



**FIRST
TUESDAY**

— Amplifying conservative voices. —

Another Wake-up Call

Monthly Newsletter

Issue 47A | June 3, 2024

Hidden Financial Commitments in Consent Agenda

Buncombe County once again has hidden away a significant financial commitment in their consent agenda. The quietly approved resolution was made at the May 7 regular meeting of the Board of County Commissioners to preserve local farmlands through conservation easements. This decision allocates \$114,000 of county taxpayer funds, supplemented by \$30,000 from state taxpayers, to protect our region's natural beauty and agricultural heritage. While the intention behind these conservation efforts is laudable, this decision also warrants a deeper consideration of its financial ramifications and another call for review of the consent agenda process by which local governments decide upon such hefty expenditures of public funds.



The Role of Conservation Easements

Conservation easements are powerful tools for protecting land from development, thus preserving the natural state and agricultural use of the land for future generations. However, they also mean that the land will likely not be developed in ways that could significantly increase its market value and, by extension, property tax revenues. This potential loss in tax revenue is a significant aspect of the conservation decision that demands analysis and mention in the public record.

Financial Implications

The immediate cost to taxpayers is quantifiable—\$144,000—but the ongoing impact of reduced tax revenue from these lands

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Left-Wing Dominance of City Council

The May 14, 2024, Asheville City Council meeting underscored the urgent need for conservative engagement. Dominated by left-wing agendas, the meeting highlighted the lack of conservative representation. Key moments from the meeting emphasize why conservatives must become more involved:

Business Improvement District (BID) – A Tax Burden on Small Businesses

A contentious issue was the establishment of a BID in downtown Asheville. This includes additional taxes on property owners, burdening their tenants and small businesses.

COUNCIL VOTES:

For the BID: Mayor Esther Manheimer, Vice-Mayor Sandra Kilgore, Councilmembers Sage Turner, Antanette Mosley, and Maggie Ullman.

Against the BID: Councilmember Kim Roney.

Despite significant opposition, including a petition with over 900 signatures, the council advanced the BID proposal, showing disregard for the financial burden on small businesses.



Public Safety and Policing – Lack of Support for Law Enforcement

Discussions on public safety once again revealed the lack of robust support for local police. With rising crime rates, it is crucial

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“When one political ideology dominates the conversation, it stifles the voices of those who may have different viewpoints, leading to policies that do not reflect the needs of all constituents.”

- Ben Carson, former U.S. Secretary of HUD



May 2 BCS Board Decisions Unveiled

As we approach the November 2024 elections, it's crucial to examine the actions and decisions made by the current Buncombe County Schools (BCS) Board members. This review is particularly significant as several board members, including Peggy Buchanan (Owen), Ann Franklin (North Buncombe), and Amy Churchill (Roberson) are standing for re-election. The at-large seat on the board will also appear on the November ballot.

Superintendent's Comments, Strategic Plan

Superintendent Jackson highlighted the successful response rate to the North Carolina Teacher Working Condition survey, showing an overall satisfaction rate of 91.25%.

Dr. Jennifer Reed presented the 2024-2027 Strategic Plan, which focuses on improving student growth, fostering a welcoming school culture, preparing students with essential skills, and supporting professional development for staff. Without a conservative voice on the board, it is up to us as taxpaying citizens to ensure these plans do not include indoctrinating students with progressive ideologies.

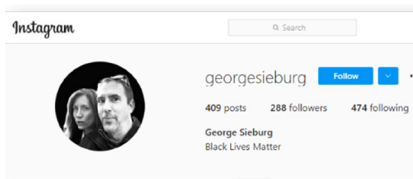
Public Comment Session:

Key issues raised during the public comment session included the need for increased teacher pay, enhanced mental

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“Progressive” Funding for City Schools

The May 13 Asheville City Schools (ACS) Board meeting highlighted significant financial and operational challenges within our district. It is important that we scrutinize the decisions being made by politicians and activists who have monopolized local government. It is our responsibility to understand their implications on our children's education and on our community's fiscal responsibility.



ASC Board Chair, George Sieburg

EL Learning Contract: Questionable Financial Choices

In March 2022, the ACS Board approved a six-year subscription to the Savvas Learning curriculum for \$117,546. Despite this substantial investment, the Board has now committed an additional \$330,000 for a one-year contract with EL Learning. This decision raises several questions:

- **Overlap and Integration:** How will the EL Learning program integrate with the existing Savvas curriculum? Is there a clear plan to avoid redundancy and ensure educational continuity?
- **Financial Prudence:** Given the district's reported budget shortfall, is it financially prudent to allocate such a large sum to a new program without fully utilizing the existing one?

It is worth noting that EL Learning receives funding from various social justice organizations, including the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation and Bloomberg Philanthropies. This connection underscores the ideological current influencing our district's educational strategies.

School Mergers: Impact on Budget and Community

The consolidation of Montford North Star Academy into Asheville Middle School is projected to reduce the district's \$4.5 million budget shortfall by up to \$2.5 million. However, this decision has sparked considerable anger and sadness among parents

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Left-wing Dominance

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to empower our law enforcement officers. However, the council favored increasing oversight and reducing police presence.

Education and Childcare – Termination of Head Start Leases

Lindsey Sterrett highlighted the termination of Head Start leases at Pisgah View, Hillcrest, and Lonnie D. Burton centers, affecting over 150 children and their families. The council has not provided a clear plan to ensure continuity of these services.

Preservation of Public Spaces – Inconsistent Funding Priorities?

The council discussed funding for the Malvern Hills Pool, highlighting disparities in resource allocation. While there was support for investing \$3 million to restore Malvern Hills Pool, a similar request for Walton Street Pool, serving the black community, was previously denied.

Council Member Kim Roney's Stance on the Pledge of Allegiance

Councilwoman Kim Roney declined to face the flag or recite the Pledge of Allegiance. As she seeks re-election with DSA support, remember her disregard for this tradition. All citizens should take note.

Strategic Voting Success for Conservatives

Despite the liberal lean of the city council, conservatives advanced CJ Domingo to the November ballot through strategic voting, demonstrating that our voices can make a difference when united.

Call to Action

The May 14 meeting highlighted that conservatives currently have no voice in Asheville city government. Our values and concerns are overlooked. It is time for conservatives to step up:

1. Support Conservative Candidates: Rally behind CJ Domingo and other conservative candidates.
2. Engage in Strategic Voting: Use your vote wisely to maximize impact.
3. Stay Informed: Follow local politics and encourage fellow conservatives to get involved.

Together, we can ensure that Asheville's government represents all residents. Let's take action and fight for traditional values. The easiest way to make a difference is to vote and encourage your like-minded friends to do the same.

Buncombe Schools Board

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health support, and more comprehensive educational policies.

Legislative Agenda:

The board approved a legislative agenda advocating for increased state funding, mental health resources, and opposition to unfunded mandates.

(Recall that one of the arguments made by the board against the state's "unfunded mandate" for district-based voting was the cost associated with implementing this change. However, as we wrote in February, this concern may have been overblown.)

Amanda Simpkins' Resignation

Amanda Simpkins, the at-large member of the BCS Board, resigned on May 15, 2024, citing personal reasons and unspecified changes in her life. The board now has 60 days to appoint her replacement.

Implications for the November '24 Elections

With Peggy Buchanan, Ann Franklin, and Amy Churchill up for re-election, it is critical to evaluate their records and the impact of their policies on our children.

Have these board members protected parental rights and protected children from left-wing agendas while ensuring high quality traditional education? Both are required.

Call to Action

It is imperative for conservatives to stay engaged and informed as we approach the elections. Attend board meetings, participate in public comment sessions, and support candidates who prioritize transparency, parental rights, and conservative educational values. The upcoming elections offer a crucial opportunity to reshape the BCS Board and ensure it aligns with our community's values.

Upcoming Events

Next BCS Board Meeting: June 6, 2024
Stay informed and engaged. Let's work towards a brighter future.

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<https://secure.anedot.com/first-tuesday-conservatives-asheville-inc/>

ASC Funding

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who value the unique STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Math) approach and smaller community feel of Montford North Star. The rapidity of this decision, first proposed in November 2023, has left many parents feeling unheard and disrespected.

Potential Merger with Buncombe County Schools

The ongoing feasibility study, mandated by state law, to explore the merger of Asheville City Schools with Buncombe County Schools, is another area of concern. Key milestones include:

- Completion of Study: Expected by December 31, 2024.
- Presentation of Findings: By January 31, 2025.
- Legislative Report: Due by February 15, 2025.

The study will assess the financial and operational impacts of such a merger. As conservative parents, we should closely monitor these developments to ensure our children's education is not compromised by bureaucratic restructuring.

Leadership and Accountability

The leadership of the ACS Board is crucial in navigating these challenges. Board Chair George Sieburg, appointed by the Asheville City Council in October 2021 and a known supporter of BLM, along with Jesse Warren, appointed in January 2023, will both face their first elections in November 2024. It is essential to hold these leaders accountable for their decisions and ensure they align with the values and priorities of our community.

Conclusion

We must remain vigilant and engaged in these discussions to advocate for fiscal responsibility and educational excellence in our district. By staying informed and holding our leaders accountable, we can ensure that Asheville City Schools provide a high-quality education that respects our values and meets the needs of all students.



Grab Another Wake-up Call at
French Fry

2109 Hendersonville Road
Arden, NC 28704
(828) 684-0416

School Board Extends Candidate Review Period

On May 28, 2024, the Buncombe County Board of Education held a special called meeting to address the vacancy left by Amanda Simpkins, the at-large representative who resigned on May 15. Despite a robust response from the community, the board decided to extend the review period for selecting a new candidate.

Meeting Highlights

Call to Order and Agenda Approval:

The meeting, broadcast live on the BCS Communications YouTube account, began promptly at 9:00 a.m. Madam Chair Franklin called the meeting to order, with board member Amy Churchill participating via conference call. The agenda was approved unanimously.

Filling the At-Large District Representative

Seat: Dr. Jackson provided an overview of the process following Miss Simpkins' resignation. The board received 25 letters of interest by the May 22 deadline and an additional two letters afterward.

The position, advertised across multiple platforms including social media and local media outlets, generated significant interest from a diverse pool of candidates. The hope had been that selecting a replacement on May 28 would allow time for a new member to undergo orientation before assuming duties and joining the June 6 board meeting.

Nomination and Debate

- Nominee: Board member Judy Lewis nominated Mr. Pat Bryant for his strong support of public education and community respect. However, the nomination was met with differing opinions. Some voting against selecting Bryant explained that they had no issue with him as a candidate. Rather they just wanted more time so that they could review the other candidates' letters as well.
- Discussion Points: Board members expressed concerns about the short timeline and the need for more time to review all candidates thoroughly. One member regretted the rush, emphasizing the importance of selecting

someone with no personal agenda and a focus on all children in Buncombe County.

Voting and Decision to Extend Review Period

The board voted on the nomination of Mr. Pat Bryant, resulting in a tie vote. Recognizing the need for additional time to consider all applicants, a motion was made to extend the review period by one week, which ultimately failed to pass. However, the board decided to revisit the decision at their regular meeting on June 6, 2024.

The motion to delay the selection of a new board member until the next scheduled meeting passed unanimously, and the meeting was adjourned.

Funding a Conservative Future

As we approach the upcoming elections, financially supporting conservative candidates is more crucial than ever. Funding is vital for campaigns to spread conservative values and policy positions effectively. Campaign funds enable candidates to invest in advertisements across TV, radio, and social media, ensuring their message reaches a broad audience.

Financial support also helps level the playing field against well-funded liberal opponents. According to the Center for Responsive Politics, liberal candidates often receive substantial backing from progressive organizations and wealthy donors. By contributing to conservative campaigns, we ensure balanced representation in legislative bodies.

Moreover, financial backing is essential for building effective campaign infrastructures, including hiring skilled staff, conducting voter research, and organizing events. These resources allow campaigns to mobilize volunteers and execute strategic initiatives that resonate with voters.

Supporting conservative candidates financially advocates for core principles like limited government, individual freedoms, and free-market policies. By funding these candidates, we help elect leaders who prioritize fiscal responsibility and defend constitutional rights.

Financial contributions are a powerful tool in shaping our political future. Let's ensure conservative candidates have the resources to succeed in the upcoming elections and uphold our values.

Conservation Easements

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deserves a closer look. The community needs a transparent analysis of how these financial figures stack up against the environmental and social benefits of keeping the land undeveloped. Such an analysis would ensure that residents are fully informed about how the county commissioners are using our tax dollars. We should all know the long-term implications of these decisions.

Lack of Transparency in Decision-Making

Furthermore, the way these funds are being allocated—on the consent agenda without public debate—provides another example of the routine lack of transparency in our local governance. Decisions of this magnitude, involving significant public funds and impacting community land use, should be subject to public scrutiny and discussion. Engaging the community in these decisions not only enhances transparency but also enriches the decision-making process with diverse perspectives. While always considerate of black and LGBTQ+ values, the current uni-party County Commission is completely unconcerned with any conservative perspectives.

The Need for Public Discussion

The Board of Commissioners must offer some public discussion and debate to the public. Otherwise, there should be at least some public disclosure of detailed justifications and comprehensive financial analyses clearly visible on the agenda. This information would help all stakeholders understand the trade-offs involved and would foster greater trust in the motivations and outcomes of such significant expenditures.

Balancing Environmental Goals with Fiscal Responsibility

While preserving our county's landscapes is undoubtedly a priority for many, we must balance our environmental goals with fiscal responsibility. Ensuring that decisions on land use and public spending are made with complete transparency will help maintain the trust of the community and guarantee that environmental conservation efforts are both sustainable and financially sound.

We call for a transparent and informed approach to conservation. By discussing economic impacts alongside ecological benefits, we can ensure our policies reflect the community's values and priorities.

ELEVATING COMMUNITY, HONORING MOUNTAIN VALUES



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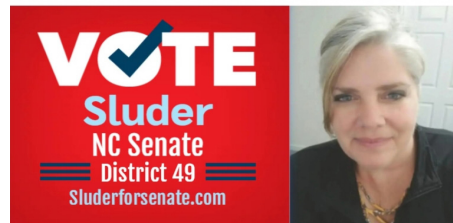
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CJ Domingo
Asheville City Council 2024

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Help put Bruce on the ballot. Sign the petition today.
*District 2 zip codes include: 28701, 28709, 28715, 28748, 28763, 28776, 28787, 28805, 28806



Our Mission

First Tuesday is a conservative advocacy organization that amplifies the voices of Buncombe County conservatives through public events, social media, and other channels. We believe that all voices deserve to be heard, and we strive to give conservatives a platform to share their perspectives.

Our Vision

We envision a community of active and vocal WNC conservatives who are informed about the issues affecting our quality of life and who are willing to use their voices to influence the government, business, and media in a way that promotes conservative values.

Our Beliefs

- We believe that conservative values are essential to a healthy society, and we promote those values through our actions and our words.
- We believe that conservatives have a unique perspective to offer on a wide range of issues, and we share that perspective with the public.
- We believe diversity of voices is essential to a healthy democracy, and we promote that diversity.
- We believe that we can make a difference in the world by working together.

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