Care of Greater Hickory (ICGH)	2.16				
AR019 HealthNet Gaston	1.13				
AR020	2.19	375,000	200.201	Approved	1/23/2024
AR021 Public Safety Campus	1.14	7,526,132	200.311	Approved	1/23/2024
AR005 Chapel Grove Elementary Waterline Extension					
AR006 Tryon Elementary Waterline Extension					
AR009 N Belmont Park Waterline Extension	5.11	16,492,347	200.439		11/12/2024
Remaining Available CSLRF Project		-			

[\*Once it is determined how we will spend all or a portion of the ARP funds, the governing board will amend this section to authorize appropriations for specific programs, services, projects, and activities. The Board may also appropriate some or all of these funds to an enterprise fund in an annual budget ordinance for a water, wastewater, or stormwater infrastructure project.]

**Section 4:** The following revenues are anticipated to be available to complete the project:

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Project	Project Allocations		Cost Object	Status/Awarded	Date
	Expenditure Category (EC)	Amount			
CSLRF Project		43,612,126			
AR001 FJC Program	1.11	300,000	200.201	Amended	6/28/2022
AR003 Grants Manager Position	7.1	643,546	200.430/200.431	Amended	4/26/2022
Short-term Emergency Housing Assistance (United Way)	2.2	250,000	200.201	Approved	1/11/2022
AR010 <b>Cherryville Park Design</b>		<b>31,619</b>	<b>200.439</b>	<b>Approved</b>	<b>3/22/2022</b>
AR009 N Belmont Park Waterline Extension	5.11	300,000	200.439	Approved	4/26/2022
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AR005 Chapel Grove Elementary Waterline Extension	5.16	638,500	200.439	Amended	10/22/2024
AR006 Tryon Elementary Waterline Extension	5.16	1,433,000	200.439	Amended	10/22/2024
AR011 Courthouse Video Arraignment System	1.4	136,313	200.470	Approved	7/26/2022
ARPA Project Coordinator (2 positions)					
AR012 ARPA Project Supervisor - Director	7.1	1,755,967	200.430/200.431	Amended	9/19/2024
Revenue Replacement (Standard Allowance)	6.1	10,000,000	200.430	Approved	6/25/2024
AR014 Mobile Shower/Laundry Unit	7.1	229,700	200.439	Amended	7/27/2023
AR016 GREAT Grant	5.2	65,500	200.471	Approved	9/26/2023
AR017 Gaston College	1.4	3,200,000	200.439	Approved	12/12/2023
Homeless Projects:					
Catherine's House					
AR018 Integrated Care of Greater Hickory (ICGH)	2.16				
AR019 HealthNet Gaston	1.13				
AR020	2.19	375,000	200.439	Approved	1/23/2024
AR021 <b>Public Safety Campus</b>	<b>1.14</b>	<b>7,526,132</b>	<b>200.311</b>	<b>Approved</b>	<b>1/23/2024</b>
<b>Chapel Grove Elementary Waterline Extension</b>					
AR005					
AR006 Tryon Elementary Waterline Extension					
AR009 N Belmont Park Waterline Extension	5.11	16,492,347	200.439		11/12/2024
Remaining Available CSLRF Project		-			

**Section 5:** The Finance Officer is hereby directed to maintain sufficient specific detailed accounting records to satisfy the requirements of the grantor agency and the grant agreements.

**Section 6:** The Finance Officer is hereby directed to report the financial status of the project to the governing board on a quarterly basis.

**Section 7:** Copies of this grant project ordinance shall be furnished to the Budget Officer, the Finance Officer and to the Clerk to County Commissioners.

**Section 8:** This grant project ordinance expires on December 31, 2026, or when all the CSLRF funds have been obligated and expended by the County, whichever occurs sooner.

and per Budget Change Request:

Account Description	Account Number	Amount
ARPA: Cherryville Park	4000-PRK-000-00000-School-ChryRPk-0000-04-410000-AR010	168,381.00
Transfer to Gen Govt Capital	4000-NDP-000-00000-TrfxTo-00000000-0000-98-584005-	(168,381.00)
Transfer from CIF	4005-NDP-000-00000-TrfxFr-00000000-0000-98-484000-	168,381.00
ARPA: Cherryville Park	4005-PWK-000-00000-School-ChryRPk-0000-04-540016-AR010	(168,381.00)
ARPA: Public Safety Campus	4000-PWK-000-00000-Safety-00000000-0000-02-410000-AR021	23,868.00
Transfer to Gen Govt Capital	4000-NDP-000-00000-TrfxTo-00000000-0000-98-584005-	(23,868.00)
Transfer from CIF	4005-NDP-000-00000-TrfxFr-00000000-0000-98-484000-	23,868.00
ProfSvcCap: ARPA: Public Safety Campus	4005-PWK-000-00000-Safety-00000000-0000-02-540016-AR021	(23,868.00)

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ARPA: Chapel Grove	4000-PWK-000-00000-000000-000000-01-410000-AR005	(5,000,000.00)
ARPA: Chapel Grove Program Income	4000-PWK-000-00000-000000-000000-01-410901-AR005	(50,500.00)
Transfer to Gen Govt Capital	4000-NDP-000-00000-TrfxTo-0000000-0000-98-584005-	5,050,500.00
Transfer from CIF	4005-NDP-000-00000-TrfxFr-0000000-0000-98-484000-	(5,050,500.00)
ARPA: Chapel Grove	4005-PWK-000-00000-000000-000000-01-540007-AR005	5,050,500.00
ARPA: Tryon Elm	4000-PWK-000-00000-000000-000000-01-410000-AR006	(10,092,347.00)
ARPA: Tryon Elm Program Income	4000-PWK-000-00000-000000-000000-01-410901-AR006	(40,000.00)
Transfer to Gen Govt Capital	4000-NDP-000-00000-TrfxTo-0000000-0000-98-584005-	10,132,347.00
Transfer from CIF	4005-NDP-000-00000-TrfxFr-0000000-0000-98-484000-	(10,132,347.00)
ARPA: Tryon Elm	4005-PWK-000-00000-000000-000000-01-540007-AR006	10,132,347.00
ARPA: N Belmont	4000-PWK-000-00000-NBelPk-0000000-0000-01-410000-AR009	(1,400,000.00)
ARPA: N Belmont Program Income	4000-PWK-000-00000-NBelPk-0000000-0000-01-410901-AR009	(45,000.00)
Transfer to Gen Govt Capital	4000-NDP-000-00000-TrfxTo-0000000-0000-98-584005-	1,445,000.00
Transfer from CIF	4005-NDP-000-00000-TrfxFr-0000000-0000-98-484000-	(1,445,000.00)
ARPA: N Belmont Water Line	4005-PWK-000-00000-NBelPk-0000000-0000-01-540007-AR009	1,445,000.00
ARPA: Lowell Elem Program Income	4000-PWK-000-00000-School-LowellES-0000-01-410901-AR008	(8,500.00)
Transfer to Gen Govt Capital	4000-NDP-000-00000-TrfxTo-0000000-0000-98-584005-	8,500.00
Transfer from CIF	4005-NDP-000-00000-TrfxFr-0000000-0000-98-484000-	(8,500.00)
ARPA: Lowell Elem Water Line	4005-PWK-000-00000-School-LowellES-0000-01-540007-AR008	8,500.00

**2024-395 Commissioners Fraley & Hovis - GEMS - To Approve the County/GEMS to Enter Into an Agreement with CaroMont Hospital for a Dedicated Interfacility Transport Unit. Approve the Addition of Ten (10) New Positions and Appropriate (\$850,696) per Budget Change Request:**

Account Description	Account Number	Amount
Caromont Inter-Facility Trnsprt	1000-EMS-000-00000-CHIFTr-0000000-0000-02-430063-	(735,096)
Caromont Inter-Facility Trnsprt	4000-EMS-000-00000-CHIFTr-0000000-0000-02-430063-	(115,600)
Salaries	1000-EMS-000-00000-CHIFTr-0000000-0000-02-510001-	352,550
Overtime	1000-EMS-000-00000-CHIFTr-0000000-0000-02-510002-	53,150
Other Pay Types	1000-EMS-000-00000-CHIFTr-0000000-0000-02-510007-	12,170
FICA	1000-EMS-000-00000-CHIFTr-0000000-0000-02-510100-	31,040
Retirement	1000-EMS-000-00000-CHIFTr-0000000-0000-02-510101-	55,180
401K Contribution	1000-EMS-000-00000-CHIFTr-0000000-0000-02-510102-	20,290
Health Insurance	1000-EMS-000-00000-CHIFTr-0000000-0000-02-510103-	120,000
Dental Insurance	1000-EMS-000-00000-CHIFTr-0000000-0000-02-510104-	1,750
Life Insurance	1000-EMS-000-00000-CHIFTr-0000000-0000-02-510105-	1,169
Uniforms	1000-EMS-000-00000-CHIFTr-0000000-0000-02-520006-	12,000
Employee Training	1000-EMS-000-00000-CHIFTr-0000000-0000-02-520011-	7,000
Furn/Equip<\$5K	1000-EMS-000-00000-CHIFTr-0000000-0000-02-520020-	10,000
MotorFuels/Lubricants	1000-EMS-000-00000-CHIFTr-0000000-0000-02-530021-	10,352
Repairs and Maint.	1000-EMS-000-00000-CHIFTr-0000000-0000-02-530023-	9,692
Insurance	1000-EMS-000-00000-CHIFTr-0000000-0000-02-530024-	8,753
Vehicle Prep	1000-EMS-000-00000-CHIFTr-0000000-0000-02-530052-	30,000
Fund Balance Appropriated	4000-NDP-000-00000-FBApro-0000000-0000-99-490000-	115,600

**2024-396 Commissioner Johnson - Human Resources - To Approve Revisions to the Gaston County Personnel Policy Manual Related to Policy 10, Bereavement Leave Policy and Caregiver Policy as follows:**

WHEREAS,	Gaston County believes it is important to have a Personnel Policy Manual for employees and supervisors to follow; and,
WHEREAS,	it is prudent to review and revise the policy manual periodically to make sure it is understandable, consistent, and up-to-date with current law, regulations and philosophy; and,
WHEREAS,	the current personnel policy manual was approved effective July 1, 2010; and,
WHEREAS,	the proposed revisions to the personnel policy are outlined in Exhibit A (attached); and,

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WHEREAS, the Gaston County Board of Commissioners must adopt all changes to the Gaston County Personnel Policy Manual.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Gaston County Board of Commissioners adopts revisions to the Gaston County Personnel Policy to be effective January 1, 2025, as outlined in Exhibit A.

**2024-397 Commissioner Johnson - Human Resources - To Approve Revisions to the Gaston County Personnel Policy by Adding Policy Number 26.6.1 to Prohibit the Use of County-Owned Devices and Networks to View Pornographic Materials as follows:**

WHEREAS, Gaston County believes it is important to have a Personnel Policy Manual for employees and supervisors to follow; and,

WHEREAS, it is prudent to review and revise the policy manual periodically to make sure it is understandable, consistent, and up to date with current law, regulations and philosophy; and,

WHEREAS, the current personnel policy manual was approved effective July 1, 2010; and,

WHEREAS, the proposed revisions to the personnel policy are outlined in Exhibit A (attached); and,

WHEREAS, the Gaston County Board of Commissioners must adopt all changes to the Gaston County Personnel Policy Manual.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Gaston County Board of Commissioners adopts revisions to the Gaston County Personnel Policy to be effective January 1, 2025, as outlined in Exhibit A.

**2024-398 Commissioner Worley - Public Works - To Authorize the Exchange of Real Property with Redhawk Owner LPV, LLC for the Relocation and Construction of the New Hope Recycling Center and to Authorize the Appropriate County Officials to Execute the Necessary Instruments to Carry out the Exchange as follows:**

WHEREAS, in 2020, Redhawk Owner LPV, LLC (Redhawk) approached Gaston County Solid Waste and Recycling and Gaston County Public Works in an effort to relocate the New Hope Recycling Center located at 235 Lake Wylie Road. The existing recycling center is located on 1.32 acres and was built in approximately 1990; and,

WHEREAS, the South New Hope Road area of Gaston County has experienced significant growth since the existing recycling center was built and can no longer adequately meet the needs of the citizens of that area of the County; and,

WHEREAS, Redhawk has assembled approximately 470 acres surrounding the recycling center site for the construction of approximately 1,000 homes, and the current recycling center is located at the front entrance roundabout of the Redhawk development; and,

WHEREAS, Redhawk has proposed to Gaston County that in exchange for \$10.00 and other good and valuable consideration, Redhawk will exchange and swap approximately 6.6 acres of undeveloped land (PID's 311953 and 307649) along South New Hope Road for the existing 1.32-acre recycling center site; and,

WHEREAS, the 6.6-acre site will allow Gaston County Solid Waste and Recycling to design and construct a new recycling center site that is adequately sized to serve the growing population in that area of the County; and,

WHEREAS, N.C.Gen Stat. 160A-271 authorizes the County to exchange any real property belonging to the County for other real property by private negotiation if the County receives a full and fair consideration in exchange for its property.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Board of Commissioners that:

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- (1) Gaston County accepts said offer of \$10.00 and other good and valuable consideration from Redhawk Owner LPV, LLC for the exchange of property as described herein.
- (2) Gaston County Public Works is directed to complete the design phase of the new, relocated recycling center.
- (3) The County Attorney is authorized to draft and negotiate any necessary exchange and property swap contract documents and the County Manager, or designee, is authorized to execute said documents.
- (4) The County Attorney is authorized to draft and negotiate any necessary temporary construction easements or permanent access easements with Duke Energy and Town of Cramerton.
- (5) The County Manager, or designee, is authorized to execute temporary or permanent construction access easements.
- (6) The Chairman of the Board is authorized to execute a deed for the 235 Lake Wylie Road property to Redhawk Owner LPV, LLC.

**2024-399 Commissioner Cloninger - Public Works - To Accept and Appropriate a Federal Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) Grant for Dallas Park Greenway Connection Along Leisure Lane and Transfer the Required Local Match Necessary to Complete the Project (Federal - \$463,000; Local - \$115,750) per Budget Change Request:**

Account Description	Account Number	Amount
FedGrtRev: CMAQ Dallas PrkGW	4000-MGR-103-00000-000000-0000000-0000-01-410000-G0128	(463,000.00)
Transfer to Gen Govt Capital	4000-NDP-000-00000-TrfxTo-0000000-0000-98-584005-	463,000.00
Transfer from CIF	4005-NDP-000-00000-TrfxFr-0000000-0000-98-484000-	(463,000.00)
Othimp&CapOutlay-CMAQ DalPrkGW	4005-MGR-103-00000-000000-0000000-0000-01-540006-G0128	463,000.00
Other Improv Cap Outlay	4005-PWK-192-00000-000000-0000000-0000-01-540006-	(115,750.00)
ProfSvcs:CapProj-CMAQ DalPrkGW	4005-MGR-103-00000-000000-0000000-0000-01-540016-G0128	115,750.00

**2024-400 Commissioner Brown - Public Works - To Authorize the County Manager, or His Designee, to Execute a Professional Services Contract with S&ME, Inc. for the George Poston Park Dam Emergency Spillway Wingwall Repair**

**2024-401 Commissioner Johnson - Public Works - To Authorize the County Manager, or His Designee to Execute a No Cost Lease Agreement for Property Owned by Gaston County Located at 325 Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Way, Gastonia, NC**

**2024-402 Commissioner Hovis - Police Department (Animal Care and Enforcement) - To Accept and Appropriate Donation Received Electronically Through PayPal from the Second Quarter of 2024 in the Amount of \$1,809.52 and the Third Quarter of 2024 in the Amount of \$881.09 for a Total of \$2,690.61 per Budget Change Request:**

Account Description	Account Number	Amount
Fund Balance Appropriated	1000-NDP-000-00000-FBApro-0000000-0000-99-490000-	(1,809.52)
Donations and Gifts	1000-GPD-200-00000-000000-0000000-0000-02-445004-	(881.09)
Medical Care	1000-GPD-200-00000-MedCar-0000000-0000-02-530015-	2,690.61

**2024-403 Commissioner Brown - Register of Deeds - To Approve a Resolution to Delay the Opening of the Office of the Register of Deeds on December 2, 2024 at 10:30 am as follows:**

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WHEREAS, a newly-elected Register of Deeds will be sworn in on Monday, December 2, 2024 at 9 am; and,

WHEREAS, the newly-sworn Register of Deeds will administer new oaths of office to all staff in the Office of the Register of Deeds following the Swearing-in Ceremony at approximately 10 am; and,

WHEREAS, all the employees of the Office of the Register of Deeds are needed to participate in the administration of new oaths, causing a delay in the beginning of daily office functions; and,

WHEREAS, North Carolina General Statutes §153A-94(b) and §161-8 state that the Board of Commissioners may prescribe the office hours, workdays and holidays observed by the various offices, and may fix the days and hours that the Register of Deeds shall attend the office in person or by deputy.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Gaston County Board of Commissioners hereby approves the delayed opening of the Office of the Register of Deeds on December 2, 2024, at 10:30 am.

**2024-404 Commissioner Brown - Tax - To Appropriate \$100,000 in Special Revenue Fund (Property Revaluation) Fund Balance for On-going Legal Services (Property Tax Commission Appeals) for the 2023 Reappraisal per Budget Change Request:**

Account Description	Account Number	Amount
Fund Balance Appropriated	2010-NDP-000-00000-FBApro-0000000-0000-99-490000-	(100,000.00)
Professional Services	2010-TAX-000-00000-0000000-0000000-0000-01-530010-	100,000.00

**2024-405 Commissioner Brown - Tourism Development - To Appropriate \$100,000 in Tourism Fund Balance in Support of Belmont Trolley and the Construction of a Trolley Barn per Budget Change Request:**

Account Description	Account Number	Amount
Fund Balance Appropriated	2005-NDP-00000-FBApro-0000000-0000-99-490000-	(\$100,000)
Other Contracts & Subsidies	205-TRM-00000-000000-0000000-0000-07-570006-	\$100,000

### Appointments

On motions introduced and seconded, the following individuals were unanimously appointed/reappointed to the ***Caromont Health/Gaston Memorial Hospital Board of Directors:***

<u>Motion Introduced</u>	<u>Seconded</u>	<u>Appointee</u>	<u>Term Ending</u>
Commissioner Cloninger	Commissioner Keigher	Mr. Timothy D. Conner	December 31, 2028
Commissioner Johnson	Commissioner Hovis	Mr. Timothy Efird	December 31, 2028

On motion introduced by Commissioner Cloninger and seconded by Commissioner Worley, the BOC unanimously reappointed Mr. Brian Bookout to the ***Council on Aging/Home and Community Care Block Grant Advisory Committee*** to a term ending November 30, 2027

On motion introduced by Commissioner Cloninger and seconded by Commissioner Hovis, the BOC unanimously appointed Ms. Nina Williams to the ***Workforce Development Board*** to an unexpired term ending May 31, 2025.

On motion introduced by Commissioner Brown and seconded by Commissioner Keigher, the BOC unanimously reappointed Mr. Brian Weyeneth to the ***Industrial Facilities and Pollution Control Financing Authority*** to a term ending October 31, 2030.

On motions introduced by Commissioner Brown and seconded by Commissioner Keigher, the following individuals were unanimously appointed/reappointed to the ***Fireman's Relief Fund Trustees*** to terms ending November 30, 2026:



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Mr. Joshua Brown  
Mr. Michael Hoover  
Mr. Douglas Mabry  
Mr. Jeffrey Snuggs

Ms. Rebekah Flanary  
Mr. Perry Linkous  
Mr. Jim Pasour  
Mr. Ricky Worley

Mr. Ronald Hale  
Mr. Bobby Lutz  
Mr. David Allen Robinson

Mr. Richard Harris  
Mr. David Lynn  
Mr. Timmy Sieber

### **Commissioners Committee Reports**

Commissioner Worley thanked God for the strength and wisdom that carried him through his 18 years as an elected official. He thanked his wife (Lynne), son (Andrew) and daughter-in-law (Emily) for their support; he thanked County staff, the County Manager, and Clerk and Deputy Clerks for their professionalism and service, and he wished the new County Attorney a successful tenure with the County. He thanked the BOC for the close friendships he had developed over the years, and for all they do for the County. In conclusion, he voiced his appreciation and gratitude to the citizens for allowing him to serve in various ways over the years and noted that serving the public is very close to his heart. He wished everyone a Happy Thanksgiving, Merry Christmas, and Happy New Year.

Commissioner Cloninger announced that the Dallas community is going to Black Mountain on November 22<sup>nd</sup> to help with Hurricane Helene disaster relief; they will be working with the *Red Truck Men* to offer aid to those in need and are recruiting volunteers; will submit a flyer to the County Manager for the Government Access Channel; they are looking for volunteers to sort and organize donations, (and for) tree removal, grading, electrical, plumbing, drywall, roofing and to place culverts; they also need tractors, excavators, front loaders and skid steers. She advised that the Mayor of Dallas (Ms. Hayley Beaty) is the contact person.

Commissioner Hovis reported attendance to the following and provided updates as follows:

- ***Gaston County School's Career Technical Education (CTE) Programs tour*** (along with Commissioner Cloninger).
- ***Gaston County Schools Operations Committee meeting***, for the discussion on the unspent \$250M bonds; he noted the original offering was to try to build another elementary school, but with the COVID distractions, payroll issues, and the Superintendent search, the Board of Education (BOE) did not position themselves to meet that without extending our bonds. They also discussed the need for land banking opportunities and a comprehensive high school plan.
- ***CaroMont Health/Gaston Memorial Hospital Board of Trustees meeting*** – he noted the CaroMont Health Foundation received \$3.5M from the David Belk Cannon Foundation designated for the *CaroMont Cares Campaign*; eight nurses were honored as the *Top 100 Nurses in NC*; a former *Shovelin Scholar*, Ms. Linnea Jurs, graduated from Harvard University with a Master's in Public Health Administration and is seeking a Fellowship opportunity in this area to remain close to home; three current *Shovelin Scholarship* applicants enrolled at the University of NC at Chapel Hill are having super strong semesters; a previous recipient will graduate in September from the University of SC with nursing honors and BSN.  
CaroMont awarded two grants to Gaston College (\$160k for the CaroMont Health Apprentices; \$30k from the Foundation to purchase infant simulators for nursing programs); The Golden Leaf Foundation donated \$1.4M, as part of the community-based grants incentive, to help fund the healthcare programs through the College at its Lincoln County campus. In conclusion, he noted the new Belmont facility that will admit its first patient in January.

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Commissioner Keigher reported attendance at the ***CaroMont Health's Black-tie Event***, along with other Commissioners, at the new Belmont campus.

Chairman Brown reported he and Commissioner Cloninger attended the ***Veteran's Day Parade*** in Dallas (NC) and noted it was well attended.

### **County Manager's Report**

The County Manager yielded his time to Mr. Joseph Stepney, Veteran Services Director, for an update on veteran services.

Mr. Stepney advised Veteran Services provides assistance and guidance for compensation and pension claims, assists with forms needed for educational benefits, VA home loans, and healthcare, and serves 13,600 veterans and families in the County.

*VA Disability Compensation* offers monthly tax-free payments to veterans who got sick, injured or those whose service made an existing condition worse while serving in the military; *VA Pension Benefits* are available to some wartime veterans and their survivors and is income-based; *Healthcare* is little or no cost quality healthcare to veterans to include dental, hearing and vision.

Since January 1, 2024, Veteran Services has completed 466 compensation, 5 pensions, 37 dependency and indemnity compensation (for widowers of veterans), 145 supplemental, 45 higher level disability reviews, and 4 Board of Veterans Appeals claims; has generated over \$400,000 in additional income to veterans it assisted.

All of the 466 compensation claims are not completed by the VA, which can take 6 months to a year to complete; it can take up to two years to complete Board of Veterans Appeal claims; those numbers are not complete and are the numbers that were input into our system that we were made aware of; it is an honor to serve our veterans; look forward to serving them as long as possible.

Commissioner Hovis advised he personally participated in Operation Green Light event since November 2<sup>nd</sup>, and everyone has been asking what the green lights are for; he encouraged the County to bring more awareness to that event; he suggested lighting the Courthouse in the future, if that isn't already being done.

### **County Attorney's Report**

No report.

### **Other Matters**

*Re: Televised BOC Meetings:* Commissioner Keigher reiterated his frustration regarding the delay between the broadcast and the Forum monitors; he urged staff to find a solution to the issue.

Commissioner Hovis announced the BOC will hold its Induction Ceremony and Organizational Meeting on Monday, December 2, at 9 am in The Harley B. Gaston Jr. Public Forum.

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**Presentation of Commissioner Commendations & Awards****2024-406      Presentation of Commendation/Award to Commissioner Kim Johnson**

Chairman Brown presented as follows:

- WHEREAS, the Citizens of Gaston County elected Kim Johnson to the Gaston County Board of Commissioners on November 3, 2020 as a representative for the Gastonia Township and she received the Oath of Office on December 7, 2020; and,
- WHEREAS, Commissioner Johnson retired from the Gaston County Sheriff's Office on January 1, 2020, as the first female Chief Deputy and was also the sixth female to be elected to the Gaston County Board of Commissioners; and,
- WHEREAS, through the years, she served on many boards including the Centralina Council of Governments, the Alliance for Children and Youth, South YMCA, CaroMont Care Advocate Committee, and the NC Joint Criminal Justice and Sheriff's Training Committee, Jail Advisory leadership group, and Job Task Analysis (JTA) Committee for Detention Officers; and,
- WHEREAS, during her tenure, Commissioner Johnson has held fast to her commitment to justice and public safety and has been a strong advocate for ensuring law enforcement and first responders have the essential resources and tools needed to safely and effectively carry out their duties; and,
- WHEREAS, she has supported various initiatives to maintain a stable financial foundation for the County, and has championed the importance of protecting fund balance reserves and reducing the tax burden on Gaston County citizens – all while upholding the highest standards of public service; and,
- WHEREAS, Commissioner Johnson recognized the essential role County employees play in delivering vital services to citizens, and the importance of effective employee recruitment and retention efforts; and,
- WHEREAS, she was a strong proponent and led the charge in the implementation of the 401-K program for County employees and has been a staunch advocate for improving employee work environments, compensation, and opportunities for professional growth.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Gaston County Board of Commissioners, on behalf of the citizens of Gaston County, commends and extends grateful appreciation to

*Kim Johnson*

for her integrity, professionalism, and dedicated public service in the performance of her elected duties, for her leadership and unwavering commitment to the principles of sound fiscal responsibility and effective governance, and for consistently advocating for the safety, security, and well-being of the citizens of Gaston County.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this Commendation, as adopted this 12<sup>th</sup> day of November 2024, be set forth in the Minutes of this Commission.

By acclamation, the BOC unanimously approved 2024-406 as set forth herewith.

Chairman Brown said it was a pleasure working alongside her; she had been a great advocate for the employees, for the betterment of public safety in our community, and for fiscal responsibility.

Commissioner Johnson recalled she had dedicated herself to the service of Gaston County since she started with the Sheriff's Office at the age of nineteen, and she will always be there for the

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County. She noted that it is hard to let go, but she knows the County will be in good hands. She concluded that it had been an honor and a privilege and that she had endeavored to make the best decisions for the County throughout her career, and during her four years as a County Commissioner.

Chairman Brown also presented Commissioner Johnson with a vase with the following inscription:

The Citizens of Gaston County  
Express Sincere Gratitude and Appreciation  
for the Dedicated Service of  
**KIM JOHNSON**  
Gaston County Commissioner – Gastonia Township  
2020 – 2024

**2024-407      Presentation of Commendation/Award to Commissioner Ronnie Worley**

Chairman Brown presented as follows:

WHEREAS, the Citizens of Gaston County elected Ronald "Ronnie" E. Worley to the Gaston County Board of Commissioners in November 2016 and reelected him in November 2020 as a representative from the South Point Township. Commissioner Worley received the Oaths of Office on December 5, 2016 and December 7, 2020; and,

WHEREAS, Commissioner Worley was elected Vice-Chairman of the Board on December 5, 2016; and,

WHEREAS, in his official capacity, Commissioner Worley has diligently served the State, Region and County and many other affiliate organizations including:

- Centralina Council of Governments Delegate – 2016-2020; 2023
- Gaston Family Health Services (GFHS) – 2016-2021
- South Fork River Health Committee - 2020
- Montcross Area Chamber of Commerce – 2020-2024
- North Carolina Association of County Commissioners (NCACC) – Delegate/Alternate Delegate 2017-2023
- Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC) – 2017-2020; Alternate 2020-2024
- County Attorney Search Committee – 2021
- Joint BOC/BOE Schools' Capital Needs Committee – 2017
- Juvenile Crime Prevention Council (JCPC) – 2017-2024
- NACo Annual Conference Voting Delegate – 2019; 2023
- NCACC Legislative Goals Conference Alternate Voting Delegate – 2016; 2021

WHEREAS, as a military Veteran, a retired North Carolina State Trooper, and the former Mayor of Cramerton, Commissioner Worley was a proponent of strategic partnerships with stakeholders at local, regional, and state levels to leverage strengths and foster responsible growth. He encouraged collaboration across the County with various agencies, municipalities, and countywide law enforcement and first responders, to enhance vital services, address persistent needs, and strengthen the bonds within our communities; and,

WHEREAS, he has been a vocal advocate for the preservation and enhancement of the County's local water resources, supporting initiatives to safeguard rivers, lakes, and streams and ensure that clean, safe water remains accessible for all citizens; and,

WHEREAS, as a steadfast proponent of school safety and education initiatives, Commissioner Worley was willing to challenge norms and advocate for visionary approaches, all while advocating for financial accountability and the responsible management of school budgets and resources; and,

WHEREAS, Commissioner Worley was a strong advocate of County employees and supported various initiatives to enhance employee compensation and benefits, including the implementation of a 401(k) plan; and,

WHEREAS, he consistently upheld the values of fiscal conservatism, ensuring that taxpayer dollars are used efficiently and effectively, and the County budget reflects a balance between prudent financial management and the needs of the County and its citizens.

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NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Gaston County Board of Commissioners, on behalf of the citizens of Gaston County, commends and extends grateful appreciation to

*Ronald "Ronnie" E. Worley*

for his dedicated service to the citizens of Gaston County in the performance of his elected duties, for his thoughtful approach to tackling complex issues, and for his steadfast commitment to fiscal responsibility.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this Commendation, as adopted the 12<sup>th</sup> day of November 2024, be set forth in the Minutes of this County Commission.

By acclamation, the BOC unanimously approved 2024-407 as set forth herewith.

Chairman Brown advised it had been a pleasure alongside Commissioner Worley, noting he was a consummate professional. Chairman Brown recalled that during his tenure as the Mayor of Stanley, he often called on Commissioner Worley (then, Mayor of Cramerton) for his guidance, and he conveyed his gratitude for the valuable mentorship Commissioner Worley provided.

Commissioner Worley reiterated his earlier comments and stated it had been his high honor and privilege to serve and wished God's blessings on all.

Chairman Brown also presented Commissioner Worley with a vase with the following inscription:

The Citizens of Gaston County  
Express Sincere Gratitude and Appreciation  
for the Dedicated Service of  
RONALD E. WORLEY  
Gaston County Commissioner – South Point Township  
2016 – 2024

Chairman Brown invited Commissioners Johnson and Worley and their families to the dais for a group photograph with the BOC.

**Adjournment**

By unanimous consent, Chairman Brown adjourned the Regular Meeting of November 12, 2024 at 7:16 pm.

(All aforementioned documents are on file with the Clerk to the Board.)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Chad Brown, Chairman  
Gaston County Board of Commissioners

\_\_\_\_\_  
Donna S. Buff  
Clerk to the Board

SEAL