



**TOWN OF GRANITE QUARRY
TOWN COUNCIL
SPECIAL MEETING
Monday, December 9, 2024
5:00 p.m.**

Call to Order

Mayor Barnhardt

1. Approval of Agenda

2. Discussion

Grant Writing Proposal – Colliers Engineering and Design

3. Presentation

Electus Governmental Affairs

Adjourn

Dodie Renfer

President, Electus Governmental Affairs



Dodie Renfer has been working in politics and public policy since 1993. She began her career in the Washington, D.C. office of Congressman Cass Ballenger (NC-10) where she served as a Lyndon Baines Johnson Congressional Intern. This experience would lead to a future position with the junior Senator from North Carolina, Lauch Faircloth. During her time in Washington, Dodie also served as a legislative aide to Congressman Todd Tiahrt (KS-4) and a clerk in the Office of Public Disclosure at the Federal Election Commission.

In 1996, Dodie was given the opportunity to return home to North Carolina when she accepted the role of Scheduler for Richard Vinroot during his first campaign for Governor. Over the next seven years, she would broaden her experience by working alongside policy experts at the John Locke Foundation in Raleigh, advocating for victims of violent crimes on behalf of the Wake County District Attorney's Office, and developing the "E.A. Morris Fellowship for Emerging Leaders" as Vice-President of CCEG (Center for Citizenship, Enterprise and Government).

Between 2005 and 2013, Dodie worked for many of the top elected officials and political organizations in North Carolina, including State Senator Fred Smith in his bid for NC Governor, U.S. Senator Elizabeth Dole during her Senate re-election campaign, U.S. Senator Thom Tillis (then NC House Speaker) as Director of Operations, Congressman David Rouzer as Political Director during his first Congressional run, and Congressman George Holding as in-state Finance Director following his first Congressional victory. She also served as Political Director for the North Carolina Republican Party in the time leading up to and during the pivotal election in 2010 when the GOP regained majorities in both the NC House and Senate for the first time in over 100 years.

In 2013, Dodie joined Cansler Collaborative Resources (CCR), a consulting firm founded by former NC Department of Health and Human Services Secretary, Lanier Cansler, as liaison to the state legislature. Five years later, in December of 2018, she left CCR to join the government relations practice at Nelson Mullins Riley & Scarborough in Raleigh, where she served as Senior Government Relations Consultant for over four years. During her tenure at Nelson Mullins, Dodie was the lead on numerous client accounts spanning across a wide range of industries, including healthcare/behavioral health, economic development, broadband/IT, higher education, county and local government, transportation, infrastructure and regulatory reform.

In November of 2022, Dodie joined public policy and government relations firm, ConnectSouth, as a Partner in their North Carolina office. Headquartered in Atlanta, GA, ConnectSouth is a boutique firm entirely dedicated to policy and government relations.

After more than 30 years of political and policy experience, Dodie decided the time was right to hang her own shingle. On February 9, 2024, Electus Governmental Affairs was officially incorporated with Dodie as President. The same clients she represented during her time at Nelson Mullins are still with her today, which is one of the highest compliments of her professional career.

Dodie is a graduate of Mars Hill University (B.S. in Political Science) and The George Washington University – Graduate School of Political Management (M.A. Political & Campaign Management). She and her husband live in Clayton, NC, and their daughter is a senior at East Carolina University. Dodie currently serves on the North Carolina Institute of Political Leadership (IOPL) Board of Directors, Children's Home Society of North Carolina Community Leadership Council, and Methodist Home for Children's Dream Big Gala Committee.

Kim Walawender

Chief of Operations, Electus Governmental Affairs



Kim Walawender, Chief of Operations, comes to us with over 20 years' experience in finance and back-office operations. Originally from Ocean City, NJ, Kim has lived in Clayton, NC for the past 20 years with her husband, Steve, daughter Alyssa (a recent graduate of UNC), son Logan (a Junior at ECU), and two rescue dogs, Buster and Louie.

During her time as Assistant Branch Manager and then Branch Manager of a Finance Company, she has fostered a team-centered office culture that emphasized empowerment, support, and enjoyment in the workplace. Kim is fully versed in all aspects of consumer finance, handling underwriting, funding, collections & repossessions, customer service, and compliance with a keen eye for detail and proactive strategies.

Prior to that, as the Client Services Manager for an independent wealth management firm for 4 years, Kim managed all back-office operations. She was pivotal during the transition of the firm to a new broker dealer, re-papering all client accounts and serving as the primary contact for audits and regulatory agencies.

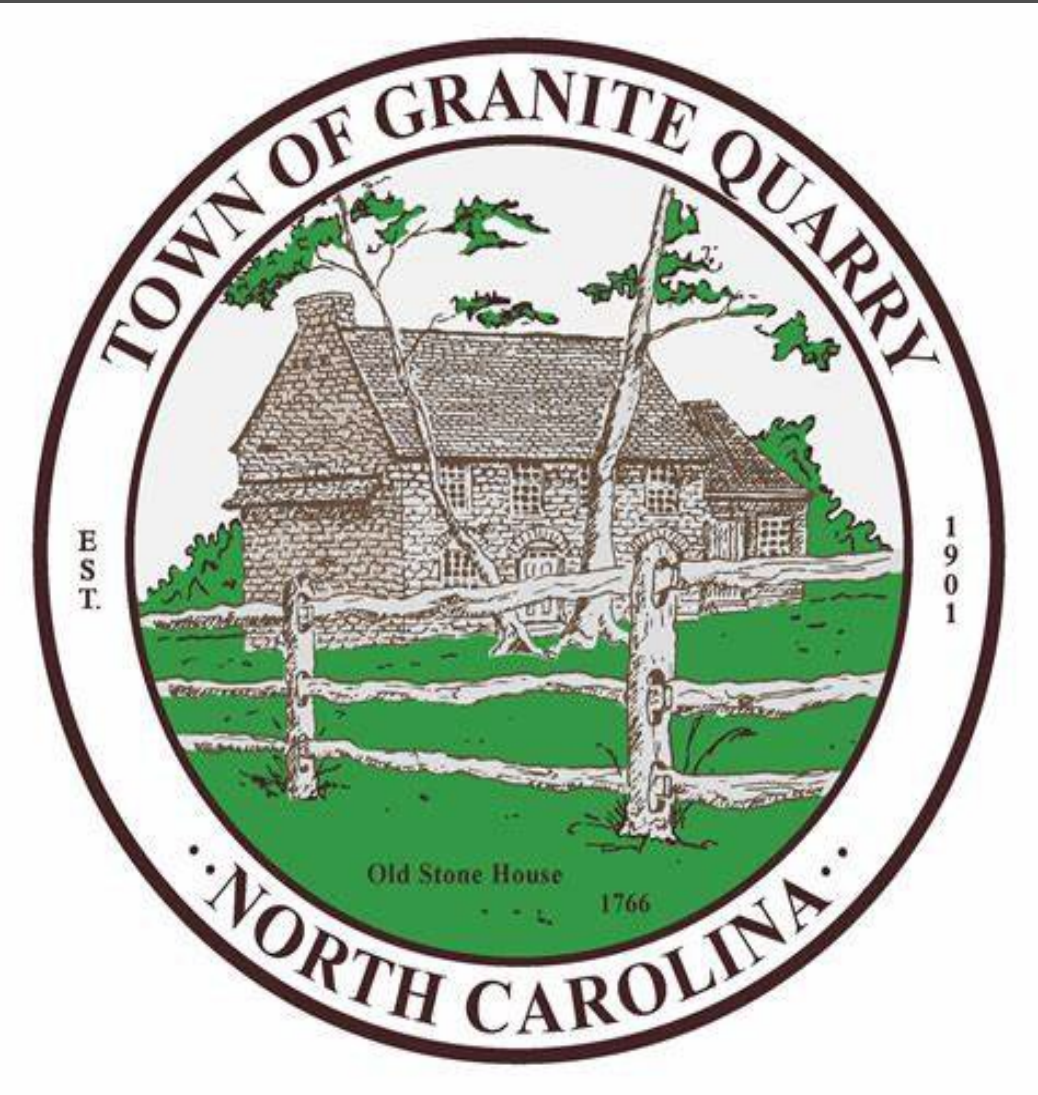
Kim has also held various Office Management positions handling the various administrative functions of firms, including tracking revenue, processing payroll, scheduling, and maintaining compliance according to industry standards in healthcare, non-profit, and senior living sectors.

Kim has demonstrated exceptional leadership, integrity, and interpersonal skills throughout her career. Her career is marked by her dedication to excellence, continuous learning, and a genuine love for her work. Her ability to develop and maintain strong relationships with customers, coworkers, and senior management has made her a valued leader in every position she has held. Kim has a B.S. in Business Administration from Saint Michael's College in Vermont. She has held NC Life Insurance License, NC Credit Insurance Licenses and is a Notary Public.

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Electus Governmental Affairs Team



Dodie B. Renfer,
President



Kim Walawender,
Chief Operations Officer



What is Lobbying?

Lobbying is a form of advocacy which lawfully attempts to directly influence legislators or government officials, such as leaders within the Executive Branch and heads of regulatory agencies.

Principal elements of **lobbying** include researching and analyzing legislation and regulatory proposals, attending legislative and regulatory hearings, building coalitions with others advocating for similar causes/issues, educating government officials about the implications of legislative changes, and advocating before the state legislature for direct appropriations.

Lobbying is developing goodwill through communications or activities, including the building of relationships, with an identified group or designated individual, with the intention of influencing current or future legislative or executive action (or both). *N.C. Gen. Stat. Ann. § 163A-250*



Key Services

- ✓ *Provide clients with strategic counsel on matters involving local, state and national governmental affairs*
- ✓ *Serve as a liaison between clients and the NC Legislature, NC Executive Branch, numerous state agencies / departments, and other pertinent associations*
- ✓ *Elevate profiles and foster relationships between clients and key decision-makers within the halls of state and local government (“SLG”)*

Benefits of Lobbyist Engagement by Local Governments

- Guaranteed seat at the table and voice in the discussion on targeted matters
- Greater access to and influence with key policymakers
- Expedited results with legislative and agency leaders
- Comprehensive and creative approach to governmental affairs, inclusive of coalition building, strategic problem solving and policy implementation
- Strategic advocacy on policy issues including, but not limited to:
 - Budget Appropriations
 - Occupancy Taxes
 - Board of Elections
 - Licensing
 - Broadband Authority
 - ABE Board
 - County Recognitions
 - Agency/Dept Abolishment
 - De-annexation
 - Property Boundaries
 - Board of Education
 - Waste Management
 - Judicial Districting
 - Emergency Management
 - Justice/Public Safety



Municipalities with Contract Lobbyists

Apex	Elizabethtown	Lexington	Sedalia
Asheville	Farmville	Maggie Valley	Selma
Beaufort	Fayetteville	Midland	Summerfield
Belmont	Garner	Mooresville	Sunset Beach
Biscoe	Gibsonville	Mount Airy	Surf City
Boone	Greensboro	Mount Holly	Troutman
Butner	Greenville	Norwood	Waxhaw
Candor	Havelock	Pembroke	Weaverville
Cary	Hickory	Pilot Mountain	Wilson
Concord	High Point	Raleigh	Winston-Salem
Creedmoor	Holly Springs	Reidsville	
Edenton	Lake Lure	Rocky Mount	
Elizabeth City	Leland	Salisbury	

The State Budget Process

The Players

*NC Governor • Office of State Budget Management (OSBM) •
State Agencies/Departments • NC General Assembly*

The Process

The NC Constitution empowers the Governor to “prepare and recommend to the General Assembly a comprehensive budget of anticipated revenues and proposed expenditures of the State for the ensuing fiscal period.” It is also provided that “the budget as enacted by the General Assembly shall be administered by the Governor.”

- The “*State Budget Act*” provides that the Governor is the Director of the Budget
- In this role, the Governor delegates certain authorities to the *Office of State Budget Management (OSBM)*

The State Budget Timeline

- North Carolina operates under a biennial (2-year) budget, beginning on July 1 of each odd-numbered year, with annual updates to the 2nd year of the enacted budget
- Budget instructions are sent to state agencies in August
- State agency budget requests are submitted in October
- Agency hearings are held in December
- The Governor submits his or her proposed budget to the North Carolina State Legislature in early March
- The House and Senate consider the Governor's budget recommendations, submit their respective budget proposals which move through the committee process, and the legislature (hopefully) adopts a budget between June and August; a simple majority is required to pass a budget
- North Carolina is one of only six states in which the governor cannot exercise line-item veto authority (the power of a governor to veto individual components (or lines) of a bill passed by the state legislature)
- The governor is constitutionally and statutorily required to submit a balanced budget. In turn, the legislature is required by statute to pass a balanced budget
- Of note: Continuing Resolutions and “mini-budgets” (2019-20)

2024 Short Session Governor's Vetoes:

HB10/Require Ice Cooperation and Budget Adjustments

HB155/Titles for Off-Road Vehicles/Low-Speed Vehicles Inspections

HB198/DOT Legislative Changes

HB237/Various and Election Law Changes

HB556/Tenancy in Common/E-Notary/Small Claims Changes

HB834/Juvenile Justice Modifications

HB690/No Central Bank Digital Currency Payments to State

SB166/2024 Building Code Regulatory Reform

SB445/Recording of Court-Filed Documents

2024 Short Session Veto Overrides:

As of November 13, 2024, the GOP-controlled legislature has been successful in overriding 7 of Gov. Cooper's vetoes from this short session, extending a winning streak that started last year, when all 19 of Cooper's vetoes were overridden. Additional veto override votes are expected later this month or in November. The 7 vetoes successfully overridden to date are:

- ✓ HB155 / Titles for Off-Road Vehicles/Low-Speed Vehicles Inspections
- ✓ HB198 / DOT Legislative Changes
- ✓ HB237 / Various Criminal and Election Law Changes
- ✓ HB556 / Tenancy in Common/E-Notary/Small Claims Changes
- ✓ HB690 / No Central Bank Digital Currency Payments to State
- ✓ HB834 / Juvenile Justice Modifications
- ✓ SB166 / 2024 Building Code Regulatory Reform

2024 Short Session Bipartisan Successes:

A number of bills passed the last week of session (pre-summer break) with little controversy, many receiving unanimous or near unanimous support in both chambers. A few worth noting:

✓ Ch. SL 2024-18 / Constitutional Amendment/Citizens-Only Voting

✓ Ch. SL 2024-27 / SHALOM Act

✓ Ch. SL 2024-40 / Adjustments to the 2023 Appropriations Act

✓ Ch. SL 2024-30 / DMV Proposed Legislative Changes.-AB

✓ Ch. SL 2024-32 / NC Farm Act of 2024

✓ Ch. SL 2024-51 / Disaster Recovery Act of 2024

✓ Ch. SL 2024-53 / Disaster Recovery Act of 2024 – Part II

2024 Short Session Shortfalls:

- **Two-year state budget (Appropriations Act for 2024)**
- **SB3 / NC Compassionate Care Act**
- **SB626 / Child Welfare, Soc. Services, DHHS Reforms**
- **HB982 / Faith in Mental Health**
- **SB321 / Medical Debt De-Weaponization Act**
- **HB563 / Hemp-derived Consumables/Con Sub Changes**

Looking Ahead – The 2025 Long-Session

- Two-year state budget
- Medicaid adjustments
- Aging health policy
- Medical billing transparency
- Revisions to PBM provisions
- Amendments to Occupational Licensing Boards
- Child care funding
- K-12 education funding
- County tier designations
- Medical marijuana
- Hospital violence protections
- Casinos & Video Lottery

LOOKING AHEAD: 2025 LONG-SESSION

REQUESTS FOR DIRECT APPROPRIATIONS



REQUESTS FOR DIRECT APPROPRIATIONS

Example: Selma, NC

- A. \$7.9 million - Water Capacity Project Phase II
- B. \$6 million - New Safety Infrastructure Phase I
- C. \$5 million - Electrical Grid Improvements
- D. \$1 million - Greenway Construction Phase I
- E. \$3 million – Historic Train Depot Repairs





**What are
Granite Quarry's
Priorities for
2025?**



ELECTUS

GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS

We would be honored to represent Granite Quarry!