

The Hoke County Board of Commissioners convened for a regular meeting at 7:00 pm, February 21, 2022 in the Commissioners Room in the Pratt Building.

PRESENT:

Chairman Allen Thomas, Jr.  
Commissioner James Leach  
Commissioner Harry Southerland  
Commissioner Lonnie Baldwin (via Zoom)

ALSO PRESENT:

County Manager Letitia Edens  
County Attorney Grady Hunt  
Clerk to the Board Gwen McGougan

ABSENT:

Vice Chairman Tony Hunt

Chairman Thomas called the meeting to order with a quorum. Commissioner Baldwin led the Pledge of Allegiance and Mr. Jim Davis gave the Invocation.

**1. Adoption of Agenda**

Hoke County  
Board of Commissioners

227 N. Main Street  
Raeford, North Carolina  
28378



February 21, 2022  
7:00 P.M.

Commissioner's Room  
Pratt Building

**A G E N D A**

**PLEDGE & INVOCATION:** Commissioner Lonnie Baldwin

**ITEM**

**1. Adoption of Agenda**

**2. Consent Agenda**

- a. NC Vehicle Tax pending refunds
- b. Finance
  - 1. Budget Amendments
    - a. Emergency Management
    - b. Parks & Recreation
  - 2. Request to declare property surplus
    - a. HSCD 2015 Dodge Charger, VIN 2C3CDXKT6FH903294, Mileage >180,000
    - b. HSCD 1989 Chevrolet 4500, VIN 1G1GG7D1G9KV102520, Mileage >180,000

**3. Tax Collector's Report**

- a. Collection Report for January, 2022
- b. Request to declare property surplus

621 McGilvary Lane	Taxes due:	\$1,344.91
FIN 58495-00-01-066	Costs:	4,089.04
Acreage 50	Total:	\$5,433.95
Tax Value \$7,500.00		

**4. Tax Assessor's Report/Releases**

**5. Parks & Recreation Advisory Board – Reappointments**

- a. Frank Baker
- b. Rose Hedgpeth

**6. Manager's Report**  
Broadband update

**7. Chairman's Report**

**8. Recess**

Chairman Thomas asked if there were any changes needed to the agenda. No changes were requested.

**Motion: Upon motion by Commissioner Leach and seconded by Commissioner Southerland, the Board unanimously adopted the agenda as presented.**

2. Consent Agenda

a. NC Vehicle Tax pending refunds

2-21-22

North Carolina Vehicle Tax System																								
NCVTS Pending Refund report																								
Crash Area	Primary Owner	Secondary Owner	Address 1	Address 2	Address 3	Vehicle Type	DOB	Plate Number	Status	Transaction #	Refund Description	Refund Reason	Crash Date	Tax Jurisdiction	Levy Type	Change	Interest Change	Total Change						
	BEL CHARLES LAWRENCE		390 ANADA RD			RAV400 NC	2016	PHANTOM	0Y19C2206	KT212	AUTHORIZED	13416464	Refund Generated due to suspension on Bill #001902306-2120-2020-0000-00	Vehicle Sale	6/12/2022	COU	Tax	(\$11.56)	\$0.00	(\$11.56)				
																				Refund	\$11.42			
	FANAU FATOS	FANAU FATOS	805 LOUISE ST			INDIANA POLICE	IN 16217	PHANTOM	002054117	POV5110	PENDING	115296102	Refund Generated due to suspension on Bill #002054117-2021-2021-0000-00	Reg. Out of State	6/13/2022	COU	Tax	(\$271.50)	\$0.00	(\$271.50)				
																					Refund	\$269.48		
	HILL EDDIE RAY JR		166 WHEATFIELD CT			RAV400 NC	2016	PHANTOM	001254277	30200V	PENDING	134022114	Refund Generated due to suspension on Bill #001254277-2020-2020-0000-00	Vehicle Sale	6/10/2022	COU	Tax	(\$262.80)	\$0.00	(\$262.80)				
																						Refund	\$254.03	
	JONES BYRON GAINCY		1825 ANDREWS RD			RED SPRINGS NC	2017	PHANTOM	001303422	TJ23847	AUTHORIZED	133011442	Refund Generated due to suspension on Bill #001303422-2021-2021-0000-00	Vehicle Sale	6/10/2022	COU	Tax	(\$88.44)	\$0.00	(\$88.44)				
																						Refund	\$87.56	
	KEYES MARGE NARVAEZ	KEYES ALMA LEE	427 PAXTON LOOP			RED SPRINGS NC	2017	PHANTOM	001729915	0484217	AUTHORIZED	109010304	Refund Generated due to suspension on Bill #001729915-2021-2021-0000-00	Vehicle Sale	6/10/2022	COU	Tax	(\$78.70)	\$0.00	(\$78.70)				
																							Refund	\$87.22
																							Refund Total	\$478.88

Total = \$ 228.89

b. Finance

1. Budget Amendments

- a. Emergency Management
- b. Parks & Recreation

AMENDMENT TO THE HOKE COUNTY BUDGET ORDINANCE  
2021/2022  
Amendment

Section 1 of the Hoke County Budget Ordinance, pertaining to the General Fund operations of the County, shall be amended as follows:

Increase/Decrease Appropriations:

Emergency Management Expenditure	15,000
Parks & Recreation	34,500
Parks & Recreation	(34,500)
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 15,000</b>

Section 2 of the Hoke County Budget Ordinance, pertaining to the General Fund operations of the County, shall be amended as follows:

Increase/Decrease Revenues:

Emergency Management Revenue	15,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 15,000</b>

This amendment:

- To increase budget for preparedness revenue to be received in the amount of \$15,000  
Funding Source: State grant funds from the Health Department
- To prevent overspending in various line items within Parks & Recreation budget  
Funding Source: No new money, using money within their budget.

Submitted: 02-21-2022

Respectfully Submitted by:

Assistant Finance Director

Approved by:

County Manager

*[Signature]*  
FEB 21 2022

2. Request to declare property surplus:

- a. HCSD 2015 Dodge Charger, VIN 2C3CDXKT6FH903294, Mileage >180,000
- b. HSCD 1989 Chevrolet 4500, VIN1GBG7D1G9KV102520, Mileage >180,000

Allen Thomas, Jr.  
Chairman

Tony Hunt  
Vice Chairman

James Leach  
Commissioner

Harry Southerland  
Commissioner



Lonnie Baldwin  
Commissioner

Grady Hunt  
County Attorney

Letitia Edens  
County Manager

Gwen McGougan  
Clerk to the Board

**RESOLUTION OF THE HOKE COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS  
DECLARING CERTAIN PROPERTY TO BE SURPLUS AND  
AUTHORIZING THE DISPOSITION OF SAID PROPERTY**

WHEREAS, the Board of Commissioners of the County of Hoke, North Carolina desires to dispose of certain vehicles from the Hoke County Sheriff's Department as listed below that have been determined as no longer needed by the County:

a.	2015 Dodge Charger	VIN 2C3CDXKT6FH903294	Mileage	>180,000
b.	1989 Chevrolet 4500 truck	VIN 1GBG7D1G9KV102520	Mileage	>180,000

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED by the Hoke County Board of Commissioners that the listed property is hereby declared to be surplus to the needs of the County and authorizes the disposition of the property in the best interest of the County of Hoke.

ADOPTED this the 21st day of February, 2022.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Allen Thomas, Jr., Chairman

\_\_\_\_\_  
Gwen McGougan, Clerk to the Board

**Motion: Upon motion by Commissioner Leach and second by Commissioner Southerland the Board voted unanimously to approve Consent Agenda items 2a – 2b2.**

**3. Tax Collector's Report**

Tax Collector Daphne Dudley gave the tax collections report for the month of January, 2022:

**HOKE COUNTY TAX COLLECTOR'S REPORT**  
February 21, 2021

Tax Levy 2021		\$30,135,000.53
Additions to Levy YTD		\$1,182,309.62
Total 2021 Levy to Date		\$31,317,310.15
Refunds 2021		\$102,253.76
Releases/Abatements		\$19,847.62
Discounts		\$433,741.26
Adjustments		\$938.95
Write Offs		\$14.60
Advertising Charged 2022 Tax Bills		\$0.00
Collectable Levy to Date		\$31,298,401.52
Collected To Date		\$29,187,218.91
Uncollected Balance 2021 Tax Levy		<u>\$2,111,182.61</u>
Collections January 2022	\$1,791,230.88	
Releases January 2022	\$0.00	
Percent of Levy Collected (Receipts)	93.25%	
Percent of Levy Collected (Releases, Etc )	0.06%	
Prior Years Tax Levy January 2022		\$2,047,014.49
Prior Years Collected in January 2022 To Date		\$682,394.59
Uncollected Balance Before Releases		\$1,464,619.90
Refunds		\$563.84
Releases/Abatements		\$2,411.95
Discounts		\$0.00
Adjustments		\$895.05
Write Offs/Insolvent		\$17,110.45
Uncollected Balance Prior Years		<u>\$1,373,460.25</u>
Prior Years Collected in January 2022	\$73,065.61	
Releases Prior Years January 2022	\$0.00	
Percent Prior Years Collected (Receipts)	28.45%	
Percent Prior Years Collected (Releases Etc )	0.18%	
Total Uncollected Taxes		<u>\$3,494,662.86</u>
	<u>2020 Taxes</u>	
Tax Levy January 2021		\$30,422,870.07
Collections January 2021		\$1,487,132.92
Releases January 2021		\$1,001.73
Percent Collected (Receipts)	91.73%	
Percent Collected (Releases Etc )	0.04%	
Prior Years Tax Levy January 2021		\$2,118,580.67
Collections January 2021		\$85,392.15
Releases January 2021		\$0.00
Insolvent		
Percent Collected (Receipts)	25.75%	
Percent Collected (Releases Etc )	0.09%	

b. Request to declare property surplus:

Mrs. Dudley also asked the Board to declare the following property, which was a tax foreclosure, as surplus:

a. Request to declare property surplus:

621 McGilvary Lane	Taxes due:	\$1,344.91
PIN 58495-00-01-066	Costs:	<u>4,089.04</u>
Acreage .50	Total:	\$5,433.95
Tax Value \$7,500.00		

Commissioner Southerland asked if the property owner could pay the taxes current and avoid this step. Mrs. Dudley said that the deed has already been recorded and the prior owner will have to place a bid and go through the upset process in order to purchase the property.

Allen Thomas, Jr.  
Chairman  
  
Tony Hunt  
Vice Chairman  
  
James Leach  
Commissioner  
  
Harry Southerland  
Commissioner



Lonnie Baldwin  
Commissioner  
  
Grady Hunt  
County Attorney  
  
Letitia Edens  
County Manager  
  
Gwen McGougan  
Clerk to the Board

**RESOLUTION OF THE HOKE COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS  
DECLARING CERTAIN PROPERTY TO BE SURPLUS AND  
AUTHORIZING THE DISPOSITION OF SAID PROPERTY**

WHEREAS, the Board of Commissioners of the County of Hoke, North Carolina desires to dispose of certain surplus property from Tax Collections (foreclosed property).

Address	Township	Parcel #	Acres	Tax Value	Total Cost
621 McGilvary Ln	Quewhiffie	58495-00-01-066	50	\$7,500.00	\$5,433.95

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Hoke County Board of Commissioners that the property referenced above is hereby declared to be surplus to the needs of the County and the disposition of the property is in the best interest of the County of Hoke is authorized.

ADOPTED this 21st day of February, 2022.

Allen Thomas, Jr., Chairman

Attest:

Gwen McGougan,  
Clerk to the Board

**Motion: Upon motion by Commissioner Leach and second by Commissioner Southerland the Board voted unanimously to declare the tax-foreclosed property at 621 McGilvary Lane as surplus to the needs of the County.**

**4. Tax Assessor's Report/Releases**

Tax Assessor Mandi Davis requested the following property tax adjustments:

OWNER NAME AND ADDRESS	CAT YEAR PROPERTY REASON	BILL	EFF DATE	JUR	REF NO	VALU	CHARGE	AMOUNT
214492 GREEN, ADAM C. GREEN, ERICKA R. 104 ROBIN PLACE FAYETTEVILLE, NC 28306	RE 2017	8355	02/21/2022			4,500	COU	33.75
	49485-03-01-437		4				FO3	4.05
	RELEASES				68656		SWF	.00
	CHARGED ON INCORRECT ACREAGE							37.80
214492 GREEN, ADAM C. GREEN, ERICKA R. 104 ROBIN PLACE FAYETTEVILLE, NC 28306	RE 2018	8405	02/21/2022			4,500	COU	33.75
	49485-03-01-437		4				FO3	4.05
	RELEASES				68657		SWF	.00
	CHARGED ON INCORRECT ACREAGE							37.80
214492 GREEN, ADAM C. GREEN, ERICKA R. 104 ROBIN PLACE FAYETTEVILLE, NC 28306	RE 2019	8562	02/21/2022			4,500	COU	33.75
	49485-03-01-437		4				FO3	4.05
	RELEASES				68658		SWF	.00
	CHARGED ON INCORRECT ACREAGE							37.80
214492 GREEN, ADAM C. GREEN, ERICKA R. 104 ROBIN PLACE FAYETTEVILLE, NC 28306	RE 2020	8568	02/21/2022			4,500	COU	33.75
	49485-03-01-437		4				FO3	4.05
	RELEASES				68659		SWF	.00
	CHARGED ON INCORRECT ACREAGE							37.80
214492 GREEN, ADAM C. GREEN, ERICKA R. 104 ROBIN PLACE FAYETTEVILLE, NC 28306	RE 2021	8670	02/21/2022			4,500	COU	33.75
	49485-03-01-437		4				FO3	4.05
	RELEASES				68660		SWF	.00
	CHARGED ON INCORRECT ACREAGE							37.80
DETAIL SUMMARY	COUNT: 5	RELEASES - TOTAL				22,500		189.00

**Motion: Upon motion by Commissioner Southerland and second by Commissioner Leach the Board voted unanimously to approve the tax release request in the amount of \$189.00.**

#### **5. Parks & Recreation Advisory Board – Reappointments**

Parks & Recreation Director Sade Rascoe presented the names of two of Parks & Recreation Advisory Board members that are due for reappointment:

- a. Frank Baker
- b. Rose Hedgpeth

Both Mr. Baker and Ms. Hedgpeth have agreed to serve another term.

**Motion: Upon motion by Commissioner Leach and second by Commissioner Southerland the Board voted unanimously to approve the reappointment of Mr. Frank Baker and Ms. Rose Hedgpeth to the Parks & Recreation Advisory Board.**

#### **6. Manager's Report**

County Manager Letitia Edens advised the Board that she had met with individuals from the Lumber River Council of Governments regarding a regional broadband study that they had conducted. Mrs. Edens gave each Commissioner a copy of the study for their review.

Mrs. Edens provided each Commissioner a proposed schedule for preparation of the FY 2023 budget. The schedule includes proposed dates for departmental budget preparation and dates for budget workshops and sessions. Mrs. Edens asked that the Board review the proposed schedule and respond to her at the next Board meeting with their preferences for workshop dates.

Mrs. Edens offered condolences to Vice Chairman Hunt and his family on the loss of his granddaughter.

Mrs. Edens also advised the Board that the Pratt Building's former receptionist, Mrs. Cecilia Herring, had passed away the previous Saturday.

#### **7. Chairman's Report**

Chairman Thomas told the Board that the Hoke County Board of Education has requested a meeting with the Commissioners to discuss the plans to jointly apply for a needs-based grant for construction of a new high school or expansion of the existing high school.

Chairman Thomas requested that the Board change the meeting time of the February 22 meeting regarding the new courthouse from 11:30 am to 10:00 am to enable Vice Chairman Hunt to attend his granddaughter's services.



**8. Recess**

**Motion: Upon motion by Commissioner Leach and second by Commissioner Southerland, the Board voted unanimously to recess the meeting until Tuesday, February 22, 2022 at 10:00 am to discuss the Courthouse project. The meeting was recessed at 7:20 pm.**



The Hoke County Board of Commissioners re-convened at 10:00 am Tuesday, February 22, 2022 in the Commissioners Room in the Pratt Building to resume the meeting recessed at 7:20 pm on Monday, February 21, 2022.

**PRESENT:**

Chairman Allen Thomas, Jr.  
Vice Chairman Tony Hunt  
Commissioner James Leach  
Commissioner Harry Southerland  
Commissioner Lonnie Baldwin (via Zoom)

**ALSO PRESENT:**

County Manager Letitia Edens  
Clerk to the Board Gwen McGougan

**ABSENT:**

**Chairman Thomas called the meeting to order with a quorum at 10:00 am.**

**Motion: Upon motion by Vice Chairman Hunt and second by Commissioner Leach, the Board voted unanimously to add "Discussion of Courthouse" to the agenda.**

Ryan Parker, Project Executive with Metcon, Inc., began by advising the Board that Hoke County is in the programming phase of the project. It will be extremely important to set a realistic project budget and adhere to it.

Tom Potts, Principal, Silling Architects, advised the Board to establish ground rules for the project. Mr. Potts continued, saying that he understood that representatives from the County had toured courthouses a year or two ago. He supports those tours, saying that they are a good tool for clients to communicate their wishes about design. Mr. Potts asked the Board if they wish to tour other courthouses. The Board members expressed willingness to see courthouses in other counties.

Mr. Potts asked if the Board would like scheduled updates on the progress. Vice Chairman Hunt suggested that the scheduled update meetings be held with the Executive Committee, and they will pass on anything that needs full Board awareness or approval.

Mr. Potts expects a 60-day programming phase, which will include the architect observe the courts as they are currently being operated. He will then prepare a tabular report estimating how much space each division will need and suggesting a square footage. Based upon this data, they will prepare an organizational diagram of how the divisions' needs can fit into a building with 2 stories. Or 3 stories. The size building that would be needed to accommodate the court functions. At the end of the 60-day programming period, decisions will be made about who can fit into that building. This information will be used by Metcon to calculate a construction cost.

Mr. Potts asked whether the proposed occupants' wish lists are expected. County Manager Letitia Edens answered that replies have been received and compiled and are included in the Board's information packet. Mr. Potts said that they will take those wish lists and add their recommendations to prepare a stacking diagram.

The Courthouse Advisory Committee has been established and Commissioner Southerland, as Chair of that committee, can determine a date for the committee to meet to discuss priorities. An Executive Committee will be established, consisting of Commissioner Southerland, Vice



Chairman Hunt, County Manager Edens and either Finance Director E.J. Prevatte or Asst. Finance Director Garvin Ferguson.

Michael LeBouf, Silling Architects Director of Design, added that much of what the courts will ask for are more operational needs and industry standards, necessary to the function that the building will have.

Upon inquiry from Vice Chairman Hunt, Mr. Potts said the construction period will take at least 24 months. The design process itself will likely take through the end of 2022.

Commissioner Leach asked who the project managers will be. Mr. Potts said the contract is with Silling, Metcon and J & K. sfL+a Architects will also be involved. Chairman Thomas asked for everyone involved in the contract to be on letterhead going forward.

Commissioner Leach asked who would be accountable for keeping the project on budget. Mr. Potts said he'd be the person to let the Board know if there's a danger in exceeding the budget. At some point, he might have to ask the Board to scale back an element of the project. Chairman Thomas added that the Commissioners on the Executive Committee will also monitor the spending closely.

#### **Recess**

Upon motion from Commissioner Leach and second by Commissioner Southerland, the Board voted unanimously to recess the meeting until February 28, 2022 at 1:00 pm in the Hoke County High School Library. The Board of Commissioners will meet with the Board of Education. This meeting recessed at 10:40 am.

The Hoke County Board of Commissioners re-convened at 1:00 pm Monday, February 28, 2022 in the Hoke County High School Media Room to resume the meeting recessed at 10:40 am on Tuesday, February 22, 2022.

PRESENT:

Chairman Allen Thomas, Jr.  
Vice Chairman Tony Hunt (virtually)  
Commissioner James Leach  
Commissioner Harry Southerland  
Commissioner Lonnie Baldwin (virtually)

ALSO PRESENT:

County Manager Letitia Edens  
County Attorney Grady Hunt  
Clerk to the Board Gwen McGougan  
Finance Officer E.J. Prevatte  
Asst. Finance Officer Garvin Ferguson

ALSO PRESENT - HOKE COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION:

Board Chair Irish Pickett  
Board Vice Chair Rosa McAllister-McRae  
Board Member Barbara Buie  
Board Member Keisha Gill  
Board Member Della Maynor

ALSO PRESENT:

Dr. Debra Dowless, Superintendent  
Assistant Superintendents:  
Dr. Chad Hunt, of Operations & Information Systems  
Dr. Dawn Ramseur, Curriculum PreK-5  
Dr. Shannon Register, Curriculum 6-13  
Finance Officer Wanaa Chavis

**Chairman Thomas called the meeting to order with a quorum at 1:00 pm. SGA President, Rebekah Hammonds, led the Pledge of Allegiance.**

Chairman Thomas asked the Board to add "Consideration of School Grant Application – Discussion and Approval" to the agenda.

**Motion: Upon motion by Commissioner Leach and second by Commissioner Southerland, the Board voted unanimously to add "Consideration of School Grant Application – Discussion and Approval" to the agenda.**

**Motion: Upon motion by Commissioner Leach and second by Commissioner Southerland the Board voted unanimously to adopt the agenda.**

BOE Chair Irish Pickett called the special meeting of the Board of Education to order.

BOE Vice Chair Rosa McAllister-McRae gave the Invocation.

Superintendent Debra Dowless gave a summary of milestones regarding the Needs-Based Public School Capital Fund (NBPSCF) grant application:

- In October, 2020 Hoke County was awarded \$10 million. The scope of the project at that time was a school of engineering, serving approximately 500 students.
- In late 2021, the NC General Assembly added additional funding to the NBPSCF grant, allowing school districts to expand their project scopes.
- Hoke County is eligible for up to \$50 million in NBPSCF funds.

- The project scope has shifted to focus on updating and expanding the existing high school.

Dr. Chad Hunt spoke about the growth in the County, and how that has affected the school system.

Capacity at the high school is currently 1,591.

Current enrollment at Hoke High School is 1,984 students. Projections for 2024-2025 is 2,355 students, and for 2029-2030 the projection is 2,484. There are presently 203 teachers and staff on campus.

Dr. Shannon Register presented a proposal to remove the Gibson buildings and modulars, except for the field house, and replace with a new building. 76,444 square feet will be demolished, and the new facility would be approximately 136,000 square feet and house the following:

- 5 EC self-contained rooms
- 50 classrooms to house core classrooms
- A Culinary Arts program
- Wrestling room
- Gym/2 locker rooms/showers
- 2 offices for coaches
- Office and space for school Administration
- Media space
- Cafeteria and food service

The McDonald side would be updated and would house:

- Social studies classrooms
- Foreign language classrooms
- Career Technical Education (CTE) classrooms
- JROTC

Capacity on the McDonald side will be 1,267; the new facility capacity will be 1,217.

Replacing 16 buildings with one new facility will improve security on the campus. There are currently several blind spots that the security cameras can't cover.

Dr. Dawn Ramseur explained the proposed budget for this project:

Total estimated project cost	\$72,752,631
Needs-Based facility grant	<u>- 50,000,000</u>
Funding request for County Commissioners	22,752,631

Commissioner Leach asked if COVID funds can be used toward this project. Hoke County Schools Finance Officer Wanaa Chavis replied that roughly the school system has received \$31 million and 95% of that has been obligated, so there are no funds remaining to put toward this project.

Chairman Thomas asked for clarity about what exactly the schools are asking for. The grant application being considered reflects the project cost of \$72,752,631. He questions whether this project will be adequate to carry the high school's needs for several years.

Dr. Ramseur presented an option that will pull all the core classrooms together. The new facility would need 17 additional classrooms to house math, English, science, and social studies. Removing the social studies classrooms from McDonald will free up space in that building. The total cost of that project is \$78,406,025 increasing the County's contribution by \$6 million.

Chairman Thomas said that he was concerned that, by the time construction is complete on the \$72 million building, the school will be very close to capacity.

Dr. Dowless agreed, adding that the \$78 million project will take the high school much further.

Commissioner Leach said that the County will not be able to go back to the LGC and request approval to borrow additional funds; the County needs to ask for an adequate amount the first time.

Chairman Thomas directed the Finance Officer and Asst. Finance Officer to determine whether another \$6 million would be feasible for the County. The County's growth will continue, and we need for there to be available capacity at the high school for as much time as possible.

Board of Education Chair Irish Pickett said that the high school may only benefit for about a year before they're at capacity again. Ms. Pickett and Commissioner Southerland agreed that the \$72 million project isn't realistic.

Vice Chairman Hunt said that, during the entire duration of his service on the Board, there's always been a need for more schools. He supports smart growth and smart planning, but the County must have the revenues coming in to afford the changes. He looks forward to hearing the opinion of the Finance Officers. He wants to give the schools as much as possible, but we don't want to put a strain on the County's budget. He is confident that the County and the School Board will be able to arrive at a compromise.

Dr. Dowless said that having class on the campus while demolishing and constructing will be a challenge. Inflation is another concern. These totals are based upon \$370 per square foot. That may change based upon the economy. She believes that the school system and the Board of Commissioners can work together and remain fiscally responsible.

Chairman Thomas asked Dr. Dowless if an emergency arose, for example a natural disaster, would the County have the flexibility to lower their financial contribution. Dr. Dowless replied that the County is obligated to contribute 2.5%, so the project scope could be changed.

Commissioner Leach said that the school system needs to invest in the project as well. Often, a project is better managed when all parties have an investment.

Chairman Thomas asked Dr. Dowless if she'd had a chance to review the information he gave her regarding grants totaling \$800,000. Dr. Dowless said those funds can be used in phases toward renovation or construction, for example, \$300,000 the first year and \$500,000 the following year. Dr. Dowless continued, saying that the \$300,000 has been earmarked for renovations.

Chairman Thomas pointed out that the County has several Capital projects, either in progress or close to beginning. At this point, the County doesn't know the exact amounts, so the County must remain flexible and not over-commit to any one project.

Rebekah Hammonds, the SGA president, said she had two concerns. The first involved security and campus access considerations in the design of the building. The second was how classes would be held while construction was underway on campus. Dr. Dowless agreed that these will be challenges.

Chairman Thomas recognized the other students in attendance: Freshman Class President Carmen Long, Payton ?, Isaiah Thomas, Lizzie Thomas, and Missy Thomas. The Board of Commissioners and the Board of Education asked to have some students in attendance, and these are the people recommended.

In preparation for a vote, Chairman Thomas asked Vice Chairman Hunt and Commissioner Baldwin if they could hear clearly.

**Motion: Upon motion by Commissioner Southerland and second by Commissioner Leach, the Board voted unanimously to approve the amended Needs-Based Public School Capital Fund grant application with the total project cost being \$78,406,025; the County's commitment would be \$28,406,025.**


**The Board of Education unanimously approved the amended Needs-Based Public School Capital Fund with the total project costs being \$78,406,025**

Commissioner Baldwin asked Dr. Dowless how the classroom space needed is calculated. Dr. Dowless replied that it depends on the use, for example a lab would need about 1250 sq. ft. and a classroom between 700 and 900 sq. ft. The Department of Public Instruction has a template with recommendations for square footage based upon the purpose of the space.

**Adjourn**

**Motion: Upon motion by Commissioner Leach and second by Commissioner Southerland the Hoke County Board of Commissioners voted unanimously to adjourn the meeting at 2:10 pm.**

  
Gwen McGougan, Clerk to the Board

  
Allen Thomas, Jr., Chairman

Approved 4/4/2022 

