

*Kevin Austin, Chairman of Board
David Moxley, Vice Chairman
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Marion Welborn, Commissioner
Frank Zachary, Commissioner*



*Ed Powell, County Attorney
Lisa Hughes, County Manager
Tanya Gentry, Clerk to the Board*

COUNTY MANAGER'S REPORT November 25, 2022

NCDOT Local Officials' Information Meeting

As I mentioned in the Board meeting Monday evening, NCDOT will hold a Local Officials' Informational Meeting on Thursday, December 8th, 3pm-4pm at the Jonesville Town Hall about improvements to the intersections of West Main Street and Elm Street, as well as Elm Street and North Bridge Street.

They will hold a meeting for the Public following at the same location, same day, 5pm-7pm.

Legislative Goals

Exhibit A contains the Legislative Goals as approved during the NCACC Legislative Conference last week. Below is a picture of Vice-Chairman Moxley during the Conference.



Next Board Meeting

Just as a reminder that prior to the starting of the December 5th Board meeting, Jim Drum will take pictures of the current Board and of the new Board and we will have a reception starting at 8:30am.

There will be some business the current Board needs to take before Beth Holcombe comes to swear in the three Commissioners.



NCACC Legislative Agenda 2023-2024 Biennium

Priority Goals

- Seek legislation, funding, and other efforts to expand digital infrastructure/broadband capability to the unserved and under-served areas and residents of the state.
- Seek additional revenue sources to address statewide public school and community college capital needs and ensure methods used to distribute school capital funding considers the needs of both low-wealth and growing counties. Revisions to the Needs-Based Public School Capital Fund that will allow for more access to counties and allow for faster school construction to include allowing projects that have not previously been awarded a grant to commence and remain eligible for future grant application periods.
- Support expansion of Medicaid as well as related funding and operational flexibility for counties to expand county workforce and necessary infrastructure.

Legislative Priorities

Environment

- Seek legislation to provide additional resources for preventative storm damage maintenance, such as stream clearing, and increase recurring funding to the state's Coastal Storm Damage Mitigation Fund.
- Seek legislation for clean water funds throughout the state and to hold chemical manufacturers producing emerging contaminants such as PFOA, PFOS, and other PFAS chemicals, and coal ash producers financially responsible for cleanup and mitigation of pollutants.

General Government

- Seek legislation to grow North Carolina's statewide economy through state investments, including technical assistance, public infrastructure funding, increased competitive incentives, state economic development grant programs and coordinated efforts with county economic development services.

Health and Human Services

- Seek additional funding and preserve block grant allocations to increase access to high quality childcare, early childhood education, child welfare services, adult protective services and guardianship, including:
 - Women's and Children's Health Services Block Grant funding to local health departments for critical services like maternal health, child health and women's health services to address unfavorable infant mortality rates;
 - Home & Community Care Block Grant; Senior Center General Purpose Funds; Social Services and Human Services Block Grants; TANF; and emergency childcare funding to ensure the safety and stability of our childcare system.
- Seek legislation that restores State Funding of Accreditation of Local Health Departments.

Justice and Public Safety

- Seek legislation to increase the amount paid to county jails by the state to the full cost reimbursement for housing sentenced inmates.

Tax and Finance

- Seek legislation that preserves existing local revenue by providing just compensation to counties for property acquired by the state and removed from the ad valorem tax base.
- Seek legislation which will repeal NCGS 105-275(45) which mandates that counties must exclude eighty percent (80%) of the appraised value of a solar energy electric system from property taxation. If repeal of NCGS 105-275(45) is not feasible, then seek legislation which will require that the State of North Carolina provide funding to any county which is forced to lose tax revenue due to NCGS 105-275(45) in an amount equal to the lost tax revenue to said county.
- Seek legislation allowing counties to include specific language on the sales tax referendum ballot designating how the proposed proceeds will be spent and to spend the proceeds of any newly enacted article 43 transit tax for all types of transportation expenditures.
- Seek legislation to give counties flexibility with use of occupancy taxes.



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Additional County Advocacy Goals

Agriculture

- Support efforts to change grants and loan award criteria to more closely match the USDA Rural Development aid requirements.
- Support legislation to protect farming operations from frivolous nuisance lawsuits.
- Support regulations and economic policies that promote small family farms.

Environment

- Support funding for a comprehensive approach to mitigate harmful and invasive species.
- Support additional funding to assist local governments in managing recycling and solid waste including: scrap tires, manufactured homes, and electronics.
- Support legislation amending NCGS §90A-53 to shorten the work experience in the field of environmental health practice necessary to receive a certificate as a Registered Environmental Health Specialists from two years to one year.

General Government

- Support increased state funding and additional funding streams for existing and new transportation construction and maintenance needs (including roads, rails, and multi-modal transportation, secondary roads and litter pickup), and support legislation to ensure that the Strategic Transportation Investments (STI) funding formula recognizes that one size does not fit all and that projects in both rural and urban areas are prioritized and funded.
- Support legislation allowing public bodies to provide emergency meeting notices by electronic means in addition to notice through newspaper with general circulation within the county.
- Support legislation allowing counties flexibility in holding remote board meetings, allowing contemporaneous, virtual public hearings, in order to expeditiously conduct county business during locally declared emergencies.

Health and Human Services

- Support expansion of Medicaid as well as related funding and operational flexibility for counties to expand county workforce and necessary infrastructure.
- Support Medicaid reimbursement for Community Paramedic services and transport services to mental health and substance abuse facilities.
- Support legislation to increase the number of state funded county Veteran Services Officers to at least one per county.
- Support legislation for hold harmless provisions and staggered payment plans to control/cap the liability to counties under the Medicaid and NCHC overpayment recoupment plan, which holds counties financially responsible for the erroneous issuance of Medicaid benefits and Medicaid claim payments resulting when the county DSS takes any action that requires payment of Medicaid claims for an ineligible individual.
- Support legislation to expand the Good Samaritan protection of covered offenses in NCGS §90-96.2(c3) to include all opioid and drug offenses to encourage reporting of drug overdoses and reduce overdose deaths and work to create required treatment options for overdose victims covered by limited immunity.
- Support legislation that promotes opioid and other substance use prevention, intervention, harm reduction, treatment and recovery initiatives.

Justice and Public Safety

- Support legislation that promotes recruitment and retention of both first responders and detention officers in jails, including but not limited to workforce development, pay scale adjustments and/ or studies, and appropriate levels of training and certification standards for these increasingly hard to staff positions.
- Support legislation to streamline and expedite the state response to emergency recovery.
- Support legislation treating all misdemeanor charges uniformly by removing statutorily imposed compliance defenses to local ordinance violations.
- Support efforts to provide greater flexibility to local governments in expenditures of 911 surcharge funds and ensure adequate funding for next-gen technology.



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Additional County Advocacy Goals (Continued)

Justice and Public Safety (Continued)

- Support legislation to restore state funding to cover the cost of facilities and utilities for state justice employees who manage and operate state probation and parole juvenile services, and provide funding for public defender offices in county-owned or leased facilities.

Public Education

- Support legislation to provide exceptions to the K-3 class size mandate including but not limited to lack of school facility space and availability of qualified teachers.
- Support legislation that promotes education attainment and career and college readiness by increasing funding for apprenticeship and internship programs, trade certification, and workforce development programs, as well as increased student support services in public schools with a focus on dropout prevention and an increase in the dropout age.
- Support increased funding to aid counties in implementing school security measures.
- Support school calendar policy that promotes optimal student outcomes and best meets the needs of local communities.
- Support funding to provide all public school students with an excellent education, including investments to assist communities in eliminating achievement disparities including:
 - Expanding teaching assistant allotments to fund assistants in all K-3 classrooms.
 - Provide full state funding for state mandated exceptional student services.

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