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BY: TODD RABY  
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2023007982  
MACON COUNTY, NC  
TODD RABY  
REGISTER OF DEEDS

NC FEE \$0.00

**MACON COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**  
**November 14, 2023**  
**MINUTES**

Chairman Higdon called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. All Board Members, County Manager Derek Roland, Deputy Clerk Tammy Keezer, and County Attorney Eric Ridenour were present, as were a number of county employees, media, and citizens. Finance Director Lori Carpenter was not present.

Chairman Higdon recessed the meeting at 6:01 p.m. due to the number in attendance stating the meeting would reconvene shortly in Courtroom A on the fourth floor of the Macon County Courthouse.

Chairman Higdon called the meeting back to order at 6:10 p.m.

**ANNOUNCEMENTS:** Chairman Higdon announced that the Annual Opioid Funding Meeting would be included in the December 12, 2023, regular meeting agenda with both municipalities invited to attend. Mr. Roland said we have to have one annual meeting per year and this will be the first one we have ever had and that Southwest Commission will also be in attendance. Chairman Higdon stated that Macon County has not spent any of its opioid funding at this time. Chairman Higdon announced that the annual recognition of employees and presentation of service awards would be held at 5:00 p.m. on December 12, 2023, before the regular meeting. Mr. Roland announced that a video presentation of the proposed Franklin High School design is available on the County website at [www.maconnc.org](http://www.maconnc.org).

**MOMENT OF SILENCE:** Chairman Higdon requested that all in attendance rise and a moment of silence was observed.

**PLEDGE TO THE FLAG:** Led by Commissioner Shields, the pledge to the flag was recited.

Commissioner Shields made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Young to adjust the agenda in order to hear presentations A and B under Reports and Presentations at this time. There was consensus to make the adjustment and no vote was taken.

**PUBLIC HEARING(S):** None

**PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD:** Narelle Kirkland spoke about the views and scenery in Macon County and mentioned ten acres that are available for purchase. She encouraged the board to purchase this property on Tennessee View Drive and establish a park for all residents to enjoy. Hazel Norris spoke about the information on social media regarding the location of Franklin High School and confusion over tax rates and requested clarification be provided. Commissioner Shearl and Commissioner Antoine provided some brief comments about speculating the cost of a new high school with and without receipt of the grant. Mr. Roland shared that information came from the financial advisors

housing, promoting business and development so people can earn a living wage and afford to live here, applying for grants to pay for schools, promotion of quarter-cent sales tax, clean water, heritage initiatives, etc. **Scott Baste** spoke in favor of the Fontana Regional Library and read information from their website about their mission, vision, and services provided stating those show that they are already politically neutral. **Maryann Ingram** had signed up to speak but was not present when her name was called. **James Burch** identified himself as a part-time Macon County employee at Solid Waste and shared his thoughts about benefits for employees. Chairman Higdon said he would get a written response to Mr. Burch following the meeting. Commissioner Young requested the board discuss this during budget time and see why we can't have some full-time positions in Solid Waste. **Olga Patter** spoke in support of the library and gave some feedback regarding the proposed agreement regarding serving in a neutral social and political manner. **Rebecca Sexton** spoke about Item F under New Business regarding party affiliation for candidates for the Macon County Board of Education. She said the current school board members could not attend tonight because they were at a State meeting. She spoke in opposition to disclosing party affiliation for school board members and feels that has nothing to do with their service, as they serve based on their knowledge of education, awareness of school needs, and ways to solve problems. **Jim Gaston** spoke in opposition to tax increases and an increase in pay for county employees. He spoke in support of the accountability of county funds. **Heather Johnson** spoke in support of the Fontana Regional Library Board and the Macon County Public Library Board. **Sarah Johnson** spoke in support of the library. **Bodie Catlin** spoke in support of a new high school but expressed concern about placing it on a piece of property that is landlocked and questioned whether parking and the size of the proposed sports complex were adequate. She also made comments about the Fontana Regional Library not allowing public comment at their meetings.

**ADDITIONS, ADJUSTMENTS TO AND APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA:** Upon a motion by Commissioner Young, seconded by Commissioner Antoine, the board voted unanimously to approve the agenda, as adjusted, as follows:

- To add Item 10E under old business, Update on Current Macon County School Projects, Macon Middle School Track, and Nantahala School Sewer Issues, per Commissioner Young.
- To add Item D under Reports and Presentations, Request from Scaly Mountain Historical Society, per Chairman Higdon.
- To add Item B1 under new business, Discussion Regarding Main Street, per Commissioner Higdon.
- To table Item 13A under appointments, Macon County Public Library Board of Trustees, per Commissioner Higdon.
- To remove Item 11G under new business, Discussion and Consideration of Resolution Adopted by the Macon County Board of Elections Regarding Compensation of the Director, per Mr. Roland.

**Update on broadband expansion efforts by Charter Communications** – Director of Government Affairs with Charter Communications Mike Tranck said Charter is coming to Macon County due to RDOF (Rural Digital Opportunity Fund) awarded in 2021. He indicated that Charter was awarded 8,191 locations which includes homes, businesses, and other locations, and shared a map showing the locations that would be served. Mr. Tranck gave an overview of the processes that have to occur and the order of those processes, including the construction phase which is projected to begin the second quarter of next year with activation projected for the second quarter of 2027. Mr. Tranck talked about information available on their website at [www.spectrumruralexansion.com](http://www.spectrumruralexansion.com) which allows citizens to see if their area is

Macon County. She talked about their competitive pricing, not require contracts with customers, having the most advanced technology, and other discounted services offered to customers. Ms. Ellis recognized the broadband committee for working with Frontier and shared her appreciation for their partnership in applying for the GREAT grant. She provided a handout of her presentation, a copy of which is available in the office of the Clerk to the Board.

**Interfacility transport and staffing concerns** – Emergency Management Director Warren Cabe shared information about situations that have happened in western North Carolina regarding "receiving time" which means the time between when a patient arrives at a medical facility and the time he or she is transferred to another treating facility. He said the average receiving time is 8.4 minutes for Macon County, but that Macon County EMS had one call that was a two hour wait time plus the two hour travel time for a total of five hours in October 2023. Mr. Cabe we are occasionally having these issues but not at the level of some of the counties that you are hearing about on the news and talked about staffing structure and minimum staffing needs and how these long transports impacts staffing and the availability to serve the community needs. Mr. Cabe informed the board that Macon County has occasionally been declining some non-emergency transports because their primary objective is to respond to emergencies. He provided data indicating that from 2019 to 2022 Macon County has seen an eleven percent increase in call volume with eighty-eight percent of the staff they had previously had. Mr. Cabe stated that EMS regionally is having staffing issues and that he is concerned and even though response times are not bad, he is covering shifts with part-time employees as much as possible and utilizing over-time. Commissioner Shearl asked about how the full-time paramedics are holding up and Mr. Cabe said it depends on the person and how he is able to creatively work or schedule them including assignments in Nantahala to cover a shift where there is less volume of calls following working a long stint in Franklin. He said that financially he has been able to move some funds around to be able to cover the over-time and has been working with NCWorks and County HR on recruitment strategies with a new campaign coming out this week. Commissioner Young commented on the emotional and physical strain emergency responders have endured over the past few weeks. Commissioner Antoine commented about the need to do a better job in taking care of first responders as it is "an exhausting job, a thankless job, and heartbreaking to see what they go through each day".

**Request from Scaly Mountain Historical Society** – tabled as no one was present to talk about the item.

#### **OLD BUSINESS:**

**Discussion and Consideration of Retention Pay Policy** – Mr. Roland reminded the board in May 2023 that he had informed them that he would be presenting a plan to utilize the premium pay funding shortly after the ability to use the funding for premium pay had ended. He said many counties across the state closed or limited their hours, but he was proud to say that Macon County did not close or decrease services. Mr. Roland Gave examples of opening and staffing a call center for COVID-19, setting up drive-thru vaccination clinics, and continuing all other normal services. He said premium pay allowed the county to be competitive in both private and public service. Mr. Roland referenced an a 52 percent increase in animal control calls , and an increase in building permits and said even though the public health concerns related to COVIC-19 have subsided many of the economic factors continue. He shared information from the October 21, 2021 presentation about the need for premium pay such as the economy and inflation and said that this had no impact on the operating

pay plan puts us on the "five-yard line" and the premium pay took us into the "end zone" and that it is more important today as both the public and private sectors across the country have done the same things to recruit and retain employees as he is proposing tonight. Mr. Roland reviewed SLFRF (State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds)/ARPA (American Rescue Plan) Fund Usage nationally and explained how that compares to what Macon County has or is doing. He talked about services that matter today such as having qualified dispatchers to answer 911 calls, maintenance workers available when the sewage is running into the jail, etc. Mr. Roland stated that he feels it is his job as County Manager to give his employees the tools they need to do their job successfully and in the public sector there is no better tool than public servants and the ability to recruit and retain highly qualified employee, and said we need to "Stick with the plan" and proposed that the remaining funding be used for its intended purpose of recruiting and retaining qualified staff. He provided a PowerPoint presentation, a copy of which is available in the office of the Clerk to the Board, showing how this would plan would provide employees with a two-dollar per hour increase in pay during the specified period ending in October 2024 [Attachment 1]. Commissioner Shields made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Antoine to approve the Recruitment and Retention Pay Policy, the Grant Project Ordinance for Macon County American Rescue Plan Act of 2021: Coronavirus State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds, and the budget amendment as presented. Commissioner Young asked why we are reviewing this again as we discussed this two years ago and three members of this board approved it, and said, he is in favor of the plan, supported it two years ago, and is not going to pledge money to employees and then take it back. Mr. Roland explained that he was bringing this back for review and approval because of the change in the use of the ARPA funding. Commissioner Shearl said the board had approved almost 17 million dollars and in April 2023 the federal government said those funds could no longer be used for premium pay and read information about premium pay from a document he said he received from the School of Government. Commissioner Shearl said he feels that we are asking the board to manipulate funds so that we can pay employees two dollars more per hour when these funds can be used for any capital project, and said, "We cannot spend every dime we get trying to make employees happy". Mr. Roland replied that what we are doing with these funds is perfectly legal followed by Commissioner Shearl asking for Mr. Roland's resignation stating that Mr. Roland had called him a liar. Commissioner Shearl said the budget has increased 25 million dollars under Mr. Roland's watch. Mr. Roland responded that if Commissioner Shearl and two other members voted, he would tender his resignation tonight. After continued remarks by Commissioner Shearl regarding an email he received from the School of Government in regard to how the funding can be spent and clarification by Mr. Roland, Commissioner Antoine said give it to the employee's. Chairman Higdon commented that in he felt he had been misled in voting for the pay plan and that he did not have any opportunity to know about the previous presentation of premium pay and how we were going to use 6.9 million dollars of taxpayer money before being asked to vote for the plan. He said he thought that premium pay had been put to bed in April yet here we are again. He requested a report on how much money came in to Macon County through ARPA and how that money was spent with full accounting of those funds at the December 2023 meeting. Chairman Higdon stated this board is in charge of the finances of this county and that he told Mr. Roland not to bring this back up prior to tonight's meeting. He said he wants to put to this issue to bed and cannot vote in favor of this tonight so his vote will be a solid "no". He said he is not saying employees are not doing a good job, but if pay plan is not paying a competitive wage then that is not what we were told. Commissioner Shearl said he is not against County employees and does not have any personal agenda against any one, but if we did a salary study and it failed then we need to go

At 9:11 p.m., Chairman Higdon called a five-minute break. He called the meeting back to order at 9:17 p.m.

**Change order for low voltage wiring for the athletic building at Macon Middle School** – Mr. Jeff Neal with NOVUS Architects said they discovered that a portion of low voltage wiring and security cameras had not been included in the plan nor the contracts. He said he is not asking for a rework of the design, only to approve the cost of \$91,000 for installation of the system with an overall project cost of \$2.5 million. Mr. Neal clarified that this proposal was not made by the general contractor. Commissioner Young said the intent of this building was to get the boys and girls wrestling teams out of the fairgrounds facility and that he understands the school also wants to use this area for instructional purposes which requires the change. Chairman Higdon asked if this was not originally included and Mr. Neal indicated that there was some disagreement in what NOVUS believed was in the original design and what the school thought was in the design. Chairman Higdon said he represents the taxpayers and would not vote “yes” as someone missed this in the scope of work. Commissioner Shields said he thinks it should be fully utilized and made a Motion to approve, seconded by Commissioner Young to approve the change order in the amount of \$91,000 and direct contract with NCI with the funding coming out of project contingency. Both Commissioner Shields and Commissioner Young said they did not like this and believe someone dropped the ball. Vote was 3-2 with Commissioner Shields, Commissioner Young, and Commissioner Antoine voting in favor and Commissioner Shearl and Chairman Higdon opposed.

**Discussion and consideration of Resolution to Amend the Fontana Regional Library Agreement** – Commissioner Antoine commented that this has been taken out of proportion, that no one said anything about the library being a bad place. He said the only issue was that the library had pornographic material available to children and that the changes made on the agreement were for the benefit of everyone and not for a political party. Commissioner Antoine reminded those in attendance that we are not the only county involved in this and that the board has no idea at this time what the other counties are going to say or propose to change. He said this is about protecting kids and that the agreement was revised because the current contract was from 2019 to 2023. Commissioner Antoine said we have to wait for the other two counties to see what they have to say and then finalize an agreement. Attorney Ridenour noted a redaction that needed to be made in paragraph VIII (A), to remove the second to last sentence “The withdrawal shall be effective one year from the date of notice” with the last sentence, “The withdrawal shall be effective the following June 30<sup>th</sup>” remaining as is [Attachment 2]. Commissioner Antoine made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Young to approve the agreement with the redaction noted by Attorney Ridenour. Commissioner Young commented that this agreement is in good faith and we are making an effort to do what is fair. Commissioner Shields said he agrees because it is in the form of a draft for Jackson County and Swain County to review. Commissioner Shearl said Macon County is not the only County having these issues and it must be stopped to protect these kids. Vote was 5-0.

**Discussion and Consideration of Resolution in Support of Innovation and Modernization of the Franklin High School CTE Program** – Ms. Colleen Strickland reminded the board that last month she had present about an opportunity to submit an application for a Perkins grant in the amount of \$5.1 million with a shared vision between the Macon County Board of Commissioners, Macon County Schools, Southwestern Community College (SCC), and local businesses. Ms. Strickland said she had asked for a resolution to be drafted by Mr. Roland which will help us have a stronger case when applying for additional

Todd Gibbs with Macon County Schools to provide an update on the Macon County Middle School (MMS) track project as well as the sewer system at Nantahala School. Mr. Gibbs provided information about the Request for Quotes (RFQ) for the design elements of the MMS track that had been released with a closing date of December 1, 2023. Chairman Higdon asked about the gas smell at MMS. Mr. Gibbs said there have not been any issues since backflow preventers were installed in the manhole at the gym. He indicated that there is still smell on occasion but not at the level or frequency as before so they are going to put a low CFM fan on the top of that building to see if they can draw out the remainder of the gas odor. Chairman Higdon asked if a camera had been placed in the vent pipe to check for leaks. Mr. Gibbs affirmed the completion and said there were some breaks identified, but they had not been sealed or repaired due to their location. Chairman Higdon stated that "sewer gas can kill you and there is no excuse to let this linger". Commissioner Antoine requested to get this fixed. Commissioner Shields said he agrees but that the school doesn't know how to fix it followed by some discussion among board members. Chairman Higdon inquires about the status of the sewer issue in Nantahala followed by a discussion about options that had been suggested in the past and options for further consideration. Commissioner Young said we have these lingering items that we want to put to bed and asked if we could not just put out a Request for Proposals (RFP) so that we get a price instead of continuing to "kick the can". Chairman Higdon said that the school needs to contract with a local soil scientist to look at an adjoining piece of property to see if an on-site wastewater system can be designed and used and if that is not an option then we need to engage with a company that can design and build a water treatment plant.

#### **NEW BUSINESS:**

**Discussion and Consideration of Bond Release for Old Mud Creek, LLC -** Plan Reviewer Joe Allen provided a review of the bond that was entered into in February 2022. He said we had released part of the bond previously on October 2022, and Mr. Scott Cole with Mountain Breeze Subdivision was requesting the remaining amount of \$18,900 to be released as the paving had been completed. Commissioner Shearl made a motion, seconded by Chairman Higdon, to approve the release as requested. Vote was 5-0. Commissioner Young said there are a couple of land disturbance ordinances that need to be revised with one of those being bond releases so that the Planning Board can handle those rather than this board and that we would have a discussion about those in the near future.

**Discussion Regarding Town of Franklin Social District and Use of the Gazebo and Clock Tower Squares -** Town Manager Aimee Owens and Town Councilman David Culpepper gave an overview of social districts as approved by the North Carolina Legislature sharing that thirty-eight municipalities have approved social districts with Sylva, NC being the closest town to us. Ms. Owens said the town council has been considering social districts since their retreat in February 2023 as this would help promote more events and activities downtown. She referred to a clause in the current Gazebo Square lease that prohibits alcoholic beverages and would like to waive the clause and would like to include the Clock Tower Square in the social district. Mr. Culpepper talked about concerns that had been voiced by the council members and said they feel good about doing this and see it as a benefit to the Town and County. Ms. Owens said the only cost to the Town would be the purchase of signage and specialty cups. Mr. Culpepper said the need for an increased police presence was a concern in Jackson County but that has not occurred. Commissioner Shields asked why this hasn't been discussed with the Franklin Area Tourism Development Commission for their input. Mr. Culpepper said he is not asking

**Discussion Regarding Main Street** – Chairman Higdon said there are some issues with the conditions of Main Street such as sidewalks and he would like to appoint a committee to work on the issue. He requested Mr. Roland represent the County and work with the Town of Franklin to bring to this board a proposed design and budget to include Main Street from Bryant-Grant Funeral Home to the top of Town Hill. Chair Higdon stated the design should include sidewalks and handrails. Commissioner Young said he wants us to work with a design professional. Chairman Higdon requested Mr. Roland bring the design and budget back to this board in a couple of months. Mr. Roland requested clarification on what authority the County has in doing anything with sidewalks. Mr. Culpepper said not much and informed the board that the Town of Franklin has worked with the NC Department of Transportation as much as possible.

**Discussion and Consideration of Bids for Two Parcels in Cartoogechaye Creek Campground** – Mr. Ridenour reviewed the offer to purchase property that the County closed on last year. He shared that the taxes owed at that time were \$15,725 with the current tax value of \$17,000 for the lot with the house (PIN 6553850133) and \$15,000 for the adjoining lot (PIN 6553820151). Mr. Ridenour said the properties are worth the tax value to which Commissioner Young agreed. Chairman Higdon said it has been board policy to consider bids for surplus property that start at least equal to the tax value. No further action was taken.

**Discussion and Consideration of Resolution Supporting Operation Green Light for Veterans** – Veteran Services Director Leigh Tabor read the resolution and requested approval [Attachment 4]. Commissioner Shields made a motion, seconded by Chairman Higdon, to approve the resolution as presented. The vote was 5-0.

**Discussion and Consideration of Resolution to Request the NC Legislature Revise the Macon County Board of Commissioners Election System to Allow Candidates in all Districts to Run for County Commissioner Every Two Years** – Chairman Higdon explained the resolution and made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Shearl to send the resolution to the NC House and Senate for approval [Attachment 5]. Commissioner Shields said he likes the system we have now and would vote “no” on this proposal. Commissioner Young asked if we go to a three-district system does it now have to be equal and said he would like for it to have public involvement and go to a public hearing. Commissioner Antoine said he likes the idea of making this fair across the board. Commissioner Shearl said districts would have to be redrawn to be equal in population. The vote was 3-2 with Commissioner Shearl, Commissioner Antoine, and Chairman Higdon voting in favor and Commissioner Young and Commissioner Shields opposed.

**Discussion and Consideration of Resolution Supporting the Identification of Party Affiliation for Candidates for Macon County Board of Education** – Commissioner Shearl said in the 2022 election there were two school board candidates from the same party and even though that is a non-partisan issue those two candidates were both republican were running for the same seat and appeared on the republican ballot which caused the ballots to get kicked out. He stated the voters then had the choice of either re-doing their entire ballot or making their vote for the school board seat void with most voters deciding not to redo their ballot which led to an unfair election. Commissioner Shearl said that because of these kinds of issues approximately 50 school districts in the State of North Carolina out of 115 or 116 districts are identifying the school board races as partisan. He said with the resolution we are asking State leaders to introduce a local bill to make Macon County School Board races a patrician race as well [Attachment 6]. Shields said he would say party politics has not been an issue on the Board of Education and feels the Board of Education is a different

to not have input into this decision. Commissioner Antoine said he feels this item should be tabled until we can speak to the Board of Education. Commissioner Young said he had not seen this item until the agenda packet was received and feels there should be public input. Upon consensus, the item was tabled until the December 12 meeting.

**Discussion and Consideration of Resolution Adopted by the Macon County Board of Elections Regarding Compensation for the Director – Removed.**

**CONSENT AGENDA:** Upon a motion by Commissioner Shields, seconded by Commissioner Young, the board voted unanimously to approve the consent agenda as presented, which includes: (A) Minutes of the October 10, 2023 regular meeting, (B) Budget Amendments #71-77, (C) Macon County Transit Addition Site Revisions, (D) Tax releases for the month of October 2023 in the amount of \$601.12, (E) Relief of the Taxing Unit for Collection of Real Estate Taxes that are Ten Years Past Due in the amount of \$38,080.07, (F) Monthly ad valorem tax collection report for which no action is necessary.

**APPOINTMENTS:**

**MACON COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY BOARD OF TRUSTEES (1 seat)** – Upon consensus, this item was tabled until the December meeting.

**CLOSED SESSION** – None.

**ADJOURN:** With no other business, at 11:23 p.m., upon a motion from Commissioner Shearl, seconded by Commissioner Shields, the board voted unanimously to adjourn.



Derek Roland  
Ex Officio Clerk to the Board



Paul Higdon  
Board Chair



# Recruitment and Retention Policy

NOVEMBER 14, 2023

# Purpose of ARPA/ SLFRF Funding in Macon County

## PRIMARY PURPOSE

"Provide Premium Pay to eligible workers who perform essential work during the COVID-19 public health emergency through October 20, 2024."

- In person interactions with patients, public or co-workers
- Physical handling of items that were handled by, or are to be handled by patients, public or co-workers

## SECONDARY PURPOSE(S)

- Recruitment and Retention
- Increased Morale
- Local Economic Boost

## Timeline of Events

- ▶ October 12, 2021- Approval of Premium Pay
- ▶ April 10, 2023 – Official end to Premium Pay
- ▶ April 17, 2023 – Official notification of Premium Pay ending
- ▶ April 24, 2023- Employees notified
- ▶ May 9, 2023- Board of Commissioners notified
  - ▶ BOCC notified at this time county administration would be working with NC School of Government and North Carolina Association of County Commissioners to pursue solutions allowing us to continue using funds for their intended purpose.
- ▶ November 14, 2023-
  - ▶ Recommendation to use remaining ARPA/SLFRF funding for Revenue Replacement, freeing up previously appropriated county revenue to be used for Recruitment and Retention policy through October 20, 2024.

October 12, 2021 Presentation

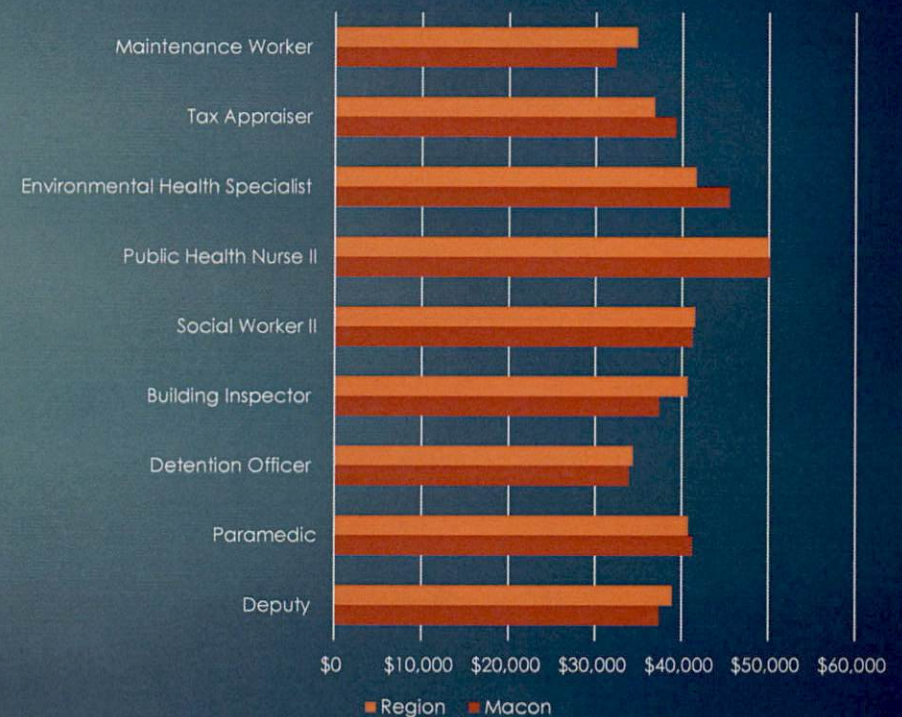
# Premium Pay for Essential Workers

- ▶ **Pay Plan Revisions get us to the 5 yard line**
- ▶ These are not normal times
- ▶ Covid-19 and American Rescue Plan Funds.
  - ▶ Address COVID Public Health (Payroll costs in HD)
  - ▶ Address COVID Economic Impact (Limited Statutory authority)
  - ▶ Replace Lost Revenue (No lost revenue)
  - ▶ **Premium Pay**
  - ▶ Infrastructure Investments (Applicable to Broadband but limited statutory Authority)
- ▶ Investing \$6.9M ARP funding in our most valuable asset puts us across the goal line.
- ▶ Premium Pay Policy enables us to do this.
- ▶ **\$ Must be obligated by 12-31-24**
- ▶ \$2.00/hr. premium pay for **all** part time and full time employees for each hour worked April 26, 2021- October 20, 2024
- ▶ Issued in lump sum payment every six months (7 pay periods)
- ▶ 1 Yr. implementation cost \$1,968,161.
- ▶ 3.5 Yr. Implementation Cost \$6,888,563.

# Secondary Purposes are **critical** Today

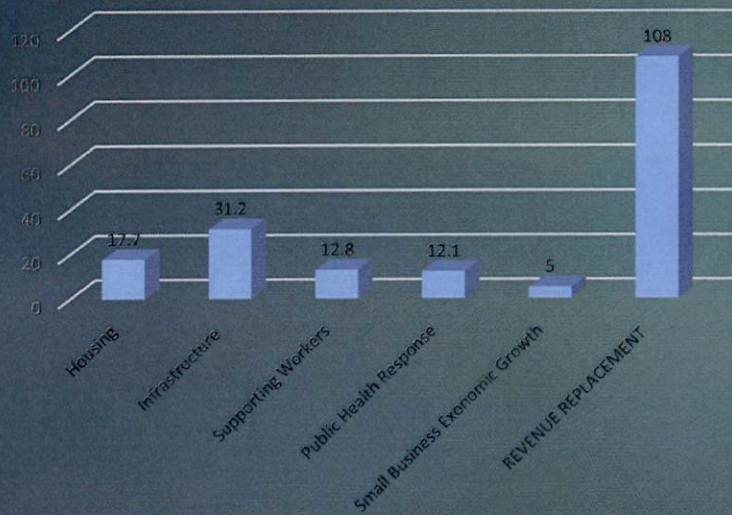
- ▶ Strong Economy=Workforce Challenges
  - ▶ Public vs. Public
  - ▶ Public vs. Private
  - ▶ Rising tide lifts all ships
- ▶ 2024 State budget increases
  - ▶ State Employees-7%
  - ▶ Non-Certified School Staff- 7%
  - ▶ Bus Drivers- 9%
  - ▶ Highway Patrol Officers- 11.1%
  - ▶ Retirees- 4%

State and Regional Salary Comparisons 2022

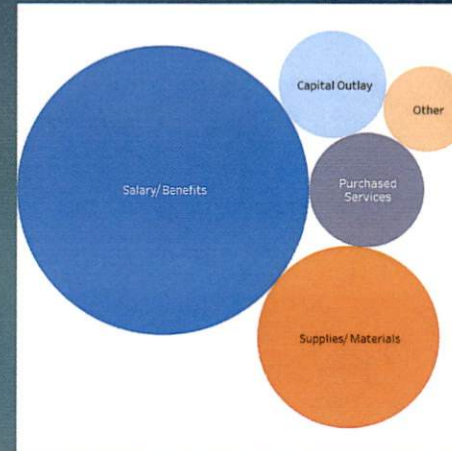


# SLFRF ARPA FUND USAGE

SLFRF July 2023 Reporting Data Analysis  
(NATIONWIDE)



Private Sector (**LOCAL**)- 554 PPP Loans ranging from \$1000- \$1,000,000 totaling approximately \$33M



Program: All  
Public School Unit: All  
As of 9/30/2023

**Total Expenditures**

\$2,688,070,157
\$420,776,415
\$1,057,400,260
\$370,184,239
\$237,605,057
<b>\$4,774,036,128</b>

Non Profits As of 9/30/2023

Organization: (All)

Select a Non Profit: (All)

Salary/ Benefits	\$10,390,746
Purchased Services	\$3,944,579
Supplies/Materials	\$3,100,808
Capital Outlay	\$720
Other	\$113,860
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>\$17,550,713</b>

Category	Relative Expenditure
Salary/Benefits	Highest
Purchased Services	Second Highest
Supplies/Materials	Third Highest
Other	Fourth Highest

# Managers Recommendation

"Stick with the Plan"

Cost of 2 premium pay payments in FY23				ARPA funds-original balance	6,964,996.00
Fund 51	24,847.00			FY22 exp - premium pay	(1,841,924.00)
Fund 11	1,667,478.00			FY23 exp - premium pay	(1,850,659.00)
Fund 60	158,334.00			FY23 exp - GREAT grant match	(25,000.00)
TOTAL	1,850,659.00			Remaining GREAT grant match obligation	(175,000.00)
				Estimated cost of remaining 3 retention pay periods	(2,775,988.00)
				Balance available for other expenditures	296,425.00

- **Approve Recruitment and Retention Pay Policy**
- **Approve Grant Project Ordinance for Macon County American Rescue Plan Act of 2021: Coronavirus State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds**
- **Approve Budget Amendment – Transfer \$1,850,659 ARP funds to General Fund, Housing Fund, and Solid Waste Fund to cover salaries/fringes under the revenue replacement category for FY2024**



## State and Local Fiscal Recovery Fund (SLFRF)

[Map](#)[Summary](#)[Recipients](#)[Projects](#)

To date, SLFRF resources have been used for..

[Data Definitions](#)

### 1. Investing in Housing



**\$17.7 billion** budgeted for over **2,700** fiscal recovery projects focused on housing, a **12%** increase since the last reporting period.

### 2. Supporting Workers



Over **4,200** individual projects and **\$12.8 billion** dedicated to worker support and premium pay to **1.4 million** workers.

### State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds (SLFRF)

provided under President Biden's American Rescue Plan Act continue to play a crucial role in allowing state, local, Tribal, and territorial governments to stabilize their budgets, respond to the pandemic, and invest in their communities.

View this page for key highlights, which are also available through the summary blog and the two year ARP anniversary report.

[July 2023 Summary Blog](#)[ARP 2-Year Anniversary Report](#)[Download July 2023 Dataset](#)[Download Previous Datasets](#)

### 3. Stimulating Economic Growth Through Small Businesses



Over **1,400** small business projects with over **\$5 billion** budgeted.

### 4. Making Transformative Investments in Key Infrastructure



**3,200** governments pursuing **12,000** infrastructure projects, budgeting over **\$31.2 billion**. An increase of **25%** since the last reporting period.

### 5. Responding to Public Health Needs

More than **1,600** governments are undertaking over **6,200** individual projects in this area, budgeting more than **\$12.1 billion**.



## Recruitment and Retention Pay Policy

The purpose of this policy is to provide retention pay to eligible employees. This policy is a continuation of the "Premium Pay Policy for Essential Work" which ended on April 10, 2023. To be considered eligible to receive retention pay, the following criteria must be met:

1. The retention pay periods will consist of three, six-month pay periods that coincide with Macon County regular pay periods. The first retention pay period will begin on April 10, 2023 and end on October 22, 2023. See Table 1 on page 2 that contains all retention pay periods.
2. Retention payments will cease at such time as any of the following occur:
  - a. The last retention pay period as identified in Table 1 on page 2 is reached;
  - b. The employee reaches a maximum of \$14,000 (including the premium pay amounts paid previously between 11/5/2021 – 5/5/2023);
  - c. The maximum available appropriation of funds is reached;
  - d. The employee is no longer employed by the County.

The employee must remain employed at 11:59 PM on the last date of each retention pay period to receive the retention pay. If the employee leaves the service of Macon County during the retention pay period, the employee is not eligible to receive any of such period's retention pay. If there is a lapse in employment for any reason during the retention pay period, the employee is not eligible for the retention pay for that specified period.

*Seasonal part-time employees - to receive the retention pay, the individual must be employed at the beginning of the specified season and remain employed through the end of the specified season. The retention pay period will begin on the first day of the specified season and end on the last day of the specified season.*

3. Payments will be calculated on a \$2.00 per hour basis for each hour worked and paid through payroll pay codes 100, 151, 200, 780, 781, 782, 784, and 900 during the specified six (6) month retention pay period or seasonal period. The payment will be issued as a lump sum following the end of the specified six (6) month retention pay period or seasonal period.
4. The retention pay will be based on actual hours worked and paid through payroll pay codes 100, 151, 200, 780, 781, 782, 784, and 900. Retention pay shall not be paid for vacation, sick, comp time or any other types of leave in which the employee is not actually working.



5. Retention pay will be for both full-time and part-time employees. The retention pay will be on a straight hour-per-hour basis. For example, if the employee is paid for 40 regular hours and 5 overtime hours, the retention pay will be calculated as 45 hours x \$2.00 = \$90.00.
6. The Finance Department will process payments and make reports available to the County Manager after each payment is made at the end of each six (6) month retention pay period.
7. Periodic monitoring and other associated controls will be implemented as per the standards currently in place through the Finance Department to maintain the accuracy and integrity of the program.
8. Documents will be retained per pertinent Macon County and State retention schedules.

Table 1

Retention Pay Periods:	Record Point:
April 10, 2023 thru October 22, 2023	October 22, 2023 11:59 PM
October 23, 2023 thru April 21, 2024	April 21, 2024 11:59 PM
April 22, 2024 thru October 20, 2024	October 20, 2024 11:59 PM

**Grant Project Ordinance for Macon County**  
**American Rescue Plan Act of 2021: Coronavirus State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds**

**BE IT ORDAINED** by the Board of County Commissioners of Macon County, North Carolina that, pursuant to Section 13.2 of Chapter 159 of the General Statutes of North Carolina, the following grant project ordinance is hereby adopted:

**Section 1:** This ordinance is to establish a budget for projects to be funded by the Coronavirus State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds of H.R. 1319 American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 (ARP/CSLFRF). Macon County's total allocation is \$6,964,996.

**Section 2:** The following amounts are appropriated for the projects and authorized for expenditure:

<b>Project Description</b>	<b>Expenditure Category (EC)</b>	<b>Amount</b>
Transfer to General Fund for Premium Pay	4.1	\$ 3,326,498
Transfer to Housing Fund for Premium Pay	4.1	\$ 48,056
Transfer to Solid Waste Fund for Premium Pay	4.1	\$ 318,029
Transfer to General Fund for GREAT Grant Match	6	\$ 200,000
Transfer to General Fund for Crime Prevention (114311) salaries/fringes	6.1	\$ 2,501,217
Transfer to Housing Fund for Housing Director (514009) salaries/fringes	6.1	\$ 37,270
Transfer to Solid Waste Fund for Solid Waste Admin. (604712) salaries/fringes	6.1	\$ 237,501
Undesignated funds		\$ 296,425
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>\$ 6,964,996</b>

**Section 3:** The following revenues are anticipated to be available to complete the projects:

<b>ARP/CSLFRF Funds</b>	<u>\$ 6,964,996</u>
<b>Total:</b>	<b>\$ 6,964,996</b>

**Section 4:** The Finance Officer is hereby directed to maintain sufficient specific detailed accounting records to satisfy the requirements of the grantor agency and the grant agreements.

**Section 5:** Copies of this grant project ordinance shall be furnished to the Budget Officer, the Finance Officer and the Clerk to the Board.

**Section 6:** This grant project ordinance is effective as of March 3, 2021, and expires on December 31, 2026, or when all the ARP/CSLFRF funds have been obligated and expended by Macon County, whichever occurs sooner.

ADOPTED this 14<sup>th</sup> day of November 2023.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Paul Higdon". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above a horizontal line.

Paul Higdon, Chairman  
Board of County Commissioners

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA  
COUNTY OF MACON

RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF REVISING THE  
FONTANA REGIONAL LIBRARY INTER-LOCAL AGREEMENT

WHEREAS, the Fontana Regional Library has proven to be an efficient and effective way to provide resources beyond the financial and service capacities of the individual county governments and libraries; and

WHEREAS, the collaborative efforts of Macon, Jackson and Swain Counties to operate the Fontana Regional Library for over 75 years has been beneficial to the citizens and patrons of the local libraries; and

WHEREAS, this Regional Agreement is up for mandatory ten year review pursuant to Article X, paragraph B of the Regional Agreement last adopted by the parties hereto in January, 2013; and

WHEREAS, while the Regional Library Agreement has worked well to govern the multi-county library system for the past decade, the Macon County Board of Commissioners believe that the existing agreement could be improved to increase communication and coordination between local government units and the Fontana Regional Library System.

NOW THEREFORE, IT IS RESOLVED by the Macon County Board of Commissioners as follows:

1. That the redline revisions to the Fontana Regional Inter-Local Agreement, attached hereto as Exhibit A, will result in improved communication and coordination between the local government units and Fontana Regional Library.
2. In accordance with Article VII, Paragraphs A and B of the Fontana Regional Agreement last adopted in January, 2013, the Macon County Board of Commissioners hereby submits the proposed amendments attached hereto as Exhibit A to the Jackson County Board of Commissioners, the Swain County Board of Commissioners and the Fontana Regional Library Board and requests that after the thirty-day period for consideration, that the amendments be voted upon by such boards.

Adopted this 14<sup>th</sup> day of November, 2023



Paul Higdon, Chairman  
Macon County Board of Commissioners

ATTEST:



Derek Roland, Clerk to the Board

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA  
COUNTY OF MACON

RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF THE CAREER AND TECHNICAL  
PROGRAM AT FRANKLIN HIGH SCHOOL

WHEREAS, the Career and Technical Program, hereinafter "CTE," is widely recognized across the State of North Carolina for the development of Career and Technical Education Programs; and

WHEREAS, the Franklin High School CTE program is a partnership between Southwestern Community College, Macon County School System, Macon County Government and the Local Business Community; and

WHEREAS, the CTE program provides a host of opportunities to Macon County Students including numerous career pathways, dual enrollment opportunities and certifications for employment in various industries; and

WHEREAS, Macon County contributes approximately \$168,528 annually to the Macon County School System to fund on-going CTE operations; and

WHEREAS, attendance in the Macon County CTE program has substantially increased as CTE course offerings have increased over the past several years; and

WHEREAS, at the October 10, 2023, meeting of the Macon County Board of Commissioners, the Board unanimously approved a letter of support for additional CTE funding from the Perkins Innovation and Modernization Grant to enable continued expansion of the CTE program; and

WHEREAS, in June, 2023, Macon County purchased an 11 acre tract of real property adjacent to Franklin High School at a purchase price of \$1.35M which it has subsequently leased to the Macon County Board of Education for a term of 40 years for use by the Franklin High School CTE program.

NOW THEREFORE, IT IS RESOLVED that the Macon County Board of Commissioners intends to continue to support the innovation and modernization of the Career and Technical Education Program at Franklin High School.

Adopted this 14<sup>th</sup> day of November, 2023

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Raul Higdon, Chairman  
Macon County Board of Commissioners

ATTEST:

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Derek Roland, Clerk to the Board

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA  
COUNTY OF MACON

RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF  
OPERATION GREEN LIGHT FOR VETERANS

WHEREAS, the residents of Macon County have great respect, admiration, and the utmost gratitude for all the men and women who have selflessly served our country and this community in the Armed Forces; and

WHEREAS, the contributions and sacrifices of those who served in the Armed Forces have been vital in maintaining the freedoms and way of life enjoyed by our citizens; and

WHEREAS, Macon County seeks to honor individuals who have made countless sacrifices for freedom by placing themselves in harm's way for the good of all; and

WHEREAS, veterans continue to serve our community in the American Legion, Veterans of Foreign Wars, religious groups, civil service, and by functioning as County Veterans Service Officers in 29 states to help fellow former service members access more than \$52 billion in federal health, disability and compensation benefits each year; and

WHEREAS, approximately 200,000 service members transition to civilian communities annually; and

WHEREAS, an estimated 20 percent increase of service members will transition to civilian life in the near future; and

WHEREAS, studies indicate that 44-72 percent of service members experience high levels of stress during transition from military to civilian life; and

WHEREAS, active military service members transitioning from military service are at a high risk for suicide during their first year after military service; and

WHEREAS, the National Association of Counties encourages all counties, parishes and boroughs to recognize Operation Green Light for Veterans; and

WHEREAS, Macon County appreciates the sacrifices of our United States military personnel and believes specific recognition should be granted; therefore be it

RESOLVED, with designation as a Green Light for Veterans County, Macon County hereby declares from November 6, 2023 through November 12, 2023, a time to salute and honor the service and sacrifices of our men and women in uniform transitioning from active service; therefore, be it further

RESOLVED, that in observance of Operation Green Light, Macon County encourages its citizens in patriotic tradition to recognize the importance of honoring all those who made

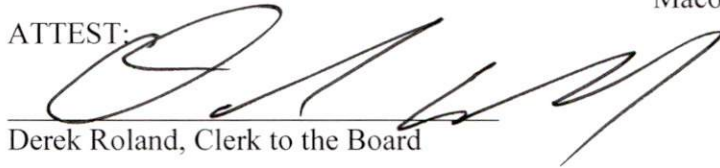
immeasurable sacrifices to preserve freedom by displaying green lights in a window of their place of business or residence from November 6th through the 12th, 2023.

Adopted this 14th day of November, 2023



Paul Higdon, Chairman  
Macon County Board of Commissioners

ATTEST:



Derek Roland, Clerk to the Board



STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA  
COUNTY OF MACON

RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF REVISING THE MACON COUNTY BOARD OF  
COMMISSIONERS ELECTION SYSTEM TO ALLOW FOR TWO AT-LARGE MEMBERS

WHEREAS, since 1978, the 5 member Board of the Macon County Board of Commissioners have been elected from 3 Districts with a single member elected from District 1 (Ellijay, Flats, Highlands and Sugarfork) a single member from District 3 (Burningtown, Cartoogechaye, Cowee and Nantahala) and three members with staggered terms from District 2 (Iotla, Millshoal, North Franklin, East Franklin, South Franklin, Union and Smithbridge); and

WHEREAS, as a result of this structure, potential candidates from District 2 are eligible to file for election every 2 years, while potential candidates from the single member Districts 1 and 3 may only file for election every 4 years; and

WHEREAS, in order to provide equal opportunity to all eligible citizens of Macon County to run for commissioner every 2 years, the Macon County Board of Commissioners believes that the best method would be for the election of 1 member from each of the three Districts, with 2 at-large members with staggered terms.

NOW THEREFORE, IT IS RESOLVED by the Macon County Board of Commissioners as follows:

1. The Macon County Board of Commissioners requests the North Carolina General Assembly establish that the Macon County Board of Commissioners shall be comprised of 1 member from each of the three Districts with 2 at-large members with staggered terms.
2. Further, that this change in the election of the Macon County Board of Commissioners shall not impact the terms of any current members of the Macon County Board of Commissioners.
3. Further, that this change begin in the election cycle for members of the Macon County Board of Commissioners beginning in 2026.
4. That this Resolution shall be forwarded to the Senator and Representative who represent Macon County in the North Carolina General Assembly and a copy be retained in the Office of the Clerk to the Board of Commissioners.

Adopted this 14<sup>th</sup> day of November, 2023



\_\_\_\_\_  
Paul Higdon, Chairman  
Macon County Board of Commissioners

ATTEST:



\_\_\_\_\_  
Derek Roland, Clerk to the Board

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA  
COUNTY OF MACON

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Adopted this \_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2023

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Paul Higdon, Chairman  
Macon County Board of Commissioners

ATTEST:

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Derek Roland, Clerk to the Board