

The Sampson County Board of Commissioners convened for their regular meeting at 7:00 p.m. on Monday, November 7, 2016 in the County Auditorium, 435 Rowan Road in Clinton, North Carolina. Members present: Chairman Billy C. Lockamy, Vice Chairperson Sue Lee, and Commissioners Albert Kirby, Jr., Harry Parker and Clark H. Wooten.

Chairman Lockamy convened the meeting and called upon Assistant County Manager Susan Holder for the invocation. The Chairman then led the Pledge Allegiance.

Approval of Agenda

Upon a motion made by Chairman Lockamy and seconded by Commissioner Parker, the Board voted unanimously to approve the agenda with the addition of Consent Agenda item (1): NC Emergency Management/FEMA documentation designating the primary and secondary agents for executing applications for disaster assistance.

The Chairman and board members expressed their appreciation to those who were involved in preparation, response and recovery efforts with Hurricane Matthew.

Roads

NCDOT representative Keith Eason was present and introduced Keith Jackson, the County's new County Maintenance Engineer. Mr. Eason had received a promotion and will be in a new district. Mr. Jackson reported that 32 roads were still closed after Hurricane Matthew, primarily due to bridge repairs. He stated that piping had been ordered and bids would be opened on November 8th for contracted assistance. He estimated that it would take 3-6 months for all road work to be completed. He stated that work in areas that were not still flooded had begun first, but as flooding abated, work would commence in all areas.

Presentations and Reports

Recognition of Chairman Vice Chairperson Sue Lee presented outgoing Chairman Billy Lockamy (who did not run for re-election) with a plaque commemorating his service as a commissioner and as Chairman. Former Chairman Jefferson Strickland made remarks in appreciation for Mr. Lockamy's service.

Presentation of Audit for Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 2016 Mr. Byron Scott of Thompson, Price, Scott, Adams & Co., PA presented the Board with the audit for fiscal year ending June 30, 2016. Mr. Scott reviewed General Fund revenue and expenditure analyses. He reported a tax collection rate of nearly 97.5% and (available) Fund Balance of 20%, which exceeds the Local Government Commission requirement of 8%, but still below the 30% recommended for counties of our size. Mr. Scott explained a deficiency identified, a restatement of previously issued financial statements to reflect the correction of a material misstatement (an incorrect computation of debt balance related to debt retired during the 2014-15 debt refunding transaction).

Finance Officer David Clack then discussed a significant increase to fund balance. He noted that department heads had done a great job managing their budgets during the year, and the results of their attention to costs and budgets generated an increase in general fund balance of \$1,633,540. He added that the increase could be attributed to the cost savings measures adopted by the Board, the County management team and conscientious department heads. He explained that total revenues collected exceeded budget by \$429,489. Part of that number is property tax collections which exceeded budget estimates by \$402,608 due to the diligent efforts of the Tax Office, as the overall tax collection rate increased to 97.43% from 97.27%. Sales tax collections exceeded budget estimates by \$225,414, which indicated that sales were higher in the County during the year. Mr. Clack stated that restricted revenue came in \$1,189,185 under budget estimates; this was due to grant revenue that was not collected because it was not expended. Sales and services, which consist of tax collection, jail, sheriff, health, ambulance, and aging fees, came in \$155,034 over budget estimates. Jail fees collected exceeded budget by \$129,185, and ambulance fees collected exceeded budget estimates by \$182,794. Health fees and Aging fees collected came in under expectations, but this was offset by savings in the expenditures of each department. Rental revenues exceeded budget because landfill host fees collected exceeded estimates, as did proceeds from the surplus sale and proceeds from a one-time refund of sales taxes paid on capital items. All of those items combined exceeded budget estimates by \$793,270.

On the expenditure side, Mr. Clack noted that department heads were extremely careful with the allocations that they received from the Board. Unnecessary items were not purchased, lapsed salary amounts were saved, and the implementation of some of the cost savings proposals prior to the end of the year accounted for most of the savings. Total expenditures were less than budget by \$7,845,233 or 10%. Lapsed salary and fringe amounts were \$1,313,483 as compared to \$718,252 in FY 14-15. Mr. Clack provided information with regard to specific budget function areas:

- The general government departments, which consist of Governing Body, Administration, Airport, Finance, Data Processing, Communications Tower, Tax Administration, Legal, Courts, Board of Elections, Register of Deeds, and Public Buildings did not expend \$773,490 (10.79%) of their total allocation. The Finance Department did not spend \$330,576 of their total allocation. The line items that

contributed to this include a reduction in the unemployment cost of \$64,000 which has been reduced in the FY 16-17 budget. Worker's compensation insurance costs were reduced by \$100,000 by enhancing our safety program, which has helped our experience rating. These savings in worker's compensation insurance were captured in our FY 16-17 budget and previously presented to the Board as a cost savings measure. The Finance Department also had some lapsed salary amounts and operational savings that contributed to the favorable budget variance. The Data Processing Department did not spend \$73,780 (11.81%) of their total allocation. The expenditure categories that contributed to the savings were lapsed salaries, and a capital expenditure that was not needed and is expected to be covered at a later time using technology that will not require the outlay of \$25,000 up front. It is expected that most of the costs will be covered by savings in other areas. The Tax Office did not spend \$107,994 (7.23%) of their allocation. Most of these savings came from lapsed salary and have been captured going forward in a previously approved cost reduction proposal.

- Public safety departments, which consist of Sheriff, Jail, Communications, Emergency Management, Volunteer Fire Departments, Inspections, Coroner, Rescue, Dive Team, and Animal Control, did not spend \$599,162 (3.48%) of their total allocation. The Sheriff's Department and Jail did not expend \$372,205 (3.68%) of their total allocation. Savings as a result of lapsed salary, reduced gas prices, insurance costs, better prices on capital items, savings in the juvenile detention and adult safekeeping costs represented most of the savings. Gas and insurance line items were reduced the in the current budget. Communications did not spend \$62,642 (6.04%) due to lapsed salaries. Rescue did not spend \$104,510 (2.53%) due to lapsed salaries, reduced gas prices, less spending on maintenance costs, and reduction of the allocation to Plain View Rescue, which was presented as a cost savings. The gas budget was reduced in the current year.
- The environmental protection function, which consists of Solid Waste, Forestry, and Cooperative Extension Programs, did not spend \$32,811(3.03%) of their total allocation.
- The economic and physical development departments, which consist of Planning and Zoning, Industrial Development, Industrial Utility, Cooperative Extension Services, and Soil Conservation, did not spend \$293,715 (20.87%) of their total allocation of \$1,407,294. Economic Development did not spend \$199,218 due mainly to the building reuse grant funds not being spent. Cooperative Extension did not spend \$69,300 due mainly to savings from lapse salary.
- Human services departments, which consist of Mental Health Administration, Veterans, Youth Needs Task Force, Health, Social Services, and Aging, did not spend \$2,298,001 (10.41%) of their total allocation. The Health Department did

not spend \$349,393, with most of this being lapsed salaries. Social Services did not spend \$450,745 in administration with most of the savings occurring in lapsed salaries, professional services, and temporary help. Social Services also did not spend \$1,375,768 in program costs. Most of the unspent money is offset by the grant revenue funds that were not drawn down. Aging did not spend \$99,408 with most of that amount being lapsed salaries and reduced insurance costs. The reduction in insurance was taken into account in preparing the current budget.

- The education function, which consists of the two school systems and the community college did not spend \$501,805. With the exception of the community college all of the unspent funds are restricted sales tax revenues. All of the unspent funds have been re-budgeted in FY 16-17.
- The culture and recreation function which consists of Library, Recreation, Special Appropriation, and the Agri-Exposition Center did not spend \$97,239 (4.6%). The Library did not spend \$17,998 mostly due to lapse salaries. Recreation did not spend \$24,876 due mostly to lapse salary, reduced gas prices, and savings on insurance costs. The budgets for gas and insurance were reduced in the current year budget. The Expo Center did not spend \$21,145 (4.11%) due mostly to savings in maintenance and repair line items.
- Contingency, funds that we budget each year to handle those unforeseen costs that arise and are allocated by the Board, had an unspent amount in that line item of \$280,000 (93.33%) of the total allocation.

Mr. Clack reiterated that the County's ability to increase its fund balance by \$1,633,540 or 7.77% was a testament to the hard work of its department heads and County Administration, with direction provided by the Board. While such a high amount is an unexpected result, not expending our fund balance is goal that we start each year with. In our current year's budget, we allocated \$2,102,439 from fund balance to cover our expenditures as compared with \$3,059,924 in the prior year. This is a \$957,488 decrease that is represented by increased revenue projections, holding the line on expenditure increases, and implementation of the cost savings proposals approved by the Board.

Following Mr. Clack's report, the Board voted unanimously to approve the audit for Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 2016 (subject to submission to and subsequent approval by the Local Government Commission), upon a motion made by Chairman Lockamy and seconded by Vice Chairperson Lee. (Copy on file in the Finance Office and with the Clerk to the Board.)

Planning and Zoning Items

RZ-10-16-1 This matter was withdrawn by the applicant.

Action Items

Public Hearing – FY 2018 Community Transportation Program (CTP) Grant Funding Application The Chairman opened the hearing and called upon Earle McNeil, SAT Transportation Coordinator, who reviewed the application for grant funding, explaining the two areas of requested funding: administrative (\$192,924; local share \$28,939) and capital (\$303,942; local share \$30,395). The floor was opened for comments, and none were received. There being no comments, the Chairman closed the hearing. Upon a motion made by Commissioner Wooten and seconded by Commissioner Kirby, the Board voted unanimously to adopt the grant resolutions authorizing the submission of the grant and making assurances and certifications regarding compliance with federal and state requirements. (Copy filed in Inc. Minute Book _____, Page _____.)

Presentation of Budget Reduction Proposals County Manager Ed Causey noted that with this month, staff had fulfilled and surpassed the budget reductions mandated as part of the salary study implementation. He reviewed additional proposals for budget reductions: CES 001 (Support Staff Position Reduction); HLT 001 (Position and Resource Reduction – technology enabled); ROD 001 (Deputy ROD Position Reduction); and DSS 002 (Position and Resource Reduction). Mr. Causey commended County department heads for embracing the process as a continuing mandate from the Board. Upon a motion made by Commissioner Wooten and seconded by Commissioner Kirby, the Board voted unanimously to approve the recommended budget reduction proposals.

Appointment – Library Board Upon a motion made by Vice Chairperson Lee and seconded by Commissioner Kirby, the Board voted unanimously to appoint Ann Matthis to replace Letitia Evans, who had resigned from the Library Board.

Consent Agenda

Commissioner Wooten requested that item e: Commissioners Meeting Schedule for 2017 be amended to change the July meeting from July 3 to July 10 and that the regular meeting time be changed from 7:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. Upon a motion made by Chairman Wooten and seconded by Commissioner Kirby, the Board voted unanimously to approve the Consent Agenda items (with the requested change) as follows:

- a. Approved the minutes of the September 26, 2016 and October 3, 2016 meetings
- b. Adopted a resolution accepting the offer of James L. Surles to purchase a parcel of land (PIN 11001748001) situated in the Newton Grove Township (Whit Road) for the amount of \$7,000 (Copy filed in Inc. Minute Book _____, Page _____.)

- c. Approved a request by the Sampson County Library system to surplus certain materials damaged by Hurricane Matthew and dispose of them pursuant to the Materials Selection Policy
- d. Authorized the submission of an application for funding under the 2017 cycle of Essential Single Family Rehabilitation Program offered through the North Carolina Housing Financing Agency (NCHFA) and utilization of The Wooten Company for grant administrative services
- e. Approved the Board of Commissioners Meeting Schedule for Calendar Year 2017 (changing the July meeting from July 3 to July 10 and adjusting the regular meeting time to 6:00 p.m.) (Copy filed in the Office of the Clerk to the Board)
- f. Approved the Sampson County Local Government Holiday Schedule for Calendar Year 2017 (Copy filed in the Office of the Clerk to the Board)
- g. Approved the Department of Aging's submission of an application for United Way funding for construction of wheelchair ramps (Copies of documents filed in Inc. Minute Book _____, Page _____.)
- h. Approved amendments to the Records Retention Schedules for County Management and Sheriff's Departments, as required by the Government Records Section of the State Archives of North Carolina (Copies filed in Inc. Minute Book _____, Page _____.)
- i. Approve a late disabled veterans tax exclusion application for George C. Simmons, Jr.
- j. Approved tax refunds as submitted:

#7688	Matthis, Joan Crostic	\$ 202.50
#7689	Matthis, Amy Thomas	\$ 292.92
#7671	Vison, Daniel Dean	\$ 222.17
#7707	Sumner, Jesse Clete	\$ 217.00
#7710	Calcutt, David Mark	\$ 231.88
#7715	McPhail Properties I LLC	\$ 116.30

- k. Approved budget amendments as submitted:

<u>EXPENDITURE</u>	<u>Health - BCCCP Wisewoman</u>		<u>Increase</u>	<u>Decrease</u>
<u>Code Number</u>		<u>Description (Object of Expenditure)</u>		
12551140	512100	Wisewoman Salaries	2,121.00	
12551140	518100	Wisewoman FICA	117.00	
12551140	518120	Wisewoman Medicare FICA	28.00	
12551140	518200	Wisewoman Retirement	156.00	

12551140	518300	Wisewoman Group Insurance	468.00	
12551140	518400	Wisewoman Dental	18.00	
12551140	518901	Wisewoman 401 K	34.00	
12551140	519300	Wisewoman Medical Services	1,500.00	
12551140	523900	Wisewoman Medical Supplies	50.00	
12551140	529700	Wisewoman Lab Supplies	701.00	
12551140	537000	Wisewoman Advertising	30.00	

REVENUE

<u>Code Number</u>		<u>Source of Revenue</u>	<u>Increase</u>	<u>Decrease</u>
12535114	404000	Wisewoman State	5,223.00	

EXPENDITURE

Aging

<u>Code Number</u>		<u>Description (Object of Expenditure)</u>	<u>Increase</u>	<u>Decrease</u>
82558750	524100	URP - Materials	39,000.00	
82558750	529901	URP - Soft Cost	16,000.00	
82558750	544000	URP - Contracted Services	45,000.00	

REVENUE

<u>Code Number</u>		<u>Source of Revenue</u>	<u>Increase</u>	<u>Decrease</u>
82035875	403605	URP - NCHFA	1,000,000.00	

EXPENDITURE

Finance

<u>Code Number</u>		<u>Description (Object of Expenditure)</u>	<u>Increase</u>	<u>Decrease</u>
11141300	599900	Disaster Relief	50,000.00	
11999000	509700	Contingency		50,000.00
61971000	535400	Maint Repair of Water Lines	250,000.00	

REVENUE

<u>Code Number</u>		<u>Source of Revenue</u>	<u>Increase</u>	<u>Decrease</u>
61937100	409900	Fund Balance Appropriated	250,000.00	

EXPENDITURE

Aging

<u>Code Number</u>		<u>Description (Object of Expenditure)</u>	<u>Increase</u>	<u>Decrease</u>
02549580	526200	SHIIP - Dept Supplies	35.00	

REVENUE

<u>Code Number</u>		<u>Source of Revenue</u>	<u>Increase</u>	<u>Decrease</u>
02034958	404088	SHIIP - Senior Health Info	35.00	

EXPENDITURE

BCCCP

<u>Code Number</u>		<u>Description (Object of Expenditure)</u>	<u>Increase</u>	<u>Decrease</u>
12551560	512100	BCCCP Salaries		2,949.00
12551560	512700	BCCCP Longevity		28.00
12551560	518100	BCCCP FICA		226.00
12551560	518120	BCCCP Medicare FICA		52.00
12551560	518200	BCCCP Retirement		210.00
12551560	518300	BCCCP Group Insurance		783.00
12551560	518400	BCCCP Dental		26.00
12551560	518901	BCCCP 401K		349.00

12551560	523900	BCCCP Medical Supplies	50.00
12551560	529700	BCCCP Lab Supplies	173.00
12551560	531100	BCCCP Travel	347.00
12551560	537000	BCCCP Advertising	30.00

REVENUE

<u>Code Number</u>		<u>Source of Revenue</u>	<u>Increase</u>	<u>Decrease</u>
12535114	404000	BCCCP State		5,223.00

1. Authorized execution of NC Emergency Management/FEMA documentation designating the primary and secondary agents for executing applications for disaster assistance (Copy filed in Inc. Minute Book _____, Page _____.)

Consideration of Tax Appeals

Upon a motion made by Commissioner Wooten and seconded by Commissioner Kirby, the Board voted unanimously to adjust the penalties applied to the following tax accounts for failure to timely list business personal property by forgiving one-half of the assessed penalties.

Herring, Andrew Garrett: Tax (\$17,843.80); Assessed Penalty of \$5,627.09 Adjusted by Half
Hudson, Pelmon Jart Jr. (Acct 1): Tax (\$4,102.20); Assessed Penalty of \$624.87 Adjusted by Half
Hudson, Pelmon Jart Jr. (Acct 2): Tax (\$33,728.34); Assessed Penalty of \$8,189.15 Adjusted by Half
Little Man Farming (Joseph Warren): Tax (\$13,352.37); Assessed Penalty \$2,566.19 Adjusted by Half
Spell Construction (Michael Spell): Tax (\$19,073.83); Assessed Penalty \$6,487.87 Adjusted by Half
Sutton, Kenneth Mack: Tax (\$8,897.83); Assessed Penalty \$2,608.58 Adjusted by Half

County Manager Reports

County Manager Ed Causey noted that the December meeting would first convene at 9:00 a.m. in the Second Floor Courtroom of the Courthouse for the swearing-in ceremonies. Mr. Causey took the opportunity to express his appreciation for those who worked in response to Hurricane Matthew.

Public Comments

The floor was opened for comments, and the following were received:

Sandy Meyer: My address is 2580 Goshen Church Road. That's Faison but its Sampson County Faison. It's where the dead body was found at the end of our road and WRAL called it a remote area in Sampson County. I live in the Hobbton district. My children attend Hargrove, Hobbton Middle School, and Hobbton High School. And I come before you tonight to say that I am incredibly disappointed by your October vote to not give funding for the Hobbton High School track project. And unfortunately I realize I am a lot late on to be heard on that; I should have come last month, the month before, the month before that. But I, probably like a lot of other parents, become somewhat complacent. I assume that the School Board and the County Commissioners are going

to do what's best for my children based on the finances you have to work with and unfortunately the realistic me knows and learned in October that that's not the case. I have a lot of concerns as my children began school. I didn't grow up here, so I was learning new people, learning the teachers, learning the educators, the administrators. And so, we went in and began in Hargrove. Over the years - I'm not going to lie to you - I've had a lot of friends, I've had a lot of people that I know from the community take their children out of public school and put them somewhere else. Well, I'm not inclined to do that. I believe this my community. The Hobbton district is the area I am raising my family, that's where I am living, that's where I plan to retire, and I want it to be the best as possible. And how it's going to be best is what we give to the students at those schools who are going to be my neighbors, who are going to be my school board members, who are going to be the employees in the businesses, who are going to be our county commissioners. And these students are going only to perform and do what we expect of them, and to what tools we give them to use, and if we give them nothing, we will get nothing in return from them. I have seen a coach come into this cross country track program; he's not from here, he's moved in, he's motivational to these kids, he's inspirational. He's gotten my teenage son to get up at 5:30 a.m. at times and go running and if that's not motivational I don't know what is. And we want to keep him. We want that excitement. We want somebody that's going to make our kids want to excel. That's not just wealthy smart children, that's children from every single segment in the community. I've heard you talk about businesses and trying to get businesses to come to Sampson County. They're not going to come if they do not have a good workforce later on. If we have a high school that doesn't provide for employees to come in. If they look at Hobbton high School and they see no track they think what kind of High School is that; obviously nobody cares about that school. If it was truly a community school, if it was truly a community school that was worth anything, it would look like every other high school. I'll be honest, it offends me to hear I am paying higher tax rate than any other surrounding counties. My children are lacking the bare minimum of what is at the other high schools within the same county of which I live. When you look at some numbers of what these kids at Hobbton High School are doing in the Track and Field/Cross Country program; it's unbelievable. They are bringing accommodations to our county. You all are being recognized because what's being said is "student so-and-so won a state championship. They are from Sampson County." If you don't give them the tools to participate that's not going to be heard throughout this state. We need to reward them for attempting to excel. We need to reward our teachers and our coaches and make them want to stay here and not want to go to other communities. (*Timer Alarmed*) That's my time? Well, I'll be heard next month then.

Cece Hudson: Good evening. I'm President of Hobbton High School PTO. I appreciate you allowing me to make some comments here tonight. My concern is also with our Hobbton High School track. We were very disappointed in the outcome of the vote from the last County Commissioners meeting to say the least. A couple of things that I would like to call your attention to first of all is there was a comment made that the track was going to service about 50 students. That is absolutely incorrect. There are on

average about 150 students that participate in track at Hobbton High School throughout the year. It is a three season sport. Many of the athletes that participate in other sports at Hobbton High School also participate in track during their off-season. They do this because they enjoy the program, they also enjoy the leadership of Coach Klaves, and it keeps them physically fit. There are also approximately 50 soccer players that would benefit from having a track at Hobbton High School, as the plans that have been made for that track also include a soccer field in the middle of the track. So that puts you at about 200 kids that would be serviced by that track in an average school year. That does not even count for the rest of the school body that would also benefit from that track from their P.E. classes throughout the year. There is also not a track available at the Newton Grove Parks down the road. That would become available to everybody in the Newton Grove Community. The track team at Hobbton was built literally with nothing but a dream by Coach Klaves. He came to this community, as Ms. Myer said. He was not from here. Coach Klaves is a once in a lifetime coach. He is the coach that every athlete dreams of having. He has a passion like no other person. That's why this school with no track, that never had a track team before has a track team that is bringing home medals in state competition. Somebody else on this Board stated that Hobbton had been treated like the unwanted step child. You are correct. Everybody that is on the track team stand up. These are not unwanted step-children. These are my children and they are your children. I'm proud of these kids. And as a county we should all be proud of these kids. We are a family at Hobbton High School. And Coach Klaves has brought these kids together. He gives them positive reinforcement and some of these kids are being looked at for college scholarships that would not have an opportunity to go to college otherwise. Think of how many more may have that opportunity if we had the proper facilities that have been afforded to every other high school in this county, yet these children are denied those services. This track team is what's keeping some of these kids that are here tonight in school. That's why they continue to come to school. Coach Klaves' leadership is what is the fire behind this program. These children have never had a home track meet. They have hosted a home track meet, but when they host a home track meet they host at a rival school; Midway. Imagine how that feels for them. They're psyched out from the beginning. I think that's a shame. And you all just sat here and congratulated yourselves because you came in way under budget. Thank you for your time.

Sandra Oates: Good evening Mr. Chairman, Commissioners. I'd like to thank you for the opportunity for me to address this Board this evening. Tonight I'd like to revisit the need of Hobbton High School to obtain a yes vote from this Board for the need of a track and field. Hobbton High School is a diverse school in need of appropriate facilities to practice, to train, and to compete. The benefits of track and field are endless. As a registered nurse I can't help but to share with you how the program will help to improve the health of Sampson County. The individual, it helps to improve their health mentally, physically and emotionally. The sports build healthy habits of exercise. It improves cardiovascular health. It reduces the risk of stroke and heart disease. It reduces the risk of obesity that has overcome 20% of the children in adolescence,

according to the Center for Disease Control. It decreases stress and in return improves mood and also behavior. It improves self-confidence as it empowers the athlete to finish what they have started; to push for better by meeting and exceeding their personal records; by setting high goals. The team work seen in track and field is simply amazing. They teach each other. They lead each other by example. They hold each other accountable. And they motivate each other. They learn these team work skills from their coach that they are blessed to have. Also, with all the negative influences in our society, would you much rather see these students of Hobbton High School running on the field or running in the streets? Think about that for a minute. Through the leadership of Jeffrey Klaves, Hobbton High School track and field has already provided proof...the evidence that you need that it can be successful. They've competed at regional and state competitions. In fact, this weekend, the cross country team went to a state competition in Kernersville. State competitions; from Sampson County; the Hobbton District. Can you imagine yourselves working without the tools you need? No laptops. No paper. No pens, no pencils, no offices, no desks. That's what you're asking Mr. Klaves to do. This sport affords students to new possibilities of seeking higher education based on their success in track in field through scholarships that otherwise would not be afforded to them. Having a track and field at Hobbton High School is a win-win situation not only for the program but for the entire county. It would allow the community to host events, which in return will boost economic growth for local restaurants and stores as people come from out of town to visit. It also can provide an avenue from other clubs and foundations to host fundraisers as well. Board of Commissioners, would you give Hobbton High School the opportunity that other county schools have had and vote yes for track and field. Thank you.

Jeff Klaves: Good evening Commissioners. My name is Jeff Klaves. I am a proud coach and teacher at Hobbton High School. At this time Mrs. Amanda Bradshaw is passing out a document that pertains to our Hobbton cross country and track and field numbers. We really believe that strength comes through numbers. I wanted to let you guys know that I currently the quarterback of the Hobbton Track Project. As the quarterback it is my job to get information to the playmakers around me. To begin I want to thank each and every one of you, Board of Commissioners, for the support you have given education throughout the years. Before I get into the privilege of introducing some of the student athletes I have that are going to speak before you tonight, I want to talk about some of the numbers that have shown the growth of the Hobbton High School track and field program. And I appreciate all the support in this room today. Many parents and students I did not even know were coming out. In expanding on some of the numbers Ms. Cece Hudson provided, since 2013 - and I just became a teacher in 2010 so this is just the last couple of years - since 2013 the Hobbton track and field program has impacted the lives of more than 210 students. Our percent increase is now up to 20% of the student body. In the Spring, Winter, and Cross Country season of the Fall, we have a no cutting policy, and we also have a no cost policy. And this is very important because 61% of our student athletes are students of color. 70% of our athletes are low-income. So to provide a program that is able to afford

them the opportunity to be a part of something that teaches them leadership and character is very important. More strength by numbers: 84% of students graduate from Hobbs High School in four years. Students that are on the teams for Hobbs cross country and track and field must maintain 70% average to be a part of the team. So why have many said that cross country and track and field has afforded them the opportunity to graduate is because, as a coach I will not let them fail. I push them first in the classroom before we ever exceed on the playing field. Many of these students, who again some of the parents have already talked about going on to be some of our student leaders, they go on to the NCAA level on scholarship and many of those students are even in this room today, so I thank you my college bound athletes for coming out and showing what the program has done for you. And I'm very humbled by the fact that my peers within the county, even at rival schools, have even voted for myself to be Coach of the Year thirteen times to represent all of the successes that have been happening. Successes that I will humbly never promote from within, but to be recognized for that obviously shows that Hobbs High School is doing very good things. And now besides the numbers that you guys have before you, I want to turn to some speakers that we have from Hobbs High School. Each student athlete will share their story and will reflect on how this project will affect them and future students at Hobbs High School. Their words are more powerful than mine could ever be because they are a product of a program that believes in student-centered learning and using athletics as a catalyst for developing our future leaders.

Janet Thompson: I am a Junior at Hobbs High School and a member of the varsity winter and spring track team. When I entered high school, I was known as the loud black girl with an attitude. I had no idea what track was, and I had no intentions of running, but I needed something to do after school and something to release built up anger that I had inside. So I decided to join the track team. At first, I didn't care about the sport; I was just running to run. But, going to meets and seeing other athletes win, it made me want to win, so I put my mind to it, and I started to win. Ever since freshman year, I've competed at every indoor and outdoor state meet, and when I first set foot on the state track at my first state meet, that's when I knew I had found my passion. I stopped playing all sports that I played and focused just on track. Since joining the track team, I've won multiple awards, including the dedication award for indoor and outdoor track, superintendent's list, academic all-star and the most improved sophomore, and that has to do with my coach's high expectations. I must say, track and my coach have really changed me as a person, and after high school I want to run track in college, which is something I never thought I would want to do. If Hobbs got a track, it would benefit student athletes like myself who want to run track in college. Now, I want you to imagine playing football and not knowing where the end zones or the out of bounds are. And, imagine playing basketball and not knowing where the three-point line or the free-throw lines are. That is what it is like practicing at Hobbs without a track. We travel to track meets without knowing where any of the exchange zones for relays are, and not knowing that has caused us confusion with running events. The confusion has caused us to get disqualified in multiple events. When this

happened with not one, but two of my relay events last spring, at the same track meet I was furious. On a positive note, things like that motivates my team to do better, although not having a track can be really frustrating. Other schools often ask us how we run so good without a track, and my response is although not having a track is very hard and frustrating, my coach always has a plan. With that being said, I am asking tonight that you please open the floor for a revote on funding for the HHS track.

Lakelyn Bass: I'm a sophomore at HHS, and I'm a current member of the HHS track and field team. When I was in middle school, I had no idea what track even was. I was a competitive gymnast for several years, and I never saw myself doing anything other than gymnastics. In ninth grade, my heart fell for a different sport. I chose running and jumping over vault, bars, beams and floor - which I never saw myself doing in a million years. The first time I ever high jumped was at Trask High School. I had no idea what I was doing, but I knew that instant that I wanted to continue high jumping the rest of my track career. That first time that I high jumped, I was only two inches away from qualifying for states, which I never thought I could do. So, at the next meet, without having anywhere to practice high jump, I qualified for indoor state championship for 1A and 2A schools. When I got to the state championships, I was so nervous that I was shaking because not only was it my first time but I was jumping with girls that actually get to practice on a track. So I was going in there thinking that I stood no chance and I was definitely not going to get on podium. So I jumped just like I normally would, and as I started to sit down they said wait, you might have placed. Sure enough, I did, and I did this without a track. The accomplishment made me want to go ahead and win states and I also want to go to college for track and field, which is kinda hard without us having a track. If it weren't for Coach Klaves, I would not be in the position I am in now. I would still be in gymnastics and I wouldn't even know what the word track meant. He does his absolute best to try and give us every opportunity we can to accomplish our goals, and it is difficult for him to do because we don't even have a track. We practice every day on grass, concrete, and even the parking lot, which is such a disadvantage. And for people like me and a lot more who do field events such as pole vault, high jump, long jump, triple jump and etc., we can't even practice because we don't have the facilities we need. We travel to different schools, maybe once a week so people with field events can have the chance to practice and get what they needed. Our coach sacrifices his own money and his time for us so that we can practice at different schools. If we had a track, we wouldn't need to find extra time to practice at other schools, extra money for transportation and equipment for us to practice on. We would have it at our own school. I'm asking you tonight to please consider a revote for funding of the HHS much needed track.

Victor Aguirre: Good evening. I am a student athlete at Hobbs High School. Some of the sports I do at Hobbs High School are soccer, cross country, winter track and spring track. So, as you can see, I am a busy student athlete year round. This track will benefit me year round. Having a track will not only benefit me, but it will also benefit future generations of Hobbs High School. It will also help with some of the students

who doesn't even know what track is. Not having a track is very difficult to understand each event. Each event is different, you have to know where you have to be and where you have to go. It is very hard to understand that when you do not have a track. If we are able to have a track at HHS, that means we will be able to hold home meets. That way, our friends and family could come and support us and see us do what we love to do. It will also help us grow the HHS Wildcat family. We have the talent, and we have the dedication and all we ask in return is a track so we can continue to grow the Hobbton High School Wildcat track and field family. I am here to ask if you could please have a revote on funding for the Hobbton school track.

Ty Meyer: I am currently a junior at Hobbton High School. I would like to start tonight by thanking the three board members who allowed me to meet with you over the past month. I've used that knowledge to become a better leader for my school and community. Words cannot describe the things I that I have gained from you all. Cross country has really taught me dedication. In hopes of qualifying for the state meet that we went to last Saturday, we were up at 5:30 a.m. from June to November, working, running and giving it our all. It's really helped me in school, where I am currently involved as a member of BETA Club, the FFA, the FBLA, the TSA, the SGA, and a current Junior Leader. I'm also captain of the cross country, golf and member of the baseball team. I joined this team my freshman year not knowing too much about running but it's something I wanted to use to stay in shape. But instead what I found is a close knit family. I met kids who came from all different backgrounds. I was told how track and field kept them out of trouble and in the classroom. These sports gave my teammates a reason to graduate and strive for more in life. With the addition of a track at our school, it would help increase the number of those students who have prospered. We should not view this as building a track for our school. We should view this as building a family for both the school and the community.

Felesia Buczynski: I appreciate the opportunity to speak as an alumni of Hobbton High School, Class of 1981, and on the current need to expedite the building of a track facility for our state champion student athletes, our grand champion band students (yes, the band would also utilize this track), our PE students and our community. You note I said the word our four times. My parents are both graduates of Hobbton High School. I, and both my brothers, are graduates. My twin daughters are graduates of Hobbton High School, and my nieces will graduate in 2018 and 2019. So yes, Hobbton High school is our community and has been for years. I'd like a show of hands of the Hobbton community here tonight - that is a very small fractions of the people who are very passionate about the Hobbton community. My brothers and I left the Hobbton community to do the military or our jobs, but we all three came back. My mother never understood while I was in college why I came home every weekend and sometimes during the week. And, I said, there's really nothing to do there, and she said, you're kidding me. You're in Raleigh, and there's nothing to do there? I missed home and the people there. Home also represented my Wildcats. You see, I cheered for six years in the Hobbton district for football and basketball, and I tried really hard to be volleyball

and softball player. I quickly realized my voice, my cartwheels and my splits were a lot more valuable than my feeble attempts to hit a ball. I missed marching band also, so I wanted to come home and see them. I came home to support Hobbton athletes and the band. Everyone needs a cheerleader in their corner. My twin daughters began playing ball in the Hobbton community in kindergarten and continued through college. Morgan was a starting outfielder as a freshman at St. Andrews, on an academic and athletic scholarship. Jillian played intramural volleyball and softball for her sorority at ECU while she was earning her nursing degree. While a student at Hobbton, Morgan played three sports, was a member of concert and marching band and FFA. Jillian played two sports, was a section leader in concert and marching band and was Miss Hobbton. As you can see, my husband and I spent a lot of time volunteering and a lot of money on our children and the programs they were involved in because we wanted them and the program to excel. We have no regrets except that we wish we had more time to volunteer. They were able to practice on a beautiful softball field, due to the generosity of a private donor. When marching season rolled around, they marched wherever they could find to march – the parking lot, the driveway, any piece of grass we were allowed on because there was no place for the band either. My daughters' love for Hobbton became even more evident when it came time to order class rings. They wanted Hobbton High School class rings, and I said you're going to graduate from college in a few years, why don't you wait and get a college ring. No, momma, we want our high school class rings; we don't want college rings. That's one of the few times they've proved me wrong. My children never asked for college class rings. They still wear their Hobbton High School class rings with their wedding bands. They're still proud of where they came from. I want to see all students and student athletes at Hobbton High School look back with the same pride my daughters did, but until Hobbton High School student feel like they're being treated with the same fairness that other schools in Sampson County have been treated with, they may never want a class ring. The Hobbton community has sat back and emotionally watched other districts be granted wonderful new schools and new athletic facilities while we've made do with hand-me-downs or nothing. What we'd like to know is why. What the students would like to know is what are they doing wrong not to get the same treatment. My daughter Morgan resigned her position at St. Andrews University as a sports information director and the assistant softball coach to come back home to Hobbton to become a teacher and a coach. It was great at first, then she realized the support from the county just wasn't there and the students were not motivated due to the lack of facilities. I lost my daughter being close to home because she found out how schools in other counties treated their students and teachers much better. She found a new home and has been very successful and satisfied there. Ask our committed teachers and students. You have the power to change the attitude of our community and our students by opening up the discussion and call for a revote of your decision that you made to decline the funding for the new and much-needed track at Hobbton High School. The cross country team, the track teams, the band, the soccer team, and the community are watching. It's time our students and community feel like they're respected. We cannot afford to lose any more great teachers and coaches. You have the responsibility to treat all schools in

Sampson County equally and fairly and do what you must to keep our student motivated.

B.J. Lockamy: I am an alumni of Hobbton High School, Class of 1993. I have a nephew that goes to that school and I have a daughter that will be attending there next year. This is where my whole family went to school – my daddy, my momma, me, my sisters. Hobbton is not just the name of a school in our district, it is our community. It is our family. It has become part of our identity. I remember those Friday night lights during football season as a cheerleader. I thought it couldn't be any better. Then came basketball season, hitting that hardwood floor, them balls bouncing made our cheers even bigger and louder. These memories will never be forgotten. That was 23 years ago. The sad thing is when I went to the football game last Friday night, it was the same lights in the field. It was the same scoreboard at the end of the field; it was the same Hog Slat bleachers – 23 years ago. In the gym I see the same wood floors; I see the same wood bleachers. I see the same scoreboard on that wall. Time has moved on, but Hobbton hasn't. The Wildcats have seen new schools get the latest schools with all the bells and whistles built all around us. We've seen new fields and new courts, tracks and amenities being used and played on, but our kids haven't been able to enjoy these. We are stuck 23 years ago. We've watched other schools and districts have priority, but we can't wait any more. We shouldn't be asked to, and we shouldn't be expected to. I have watched past Hobbton alumni send their kids to other schools in next door districts due to the lack of facilities and amenities at Hobbton High School. And, who's to blame them. As a parent, we all want better for our children. So our physical location looks the same, but our spirits move on every day. Football, basketball, baseball are not the only sports or activities our children can be a part of. New and exciting things are happening at Hobbton. We have the mighty marching Wildcats that are grand champions with our hard work and dedication of our kids and Jeffrey Tart. He has taken this band to places it has never seen, but yet we have to practice wherever we can. Angela Martin has taken the drama and class to new heights, and made the Hobbton High School pageant a scholarship pageant. This has opened door for many who don't want to play sports. And then there's Jeffrey. His dedication to our children and his field and track program is inspirational beyond words. Our children deserve a new track and field, a soccer area to play and practice. We have been passed by so many years. Let us move on. Let us stop being the red-headed stepchildren. We're asking for these funds. We need this money specifically for Hobbton's new track and field. We understand there may be other schools that have new facilities, and some already have more than one track. We just want one. Let the Board of Education allocate their money like they always do – but we need this specialty fund. Please help the Hobbton district. Our kids past, present and future. Our community, our legacy is Hobbton Wildcats. Please don't let personal debates and opinions be at the expense of our children and our Hobbton community or our future. I am respectfully asking and begging for reconsideration for revote.

Jennifer Polk: I too am here in support of Hobbton High School and our request to fund a track for our athletes of Hobbton High School. We're not asking for anything out of

the ordinary. All we're asking for is just what it would take for our students to have equal facilities to the other schools that are in this county. Thanks to the hard work of our coach Jeffrey Klaves, Hobbton High School now has a phenomenal track and field program. He ensures our athletes are provided with opportunities that a lot of our students just wouldn't have without his assistance. Throughout the track and field season, our students participated in invitational events, and sometimes Coach Klaves pays out of pocket. That shouldn't be the case. Because of his efforts, his assistance and his undying support of our students, our athletes, some of our athletes are able to go onto college on a scholarship for track and field. That's admirable. My son is Josh Polk. He's a sprinter at Hobbton High School. During the last school year, Josh won all-county, conference, region and even a state championship, and I'm proud of that. To hear the disappointment in my son's voice when you guys voted no for a track was very heart-wrenching. I'm sure if it had been your child that you had to tell, you would have been just as disappointed. Thank you to the two of you who voted yes. To the other three, I'm disappointed to say the least. But Josh says, momma, I'm not going to worry about it. I'm just going to continue to do my best. While I admire his tenacity and his determination to continue to work hard, as so many of our other students feel, this should not be the case. Our students at Hobbton High School should not continually be disappointed simply because this board does not put forth the funding that we need. We don't have a new school; there are new schools all over the county. We don't have a track; there are tracks at schools all over the county. How do I explain that to my son? How do we explain that to the children that are our future? I urge you to reconsideration your discussion and just bring Hobbton up to the status quo which is present at every other high school in the county.

Mike Wilson: The only thing I have to say is they're not asking for a lot. They're not asking for a \$35 million school; they're asking for 1% of that. The oldest high school in the county, and it's a disgrace for me to stand here and y'all not approve it.

After comments were received, Commissioner Kirby offered the following remarks:

I don't consider - I have never considered - any child unwanted or a stepchild. It is I who made the comment awhile back that I felt in my opinion - maybe I overstated - that Hobbton seemed to have been given the short end of the stick. If you recall over a year ago I made a motion to grant this - Mr. Parker and I. During my years at Clinton High School I participated in athletics. Many of you might know that I played football. Some of you might recall that I played basketball and baseball. Few of you would know that I participated in track and field. I was on the 440 relay team; I ran the 220 and the 100-yard dash. I also threw the shot put, the javelin and discus. Track and field was a very important part of Clinton City Schools, and it was extremely rewarding for me. I learned a great deal about life and about myself from participating in track and field. On Friday, October 28, 2016, I had the distinct honor and privilege of speaking with Ty

Meyers, a junior at Hobbton High School. Ty is an exceptional young man. He is a member of the cross country team, baseball team as well as, a member of the Junior Leadership organization. I was extremely impressed with Ty. He demonstrated an uncanny maturity and clear articulation on the subject matter of the track, that was superior to the adults that I'd spoken to on the issue. In short, while many adults were expressing extremely mean-spirited, hateful, and childish sentiments on the Internet and social media outlets, Ty contacted my office and scheduled an appointment and spoke with me like an adult. His email to me and his conversations with my office were extremely mature and sober. A lot of the individuals, perhaps some even in this room tonight, who are adults, could learn an awful lot from this very nice young man. Ty told me about the need for the track, for personal reasons. He went on to explain, in detail, how the track would be beneficial to the whole community. I must admit that I did hear from another adults about the purposes beyond the track team. But Ty's explanation was especially enlightening. He talked about the safety and security for ordinary families utilizing the track during off hours for health and well-being. He spoke of teachers possibly utilizing the track before or after school. The most important take away from my meeting with Ty Meyers was the unmistakable excitement that I saw in his eyes at the thought of having a track that would serve as Hobbton's "home field" during the track events scheduled for home. I saw a lot of myself in the eyes of Ty. I remembered how good I felt running track and playing football at the Dark Horse Stadium. In my thoughts of those high school days, I could not imagine playing home events at any location other than Clinton High School. How can we now deny the children at Hobbton High School this incredible feeling of pride? How can we possibly take away the joy and exhilaration that they necessarily would have by walking out onto their own home track? Ty is not the only kid who would have great joy and pleasure in having his or her own home field. The interest in track and field at Hobbton is astounding, compared to other schools in our county. It is my understanding that approximately 60 to 70 kids came out to participate in track and field last year! That is absolutely amazing. The team has produced several athletes to compete on the state level. That weighs extremely heavy in my mind. In high school, I was all conference, all East, and all-State. Receiving those honors were not entirely about me. It was a reflection of our team, our school, and our community. It was a reflection of our coaches, teachers, and those who supported us. I remember how I felt and can only imagine how my coach, Bobby G. Robinson felt when they told us that I was all-State football and was given an opportunity to participate in the Shrine Bowl game, where the top athletes in North and South Carolina play each other in Charlotte, North Carolina. That really was not about Albert Kirby, but rather it was about Clinton High School athletics, which included the Boosters Club and the mothers, fathers, parents who supported our team. As a former athlete, a former track and field participant, it is impossible for me to overlook the request of the children of Hobbton High School. With respect to spending, no one will debate or disagree with the fact that we are a poor rural county with limited resources. Nobody on this board will disagree with the fact that the taxes in our county are too high. I'm sure that many will agree that there's a need to limit spending, especially wasteful spending. But this is not wasteful spending. Let me

explain to you why it is not. It's not wasteful spending because you cannot put a price on the faces of those young ones when they walk out onto their very own track; let me emphasize their own track. When there's a home track and field event and the location is their very own track field, well that is priceless. This is one of those situations where we are going to have to simply make a way.

Mr. Kirby then noted that it was for this reason that he made a motion regarding the approval of funding for completing the track at Hobbton High School. He noted that he understood the school had some funds available (\$100,000 - \$150,000) for the track and moved that the Board cover the difference in the monies needed to fund the construction of the track, the estimates he understood being between \$350,000 - \$400,000. An unidentified representative in the audience noted that the estimate they had been given was near \$600,000, but they thought the bids would be under that. An additional \$250,000 was needed, the representative offered. Staff noted that the motion must appropriate a specific amount of money. Commissioner Wooten stated that if the motion was amended to the original request of \$150,000, he would second the motion. It was discussed that this would not be enough to fund the project. Commissioner Kirby withdrew his motion and yielded the floor to Commissioner Wooten.

Commissioner Wooten noted that he had also met with Ty Meyer on the need for the track, and he was an amazing young man. Commissioner Wooten noted the passion of the coach and youth that had been present, and there was no way that he could find himself to do anything other than support what was asked for. He stated that he had received a lot of hate mail and "nastygrams"; however, he would put that aside because that was no way to get anything done. He stated he was going to be man enough to admit he was wrong and to put the hateful things that were said aside. He stated he would support what was originally asked for if it were put into a motion. He noted, however, that this request was not the Board of Commissioners' job. The Board of Education did not discuss it in an open meeting, and they did not vote on it, he added, but he was not going to stand in the way of people like Ty Meyer, Lakelynn Bass and the other people who spoke, having - as someone eloquently put it - the tools to do what they need to do.

Vice Chairperson Sue Lee also noted that she too had been the recipient of rather nasty things. She stated that she honestly believed the request should come through the Sampson County School Board. She stated that Hobbton was just as deserving as any other school, and she wanted to see them get their track as the kids deserved the track. But, she stated, there was a right way to do things, and the request should have come through the school board. She stated that the Board of Commissioners were not charged with finding the funding to do this; the method was flawed.

Commissioner Kirby stated that after discussing with the Chairman and other Board members, he moved that the Board grant the school what was originally requested (\$150,000). Staff suggested that the motion be to approve the budget

amendment that was on the previous month's agenda as it specified the actual funding accounts. Commissioner Kirby amended the motion to be that the budget amendment from the previous agenda (noted below) in the amount of \$150,000 be approved. Chairman Lockamy seconded the motion, and it passed 4-1 (Vice Chairperson Sue Lee voting nay).

<u>EXPENDITURE</u>		<u>County Schools Capital Outlay</u>	
<u>Code Number</u>		<u>Description (Object of Expenditure)</u>	
11659140	555030	Category I	<u>Increase</u> 150,000.00
19959140	582096	Transfer to General Fund	<u>Decrease</u> 150,000.00
<u>REVENUE</u>			
<u>Code Number</u>		<u>Source of Revenue</u>	
11035914	409612	Trans from 1/2 cent sales tax reserve	<u>Increase</u> 150,000.00
19932320	409900	Fund balance approp	<u>Decrease</u> 150,000.00

It was stated that this approval did not preclude the request for additional funds coming, as appropriate, through the school board.

Closed Session

Upon a motion made by Chairman Lockamy and seconded by Commissioner Kirby, the Board voted unanimously to go into Closed Session pursuant to GS 143-318.11(a)(3) for consultation with the County Attorney on a potential legal matter relating to a department's request for payment of overtime for an exempt employee. No action was taken in Closed Session. The Board returned to the Auditorium, and upon a motion made by Chairman Lockamy and seconded by Commissioner Kirby, voted unanimously to come out of Closed Session.

Adjournment

Upon a motion made by Chairman Lockamy and seconded by Commissioner Parker, the Board voted unanimously to adjourn.