

# WASHINGTON COUNTY, TENNESSEE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

## RESOLUTION NO. 25-11-04

### ***RESOLUTION APPROVING & AUTHORIZING THE FUNDING OF THE AGRICULTURE LEARNING CENTER AT JONESBOROUGH SCHOOL AND AMENDING FY26 BUDGET***

WHEREAS, Resolution 22-07-14 approved an appropriation in the amount of \$500,000.00 to construct an Agriculture Learning Center (ALC) in association with the construction with the construction of the Jonesborough K-8 school with funding from Washington County sourced from funds originally made available to Washington County through the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA); and

WHEREAS, Resolution 22-07-14 required that, in advance of any request for funding payment, the Town of Jonesborough would appear before the ARPA Committee to allow Washington County to confirm its satisfaction of the conditions necessary to support Washington County's investment in the partnership opportunity, and the ALC construction did not occur in FY23, the Town did not appear, and the funds were not disbursed;

WHEREAS, on November 6, 2025, at a meeting of the ARPA Committee, the Town of Jonesborough presented an update on the current development plans of the ALC, attached hereto as Exhibit A; and

WHEREAS, The Town of Jonesborough requests funding in the original amount of \$500,000.00 and an additional amount of \$117,000.00 for a total amount of \$617,000.00 that will allow the project to move forward; and

WHEREAS, Resolution 23-05-07 allocated \$62,483 in funding to the Johnson City Public Library for the development of a Community Classroom, subject to a matching funding requirement from the City of Johnson City. Because the City of Johnson City did not provide the required matching funds; therefore, in accordance with the terms of the resolution, Washington County did not disburse the funding; and

WHEREAS, the ARPA Committee at its November 6, 2025 meeting recommended consideration and approval of this request to the ARPA Committee; and

WHEREAS, the ARPA Committee requests the following amendments to the 2025-2026 Budget

1. Increase \$617,000 to expense line item 127-58831-316-60 (ARPA Fund – Contributions- Town of Jonesborough);
2. Decrease \$617,000 from equity line 127-39000 (ARPA Fund – Fund Balance); now therefore

WHEREAS, the Budget Committee at its November 12, 2025 meeting recommended consideration and approval of this request to the Board of County Commissioners; now therefore

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS OF WASHINGTON COUNTY, TENNESSEE THAT:

SECTION 1. The Board of County Commissioners hereby authorizes approval of the Agriculture Learning Center at Jonesborough School Project and the allocation of ARPA funds in the amount of \$617,000.00.

SECTION 2. The Fiscal Year Budget 2025-2026 is amended as follows:

1. Increase \$617,000 to expense line item 127-58831-316-60 (ARPA Fund – Contributions- Town of Jonesborough).
2. Decrease \$617,000 from equity line 127-39000 (ARPA Fund – Fund Balance).

SECTION 3. This Resolution shall take effect from and after the date on which it is approved by the County Mayor or as indicated by certification of the County Clerk, as hereinafter set forth.

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**Introduced by Commissioner:** *Wheeler*

**Seconded by Commissioner:** *Huffine*

**Commissioners Voting FOR:** *Tucker, Johnson, Fitzgerald, Edens, Davenport, Matherly, England, Malone, Stout, Tomita, Jones, Wexler, Huffine, Wheeler, Carder*

**Commissioners Voting AGAINST:** *None*

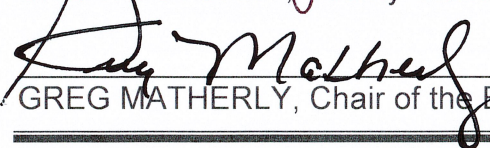
**Commissioners Abstaining:** *None*

**Commissioners Absent:** *None*

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ADOPTED BY THE COUNTY LEGISLATIVE BODY, in session duly assembled, on this the 24<sup>th</sup> day of November, 2025.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
CHERYL STOREY, County Clerk

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
GREG MATHERLY, Chair of the Board

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REFERRED to County Mayor this the 25 day of Nov 2025.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
CHERYL STOREY, County Clerk

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APPROVED by County Mayor on this the 2 day of Dec 2025.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
WILLIAM J. GRANDY, County Mayor

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The County Mayor having declined to approve this Resolution, the same became effective on the \_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_ 2025, pursuant to Tennessee Code Annotated § 5-6-107(b)(5).

\_\_\_\_\_  
CHERYL STOREY, County Clerk

Approved as to form by the County Attorney this 25<sup>th</sup> day of November 2025.

  
ALLYSON L. WILKINSON, County Attorney



## TOWN OF JONESBOROUGH

123 BOONE STREET  
JONESBOROUGH, TN 37659  
TELEPHONE (423) 753-1030  
WEBSITE: [WWW.JONESBOROUGHTN.ORG](http://WWW.JONESBOROUGHTN.ORG)

October 29, 2025

Mayor Joe Grandy  
Washington County Commission  
100 E. Main Street  
Jonesborough, TN 37659

Dear Mayor and County Commission,

This correspondence is an update on the development of the Agriculture Learning Center (ALC) to be located on the “campus” of the Jonesborough Elementary School. The update is intended to review the importance of establishing the ALC and its value to young people and the current and potential farmers of Washington County, the current status of the project, and a request to approve additional ARPA funding that will allow the project to move forward toward construction. Washington County has always had a strong agriculture-based component to its economy, and the ALC is being developed in an effort to help sustain that extremely important aspect of the County’s economic strength.

**Need** – The development of the Agriculture Learning Center is very important for the following reasons:

- As urban growth in our area rapidly expands, we are losing farms and the skills associated with the growing and healthy use of locally produced food products.
- More innovative techniques in growing your own food like raised beds, small greenhouses, vertical and container gardens, hydroponics, etc. as well as the development of community gardens need to be taught to existing and new generations.
- With more frequent periodic job losses, pandemics, catastrophic weather events, etc. people need to be more self-reliant; producing themselves what is needed for survival.
- Young people are growing up in an information age and develop life-long interests earlier in life; self-reliant skills need to be taught at an earlier age.
- To increase the profitability of people investing resources in growing food locally there needs to be more opportunities within the community to market and sell what is produced.
- It is also important to have people more knowledgeable and trained in growing related skills in order to enhance “farm-linking”; the transfer of working farms from one family to a new family thus keeping the property in farm use.

**Purpose** – The construction of the ALC will provide a venue specifically designed to enhance the teaching of younger school age students and adults the following:

- Sustainable gardening and small farm skills and concepts
- Techniques in growing healthier produce and food products in a more urban environment
- Good nutrition and the importance of healthier lifestyles
- Proper food preparation skills

In addition, the ALC will serve as a “food hub” where local growers can bring their produce and food products to be purchased by the Washington County Schools. Currently, no locally grown food is purchased by the school system because there is no way to facilitate the receiving, inspecting, processing and coordinating the distribution of locally grown food to the different County schools. These roadblocks are addressed with the ALC through a receiving area, large walk-in cooler, and “food hub” point-of-sale system. The School System has drivers that take food to individual schools. Through the “food hub” point-of-sale software program, participating farmers can pre-separate produce going to individual schools but bring it as one delivery to the ALC building when it is inspected and documented.

**Facility Components** – The ALC will be the only facility in the region and possibly the state designed to teach gardening and small farming skills, proper preparation and healthy cooking skills and concepts in a public K-8 school setting as well as to youth and adults in after school programming. The project includes an orchard, and areas for an equipment shed and small farming equipment. The facility will contain the following components:

- Classroom area with tables, whiteboards and the technical connections needed for digital screens
- Potting shed area with cleaning and rinse stations, container and nutrient storage
- Covered section of an open pavilion for fair weather instruction/classroom expansion
- Walk-in cooler with a receiving area for produce and point-of sale equipment
- Small commercial kitchen designed for instruction with outlets for individual cooking units
- Storage room, hydroponic area, connected green house, raised and vertical beds
- Restrooms

**Curriculum** – The ALC partners will establish a curriculum committee when the building goes under construction that works to develop a K-8 teaching curriculum and guide that will:

- Reflect quality aspects of any existing programs across the country that through various agencies may be teaching agriculture skills to young children
- Sequence the learning exercises that are teaching skills and concepts based on the age and grade of the students being taught

- Be sent to the Washington County Board of Education and the State Department of Education for review and approval
- Be made available to any other school system or initiative in Tennessee that desires to establish a similar education program
- Include a training program for instructors using a community-based education model

**Partners** – The ALC project in Jonesborough has a number of enthusiastic partners, which include the following: Town of Jonesborough, Appalachian Resource and Conservation Council, Washington County Schools, Grand Oak Farm and Green Earth Connection, Washington County Extension Service, Jonesborough Locally Grown (Farmers Market/Boones Creek Market), Washington County Soil District, Natural Resource Conservation Service

**Current Status-Budget** – Attached are some design development drawings from Clark Nexsen Architects that depict the ALC design in its current status. When the “partners” committee worked together on the building layout with architects Aaron Bruno and Shelby Mitchison, the design of the building resulting from that collaboration was cost projected and determined to be significantly above the project budget. A series of meetings took place value engineering the design in an effort to establish the most cost-effective way to establish the spaces needed to achieve the purpose of the Center. While the space allocation was reduced over three or four re-designs, the cost of materials and labor constantly increased. The design development plans attached represent what is felt to be the most cost-effective layout of the ALC that is still very functional. The latest cost breakdown based on that design is close to \$1,300,000, which includes a contingency of a little over \$55,000.

**Why has it taken a long while to reach a final design?** – The purpose of the building is very unique, and there are not similar buildings out there to use examples. There are multiple intended users and they all needed to be involved. And the cost of materials has continued to be somewhat volatile. Value engineering requires the contractor to work with subs to try to realistically project costs. BurWil Construction has worked with the partners and Clark Nexsen to provide the cost projection. The design of the building and layout attached to this update is the consensus resulting from numerous meetings and revisions, and it provides the most functionality and flexibility for various uses at what is intended to be the lowest cost.

**How much financing is currently available?** – The State of Tennessee has provided \$270,000 towards the project and about \$18,000 of that amount thus far has been used to fund design development. The County Commission has previously approved \$500,000 toward the project, and BurWil Construction has about \$270,000 in previous project savings above their profit and overhead they are willing to invest in the project. This makes the total funds currently available to be about \$1,022,000, \$278,000 short of \$1,300,000 which we expect to be the realistic construction cost including the \$50,000 contingency.

The request of the ARPA Committee and the County Commission is to approve remaining ARPA funds to make up as much of the shortfall as possible.

**Additional Funds** - There are partners committed to raising additional funds in support of the project for furnishings, etc., but that effort needs to begin as soon as construction begins. We need to know the ALC building is a reality. There are grants available that can help cover initial expenses but not for construction, and there are agriculture-based businesses that will be contacted to financially support the ALC. A Rural Business Development Grant has already been approved for \$83,700 to pay for the walk-in cooler and the demonstration kitchen equipment, but that funding needs to be spent by June 2026. Again, a concerted effort to raise additional funds will begin immediately after the construction contract is signed.

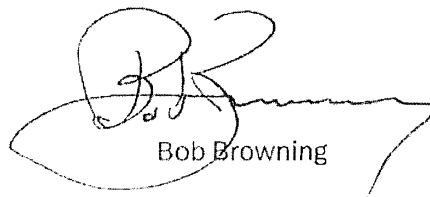
**Who will oversee the project?** – Town representatives along with Aaron Bruno of Clark Nexsen Architects will provide project management, but an ALC Committee will be formed made up of representatives of the partnering agencies, the Washington County Department of Education as well as Washington County. This Committee will review all design and construction details, help strategize fund raising activities, and is intended to provide long-term oversight with operating policies and procedures.

**Summary** – If enough ARPA funding is approved, the intent is to immediately develop construction drawings; and even start the project, at least pouring the concrete slab and installing all under slab utilities before winter weather. The ALC site was pre-graded so there is essentially only the grading preparation for the concrete slab. The Town can bring utilities (water and sewer) to the building, as they are close by. Electric services are close as well. Having the concrete floor in place soon allows construction to continue during the winter months.

The support of Washington County for this project is greatly appreciated.



Glenn Rosenoff  
Town Administrator



Bob Browning

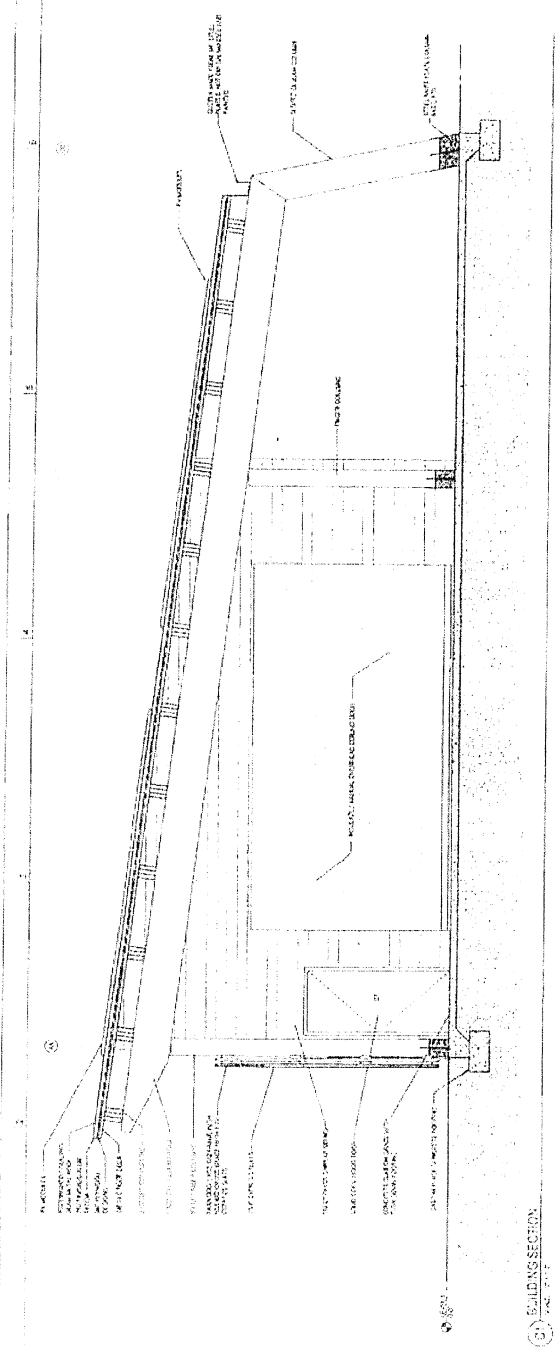






TOWN & COUNTRY  
**AGRICULTURAL  
 LEARNING CENTER**  
 1000 S. 1000 E.

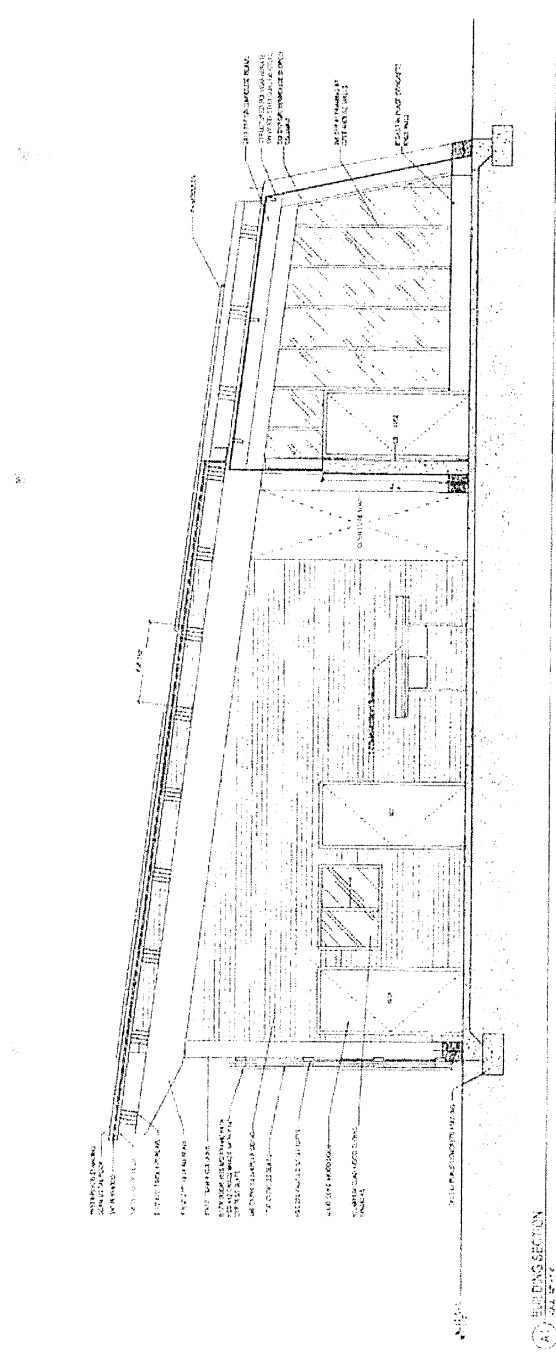
PROJECT NO. 1000-1000  
 DATE: 10/10/10  
 DRAWN BY: J. H. HARRIS  
 CHECKED BY: J. H. HARRIS  
 APPROVED BY: J. H. HARRIS



2 BUILDING SECTION  
 SCALE 1/4" = 1'-0"

**NOT FOR CONSTRUCTION**  
 DESIGN DEVELOPMENT

PROJECT NO. 1000-1000  
 DATE: 10/10/10  
 DRAWN BY: J. H. HARRIS  
 CHECKED BY: J. H. HARRIS  
 APPROVED BY: J. H. HARRIS



2 BUILDING SECTION  
 SCALE 1/4" = 1'-0"

AE301

