

NORTH CAROLINA
COUNTY OF GREENE

The Greene County Board of Commissioners met in regular session on Monday, February 3, 2025, at 10:00 AM in the Greene County Operations Center. Present for the meeting: Chairman Bennie Heath, Vice-Chairman Jerry Jones, Commissioner Derek Burrell, Commissioner Ray Johnson, Commissioner Robert Taylor, Jr., County Manager Kyle DeHaven, County Attorney Gay Stanley, and Deputy Clerk Kathy Mooring.

A. Call to Order

Chairman Bennie Heath called the meeting to order at 10:00 AM, and asked Commissioner Johnson to give the Invocation and lead the Pledge to the Flag.

There were five Greene County staff and two people from the public in attendance.

B. Approval of Agenda

On a motion by Vice-Chairman Jones and seconded by Commissioner Johnson, the Board voted unanimously to approve.

C. Public Information

Commissioner Taylor asked about the uncollected tax amount for last year. It was explained that in this monthly report, as people pay their taxes the uncollected amount will go down and the percentage collected will go up.

1. Monthly Collection Report
2. Monthly Financial Report

D. Consent Agenda

On a motion by Vice-Chairman Jones and seconded by Commissioner Johnson, the Board voted unanimously to approve.

1. 01-06-25 Regular Meeting Minutes
2. 01-15-25 Special Meeting Minutes
3. Consideration of Late Present Use Value and Property Tax Relief Applications
4. Releases/Refunds
5. Budget Amendment: Economic Development Strategic Plan Grant
6. Budget Revisions - Health Department

E. Public Comments

No comments.

F. Presentations

1. AMI Systems update

Rich Moore of McDavid Associates came and presented an update of the AMI system. The AMI system has not been able to achieve the 99% accuracy requirement. Greene County has withheld final payment to Mueller pending demonstrating compliance with the accuracy requirement. Of the current 5,405 active meters, approximately 755 meters are not reading electronically. The County has to manually read the 755 meters. At the end of 2022, Mueller proposed a solution that included replacement/upgrade of the existing AMI system at a discounted cost (\$1+ million). This was rejected by the County as the existing system is contracted to meet a 99% accuracy, was installed at a significant cost, and the County was not going to consider investing additional construction funds until the existing system was shown to function properly. Mueller recognizes the need to meet contractual requirements. Mueller has provided two (2) options to take corrective action related to performance issues with the County's AMI system (See attached). Commissioner Burress is against keeping Mueller as our contractor. It was explained by the County Manager and Rich Moore that if the County chooses to go with a different contractor at this time, the County will be spending more money than is necessary, and it will be more cost-effective to hold Mueller to their contractual requirements.

On a motion by Vice-Chairman Jones to present Mueller with Option 1 and seconded by Commissioner Johnson, the Board voted 4-1 to approve. Commissioner Derek Burress voted against it.

G. County Manager

1. Letter of Request for Commissioner Appointee on the Greene County Aging Planning Committee

The Senior Center requests a Commissioner appointee to serve on the Aging Planning Committee. Meetings take place on the third Tuesday of January, March, May, July, September and November at 2 p.m. Commissioner Jones nominated Commissioner Johnson.

On a motion by Vice-Chairman Jones and seconded by Commissioner Taylor, Jr., the Board voted unanimously to approve.

2. 2025 Contract to Audit

Mr. DeHaven presented a proposed contract for auditing from Mauldin & Jenkins, LLC. The County has just finished a three-year contract with Mauldin & Jenkins, LLC. The quote includes options for a three-year and a five-year contract, as well as the cost to prepare financial statements for the corresponding years. At this time, a decision is being sought solely on the audit contracts, as time is of essence due to the firm's billable hours filling quickly. The financial statement preparation component will be addressed at a later date.

On a motion by Vice-Chairman Jones and seconded by Commissioner Taylor, Jr., the Board voted unanimously to approve.

3. Request for Public Hearing: Consideration of a Moratorium on Solar Farms
Mr. DeHaven presented a request from the Greene County Administration and Staff for a public hearing to receive public comment regarding the consideration of a Moratorium on Solar Farms in Greene County on Monday, March 3, 2025, at 10 a.m., at the Greene County Operations Center, Commissioners Chambers, located at 312 SE Second St., Snow Hill, NC 28580.

On a motion by Vice-Chairman Jones and seconded by Commissioner Johnson, the Board voted unanimously to approve.
Chairman Heath set the Public Hearing for March 3, 2025, at 10 a.m. to consider a Moratorium on Solar Farms.

4. Request to Set a Date for a Budget Retreat
Mr. DeHaven requested that the Commissioners schedule a budget retreat on February 18, 2025, from 9 a.m. to 12 p.m., in the Greene County Longleaf Pine Conference Room to establish priorities for the 2025/26 budget. Commissioner Jones stated he had a prior commitment that day and asked if we could change it to February 17th at the same time and location. Mr. DeHaven asked the Board's wishes, and reminded the Commissioners of their meeting that same day in the evening at 6 p.m. Nobody had an issue with holding the retreat on the 17th.

On a motion by Vice-Chairman Jones and seconded by Commissioner Johnson, the Board voted unanimously to approve.

5. Year in Review
Mr. DeHaven presented the departmental year in review. Departments submitted their biggest accomplishments of the past year for the Commissioners' review. Mr. DeHaven asked the Commissioners if they wanted these accomplishments read out loud or if they wanted to just review on their own. He also asked the Board to thank the staff if they see them for all their hard work and dedication. Chairman Heath asked Mr. DeHaven to read aloud these accomplishments for those who are not present at the meeting.

H. County Attorney's Comments
No comment.

- I. Commissioners' Report and Recommendation**
Chairman Heath reminded everyone that our next meeting would be our first evening meeting of the year and the new time for nighttime meetings is 6 p.m.
Commissioner Jones asked if the May 19th meeting can be moved from 6 p.m. to 10 a.m. due to a conflict. All board members agreed to this change.

- J. Closed Session**
On a motion by Vice-Chairman Jones and seconded by Commissioner Johnson, the Board

voted unanimously to go into closed session.

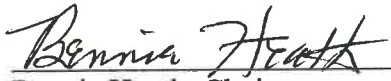
1. Economic Development - To conduct a closed session pursuant to the provisions set forth in N.C.G.S. § 143-318.11(a)(4)

Attorney-Client Privilege - To conduct a closed session pursuant to the provisions set forth in N.C.G.S. § 143-318.11(a)(3)

On a motion by Vice-Chairman Jones and seconded by Commissioner Taylor, the Board voted unanimously to come out of closed session.

K. Adjourn

On motion by Vice-Chairman Jones and seconded by Commissioner Burress, the Board voted unanimously to adjourn.


Bennie Heath, Chairman

Attest:




Kyle J. DeHaven, Clerk to the Board

BUDGET REVISIONS

<u>Revenues</u>				<u>Expenditures</u>			
<u>Account #</u>				<u>Account #</u>			
11-172-4382-26	Child Fatality Case Reporting	+	1,323.00	11-539-5171-00	Child Fatality Case Reporting Supplies	+	1,323.00
11-172-4383-10	CDC Flu Vaccine Farmworkers	+	2,500.00	11-564-5171-00	CDC FVFF Supplies	+	2,500.00
11-172-4383-02	Cancer Prevention	+	1,625.00	11-566-5275-00	BCCCP Contracted Svcs	+	1,625.00
TOTAL		+	5,448.00	TOTAL		+	5,448.00

Child Fatality Case Reporting \$1,323: The Greene County Department of Public Health was awarded funds to prepare and begin using the NFR-CRS [web-based system hosted by the National Center for Fatality and Prevention within the Center for National Prevention Initiatives of the Michigan Public Health Institute (MPHI) and is used by many states to provide child death review teams with a data system for capturing, analyzing, and reporting of information shared at a child death or serious injury review]. MPHI has a Cooperative Agreement with the Maternal and Child Health Bureau, Health Resources and Services Administration, US Department of Health and Human Services, to manage the National Center for Fatality Review and Prevention. Funds were appropriated by the NC General Assembly to support implementation of the changes authorized by NCSL 2023-134 to restructure death reviews by Local Teams and to offset the costs associated with the Local Teams participation in the NFR-CRS.

CDC Enhancing Seasonal Flu Vaccine Efforts for Farmworkers \$2,500: The Greene County Department of Public Health was awarded additional funding to increase outreach and education with farm workers, employers, and advocacy groups to stress and ensure understanding of these messages and strategies. Additional outreach will focus on key worker and employer groups as well as advocacy groups for Latino populations such as the National Alliance for Hispanic Health, the National Hispanic Medical Association, and UNIDOS, to alert these organizations to these updated strategies to support farm worker health.

BCCCP (Breast Cancer Cervical Cancer Prevention Program) \$1,625: The Greene County Department of Public Health was awarded additional funding to increase the number of screening targets in this program. In addition to the screening targets who are funded by State and Federal funds, we received funds that the State received from tax donations to the program to screen 5 additional women who meet the program requirements.

Requested by: Jay Brock 1/14/25

Approved by: Bennie Heath

Board of Commissioners Meeting Presentation
Mueller Advanced Metering Infrastructure (AMI) System Performance Update

Greene County operates an Advanced Metering Infrastructure (AMI) system that is designed to allow remote reading of water meters, electronic data collection, and direct billing from meter reading data. The AMI system was installed using the Mueller (manufacturer) metering, transmitter, data collection platform. Greene County specifications required the system to have an accuracy that allowed 99% of meters to be read remotely.

The AMI system has not been able to achieve the 99% accuracy requirement. Greene County has withheld final payment to Mueller pending demonstrating compliance with the accuracy requirement. Transmitters on existing meters have been identified as not working properly such that warranty requires replacement. Mueller has been working to replace warranty transmitters. Mueller has also added data collection antennae in an effort to improve read rate of water meters. Of the current 5,405 active meters approximately 755 meters are not reading electronically. The County is having to manually read the 755 meters.

At the end of 2022, Mueller proposed a solution that included replacement/upgrade of the existing AMI system at a discounted cost (\$1+ million). This was rejected as the existing system is contracted to meet a 99% accuracy, was installed at a significant cost, and the County was not going to consider to invest additional construction funds until existing system was shown to function properly.

Mueller recognizes the need to meet contractual requirement of 99% accuracy. Mueller staff met with Greene County to identify issues and lay out a path to solving problems.

- Mueller accepts responsibility to meet contractual obligation regarding accuracy of meter reading.
- Mueller acknowledges that original meter transmitters are not as effective as were marketed to them.
- Mueller offers a plan of action to bring the County's system into contractual compliance through the following:
 - Upgrade the County's meter reading network to most current network at no cost.
 - Provide all needed hardware, programming, and training to the County at no cost.
 - Provide 1,500 current model meter transmitters to include labor to install at no cost. Initially new transmitters will be installed on the 755 meters not currently reading. Remaining transmitters will be installed based on failures that occur during warranty.

Mueller has provided two (2) options to take corrective action related to the performance issues experienced with the County's Advanced Metering Infrastructure system. A January 2, 2025 letter is provided that summarizes the options.

In summary, the County's existing AMI system is close to its life expectancy. After the current system meets a 20-year operational requirement, it is unlikely that Mueller will offer any support services to maintain the existing system. This will place the County in a situation where you will have to consider full replacement or operation of a system that will gradually fail.

Mueller is offering complete system upgrade basically at their cost. The proposed MTU units cost much less such that current replacement actions will be costly. In looking at a 10-year cost comparison, an update of current system software/transmitters is cost-justified under the following:

- Greene County keeps the current \$50,000 that has been kept as retainage.
- Mueller agrees to provide support for the current AMI billing system during the transition to the new system at no cost. The current \$36,574.81 annual operating costs related to the new system are waived.
- Mueller agrees to provide support for the new AMI system at their agreed upon annual cost based on \$4.50 per active water service meter with new MTU transmitter installed.
- Mueller agrees to provide interface between new AMI network system and Greene County's current billing software system provider.
- Mueller agrees to provide labor/support to install the 1,800 MTU units for the current meters that are not currently transmitting water usage information properly.
- Mueller agrees to install new AMI network and provide training to Greene County Water Department personnel on operation.

Action Recommended: Authorize submittal of proposal to Mueller for system upgrade under above conditions.



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January 2, 2025

Mr. Kyle DeHaven, County Manager
Greene County
229 Kingold Boulevard, Suite D
Snow Hill, NC 28580

SUBJECT: Replacement Cost Evaluation
Advanced Metering Infrastructure System
Greene County Regional Water System

Dear Kyle:

In reference to the subject project, the purpose of this letter is to provide a brief replacement evaluation of the Greene County Advanced Metering Infrastructure (AMI) System based on cost information provided by the original vendor who provided the technology related to the current system (Mueller). Evaluation is simplified to two (2) alternatives which include maintaining operation of the current AMI System or replacement the technology and data platforms by upgrading communication assets.

As a brief background, the County borrowed \$1,604,118 (20-year term, 0% interest rate) through the Drinking Water State Revolving Fund to implement an AMI system that replaced all water meters and provided two-way communication to remotely read/monitor water meter usage. After a procurement process, The County opted to implement an AMI system provided by Mueller Systems, LLC.

Following activation of the AMI system, Mueller was notified that the percentage of active water meters reporting usage did not meet contractual requirements. Transmitters attached to water meters were identified as a primary problem. Mueller has been providing replacement transmitters in an effort to achieve the original contracted level of communication. At present, there are approximately 1,800 transmitters that continue to need to be replaced.

Mueller acknowledges deficiencies in their original system. They have been providing replacement transmitters that are an upgraded version of original devices installed. As the existing AMI system has aged, technology has advanced, providing an opportunity to upgrade technology at a reduced cost before existing assets are fully depreciated and replacement requires much greater investment.

In an effort to address the current 1,800 water services that are not electronically transmitting data properly, Mueller has offered two (2) options for consideration:

Option 1 – Update AMI System

Mueller recognizes that the original AMI system is technologically lacking in capability to meet current and long-term water system needs. In lieu of implementing improvements on aged technology, Mueller proposes to provide a completely new network system, replacing antennae, collectors, software, and billing system interface. Additionally, Mueller will provide 1,800 new transmitters (capable of communicating

with new network system) at no charge and will offer the County to purchase new transmitters (above the original 1,800) at a reduced unit price.

New Network System Capital Cost = \$546,876.99

MTU Transmitter Unit Price = \$97.00/Each

Option 2 – Retain Existing AMI System

Mueller confirms that the County has 1,800 transmitters that need to be replaced in order for the original AMI system to operate in conformance with original contract requirements. Mueller offers to provide 1,800 of the “old” model transmitters to restore communication of all active water services (in compliance with original contract requirement). Any future transmitter replacement will be provided at the unit cost of the transmitter at the time of request.

MTU Transmitter (Current System) Unit Price = \$178.50/Each

Replacement evaluation includes the following considerations:

1. Physical Impairment – The existing AMI system has been operational for eleven (11) years. At a twenty (20) year life expectancy, assets are much closer to full depreciation. The current AMI system is based on a technology platform that Mueller no longer markets. The existing AMI system is soon to be at an age where it will no longer be supported, placing the County in a position of having to evaluate full system replacement.

The existing AMI system includes annual operating costs for software updates to billing system and maintenance on collectors (antennae). Greene County currently pays an annual cost of \$36,574.81. At the end of the current 20-year life cycle, it is a risk that the current billing system will no longer be annually supported such that any maintenance will be required on the basis of service calls. This will likely result in higher operating costs.

2. Inadequacy – The existing AMI system required the addition of several transmission antennae to provide communication of existing water meters with the water department’s billing system. Remote areas of the County could remain a challenge for future communication with the County’s existing AMI system. Upgraded technology will ensure future service capabilities are met.
3. Obsolescence – Based on current system operation, the County must manually read approximately 1,800 water meters and input date into the billing system to generate monthly statement to water customers. This requires labor from existing water department workforce that should not be needed under a fully integrated AMI system.

The following is a quick summary of presented options:

Current Financial Summary:

Original DEQ Loan	\$1,604,118.00
Annual Principal	\$80,205.90
Outstanding Balance	\$882,264.90
Retainage Held on Mueller	\$50,000.00

Active Water Meter Summary:

Greene County	4,353
South Greene Water Corporation	1,110
Maury Sanitary Land District	<u>235</u>
TOTAL	5,698

10-Year Cost Evaluation:

Option 1 – Update Existing System

Outstanding Loan Balance	882,264.90
New Network/Billing System	546,876.98
1,800 New MTU Units	0.00
3,900 New MTU Units	378,300.00
Annual Operating Cost	256,500.00
10-Year Cost	2,063,941.88

Option 2 – Retain Existing System

Outstanding Loan Balance	882,264.90
1,800 MTU Unit Warranty	0.00
3,900 MTU Unit Replacement	696,150.00
Annual Operating Cost	365,748.10
10-Year Cost	1,944,163.00

Under Option 2, it is assumed that the existing 3,900 active MTU meter transmitters will need to be replaced within the 10-year period. The Option 2 transmitters will cost \$178.50 each (compared to new system MTU transmitter cost of \$97.00 each).

Option 2 is \$119,778.88 lower in cost than full system replacement. Beyond 10-Year, the cost to operate the existing AMI system is likely to be far greater than an Option 1 system replacement, but projecting those costs is not realistic. It is noted that Mueller has advised that current annual operating costs will be waived under an Option 1 where new annual operating costs will be based on \$4.50 per year per active meter on the new system. Recognizing that full transfer of old meters to the new system will likely take 2+ years to fully integrate, the County will benefit from annual cost savings during the transition period.

From a cost evaluation standpoint, Mueller is offering the new network system at/below cost. There does not appear to be any profit margin factored into their number. They are installing the same system in other government units currently at an average cost of \$400 per meter (approximately \$2.2 million for Greene County under a new installation option). Positives and negatives of an Option 1 are as follows:

Positives:

- New technology resets the County's AMI system for another 20+ years of effective operation.
- Lower operating cost
- Lower individual cost for new meter/transmitter installation
- More capability on billing system (allows capability for customer on-line monitoring of water use and can provide on-line payment capabilities)

Negatives:

- Higher 10-Year Present Worth Cost
- If implemented, County will be operating two (2) billing systems for the period of time required to transition transmitters on water meters to new system. Mueller will be responsible for supporting both systems during the transition
- While path study indicates new system will eliminate current no-read problems, the proof of capability requires installation.

Mueller is a global company with a lot of assets/capability. They have honored warranty issues and have tried to put forth a solution under the lowest cost impact possible. In an effort to bring Option 1 to a more cost effective solution, it is recommended that Mueller be presented the following as an agreement to move forward:

1. Greene County keeps the current \$50,000 retainage.
2. Mueller agrees to provide support for the current AMI billing system during the transition to the new system at no cost. The current \$36,574.81 annual operating costs related to the new system are waived.
3. Mueller agrees to provide support for the new AMI system at their agreed upon annual cost based on \$4.50 per active water service meter with new MTU transmitter installed.
4. Mueller agrees to provide interface between new AMI network system and Greene County's current billing software system provider.
5. Mueller agrees to provide labor/support to install the 1,800 MTU units for the current meters that are not currently transmitting water usage information properly.
6. Mueller agrees to install new AMI network and provide training to Greene County Water Department personnel on operation.

Please review and advise as I may provide any additional information.

Sincerely,

McDAVID ASSOCIATES, INC.

Richard B. Moore, P.E.
Farmville Office

Board of Commissioners

Bennie Heath – Chairman
Jerry Jones – Vice-Chair
Derek Burrese
Ray Johnson
Robert (Bobby) Taylor, Jr.

**County Manager**

Kyle J. DeHaven

County Attorney

Gay Stanley

Finance Officer

Sandy Shirtz

February 3, 2025

Ms. Sharon Harrison
Greene County Senior Center

Dear Ms. Harrison;

It is with great pleasure to advise you the following appointment have been made by the Greene County Board of Commissioners.

Commissioner Ray Johnson has been appointed to the Greene County Aging Planning Committee.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Bennie Heath". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Bennie" and last name "Heath" clearly distinguishable.

Bennie Heath, Chairman
Greene County Board of Commissioners

Economic Development

- Secured 630 acres of new industrial land under option at no cost to Greene County citizens
- Created the Greene County Economic Development Partnership
- Secured over \$200,000 in grant funding and appropriations for economic development efforts

Department of Social Services (DSS)

- Completed various agency-wide trainings to improve staff preparedness
- Partnered with western County's to assist in Hurricane Helene recovery

Finance

- Developed a system to recognize revenue timely, eliminating holding accounts for revenue classification
- Reduced monthly close time to within 10 days, improving accuracy of financial statements

Recreation

- Two baseball teams won district titles and advanced to the state tournament
- Basketball teams (7-8, 9-10, and 11-12) won respective district tournaments
- Reintroduced tackle football, with the team finishing with a 6-2 record
- Increased participation in soccer and girls' volleyball

Public Works

- Settled into a new Public Works building in January 2024
- Acquired Ormondsville Water
- Completed and submitted the EPA-required Lead and Copper Service Line Survey on time
- Replaced the landfill compactor and resolved sewer line issues
- Expanded the water customer base, adding 200 new water services in 2024

Transportation

- Cross-trained all three Admin Staff to ensure flexibility in responsibilities
- Increased ridership by 99 new passengers, with 3,000 more trips
- Director completed the 6-month Transit Academy Training Program for Directors
- Successfully completed a Compliance Review with zero deficiencies

Tax

- Reworked the Present Use Value process to reduce late applications from landowners

- Started contacting mortgagors for payment on delinquent parcels
- Improved organization of Beer & Wine Licenses through a new application process
- Enhanced the Tax Department webpage to provide more information and assist the public

Register of Deeds (R.O.D.)

- Implemented the Property Fraud program to protect citizens
- Reached out to local businesses to offer discounts for veterans
- Added a new vendor for e-recordings and started e-recording maps
- Added all highway right of ways to the Cott (eSearch) system and are nearing completion of scanning all maps

Extension

- 1,846 participants in agriculture and 4-H programming
- Provided 64 hours of continuing education for farmers
- Increased 4-H participation by 20% from the previous year
- Recorded over 1,600 volunteer hours

Human Resources

- Revamped New Hire Orientation to provide a consistent and comprehensive overview of Greene County Government for all new employees
- Ensured new hires understand both their specific department and local government operations as a whole

Senior Center

- County passed a resolution in March 2024 to seek funding for a new Senior Center
- Registered 68 new participants and served 33,652 individuals in 2024
- Introduced new programs: Cardio Drumming, Chair Yoga, Black History Month Presentation, and a new Bocce Court for Senior Games
- 22 seniors competed in Regional Senior Games, 17 qualified for State Finals, and 2 will compete in Senior Games Nationals in 2025

Public Health

- Awarded Reaccreditation with Honors on November 15, 2024

Emergency Management

- Increased revenue from fire inspections by 50% compared to 2023
- Purchased a new EMS Quick Response Vehicle (QRV) for enhanced operational efficiency
- Completed the NC 911 Board PSAP Assessment with zero deficiencies
- Secured over \$70,000 in grant funding for equipment and capability improvements

- Completed EMS Station 3, improving response times in coverage areas

Sheriff Office

- Completion of New Office to better serve Public Safety function for Greene County Citizens