

Draft

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
REGULAR MEETING February 6, 2006

ALEXANDER COUNTY
STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA

PRESENT: Larry G. Yoder, Chairman
 W. Darrell Robertson, Vice-Chairman
 Wesley E. Bolick
 William L. Hammer
 W. Norris Kever

STAFF: Rick French, County Manager
 Jamie Starnes, Clerk to the Board

MEDIA: Gary Herman, The Taylorsville Times

The Alexander County Board of Commissioners held a regular meeting on Monday, February 6, 2006 in the Catawba Valley Community College / Alexander Center Multipurpose Room, Taylorsville, North Carolina.

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Yoder called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM.

INVOCATION & PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Father James Byer, Administrator of Holy Trinity Catholic Church, gave the invocation and Chairman Yoder led the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

*****SPECIAL RECOGNITION*****

Steven Corley, Director & CEO of Foothills Area Program / LME, recognized Dr. Jane Teague for her service to Foothills as an outstanding board member from 1993 to 2004. Mr. Corley stated that Dr. Teague had been a voice for citizens with mental health issues, especially children, and he thanked her for her contribution.

Dr. Teague stated it had been an honor and pleasure to serve on the Foothills Area Program / LME Board and to have a part in helping provide services to children with disabilities.

Commissioner Robertson, on behalf of the entire Board, conveyed his appreciation to Dr. Teague for her service to Foothills.

COMMISSIONER'S REPORT

Commissioner Robertson discussed a recent Western Piedmont Council of Governments (WPCOG) publication which investigated age trends by county. He explained that the publication showed the current residential population for Alexander County at 35,545; however, it also predicted the population to increase to 47,251 by 2030. Commissioner Robertson stated that this increase in population would have a significant impact on the need for County services in the future.

Commissioner Hammer stated that he and Commissioner Keever attended a N.C. Association of County Commissioners Agriculture Subcommittee Meeting recently. He mentioned that the meeting was well attended and he noted that farm tax credits were discussed.

ADOPTION OF AGENDA

Commissioner Robertson made a motion to adopt the agenda as presented. Commissioner Keever seconded the motion. The Board voted unanimously in favor of the motion.

PUBLIC HEARING: CLOSEOUT FOR 2004 CDBG WATER HOOKUP PROJECT NUMBER 04-C-1310

Nancy Coley, WPCOG Community Development Administrator, stated that this public hearing was required before submitting the Closeout Performance Report for CDBG 04-C-1310 Water Hookup Project. Ms. Coley stated that the purpose of this \$75,000 infrastructure grant was to provide water taps and connections to serve up to 60 low and moderate income families and she noted that grant funds provided 100% of project costs.

Ms. Coley announced that this particular project allowed taps and connections to be provided for 26 homes which included 57 persons. She also mentioned that the grant agreement stated that all activities must be completed, all grant funds spent, and the grant closed by February 23, 2006. Ms. Coley stated that there would be some remaining grant funding that would not be spent because there were no pending applications. Ms. Coley requested the Board vote to submit the closeout papers to the N.C. Department of Commerce Division of Community Assistance.

Chairman Yoder inquired as to the lack of applications submitted for this grant project. Ms. Coley stated that the project had been advertised in the local newspaper and on the government channel and she noted that letters had been included in EnergyUnited Water Corporation water bills. Chairman Yoder suggested looking into an additional avenue for advertising in the future.

Chairman Yoder called the public hearing to order and requested any public comment. There being no public comment, Commissioner Robertson made a motion to close the public hearing. Commissioner Keever seconded the motion. The Board voted unanimously in favor of the motion.

Commissioner Keever made a motion to allow Ms. Coley to submit the closeout papers for the 2004 CDBG Water Hookup Project Number 04-C-1310 to the N.C. Department of Commerce Division of Community Assistance as requested. Commissioner Bolick seconded the motion. The Board voted unanimously in favor of the motion.

APPROVAL OF COPY SERVICES AGREEMENT

Jennifer Herman, Finance Director, stated that following a detailed study of the County's copier usage and costs by Robert S. Segal, CPA PA, and at Segal's recommendation, the County had requested proposals from vendors to provide copiers, copier maintenance and supplies, and a cost for each copy.

Ms. Herman informed the Board that requests for proposals (RFP) were mailed on December 19, 2006. Vendors were requested to provide the County with new digital copiers capable of being connected to the County's wide area network as well as the ability to scan and print, provide accountability by user, and receive and produce facsimile transmissions. She stated that the County held a pre-proposal meeting with interested vendors on January 9, 2006 where an amendment was issued to the RFP. She noted that 5 proposals were received on January 23, 2006, one of which was withdrawn due to the discovery of errors in the proposal.

Ms. Herman stated that the proposal of Toshiba Business Solutions provided the most attractive pricing at a weighted average cost per copy of \$.0217 per black and white copy and \$.095 per color copy over the proposed 5-year contract life. She also stated that Toshiba met the County's technical specifications for a nationally recognized brand of copiers, provided the same low costs per copy for additional copiers, demonstrated its ability to provide adequate services, and offered effective billing procedures. Ms. Herman mentioned that replacing all copiers immediately under the Toshiba proposal would save the County \$31,664 annually; however, she pointed out that 9 of the 20 copiers included in the proposal were leased under other agreements that would expire over the next 5 years and could not be converted as of yet. Ms. Herman stated that those copiers would be replaced as their leases expired. She also reported that savings to the County over the 5-year period phase in period was projected at \$101,199 and she noted that the number of invoices and checks for copy vendors would also be reduced.

Ms. Herman requested the Board approve a Resolution Authorizing the Execution of a Copy Services Agreement for the County of Alexander so that staff could move forward with negotiations for the agreements.

Commissioner Keever made a motion to approve the Resolution Authorizing the Execution of a Copy Services Agreement for the County of Alexander. Commissioner Robertson seconded the motion. The Board voted unanimously in favor of the motion.

LEPC ANNUAL REPORT

Russell Greene, Emergency Services Director, presented the Local Emergency Planning Committee (LEPC) annual report, which was submitted to and approved by the membership of the LEPC on January 26, 2006. The report was as follows:

The Alexander County LEPC met on January 27, 2005 in the Cooperative Extension Learning Center. Twelve members were present at this meeting. Russell Greene reported on the following items:

1. Update on Emergency Management Homeland Security Grants.
2. Status of the 2004 Annual Report.
3. Update on the Citizen Corps funding.
4. New membership recommendations.

During the May 19, 2005 meeting, the 17 members present heard reports from the Chairman on the following items and took action as necessary:

1. Election of Vice-Chairperson.
2. Update on Emergency Management Homeland Security Grants.
3. Update on Citizen Corps funding.
4. Companies submitting Tier II reports.
5. Review of Tabletop Exercise.
6. Update on upcoming Full-Scale Exercise.
7. Update on Iredell County Regional Exercise.
8. Response review – school bus accident.
9. Subcommittees were appointed in the following areas:
 - a. Emergency Plans Review
 - b. Tier II Reporting
 - c. Major Response Review

Sixteen members were present at the August 18, 2005 meeting. The following items were discussed and action was taken as deemed necessary:

1. Update on Emergency Management Homeland Security Grants.
2. Update on additional Tier II reports received.
3. Citizen Corps update.
4. Final actions on upcoming Full-Scale Exercise.
5. Review of Iredell County Regional Exercise.
6. Response review – tornado.

During the November 10, 2005 meeting, the 11 members present heard reports from the Chairman on the following items:

1. Review of Citizen Corps training conducted at Shurtape.
2. Discussion and review of Full-Scale Exercise.
3. Review of the Highway Safety Class.
4. Update from Sheriff Hayden Bentley on emergency communications.
5. Update on purchase of new ambulance.
6. Presentation from Julia Houck, Farm Service Agency.
7. Presentation from Dave Bristol, American Red Cross.

Mr. Greene stated that the LEPC consisted of a very dedicated group of individuals with a desire to serve the citizens of the county. He also stated that in the coming months these members would begin the process of review the current Emergency Operations Plan. Mr. Greene thanked the members of the LEPC and the Board of Commissioners for their continued support of all emergency service agencies. He also requested the following appointment and reappointments to the LEPC for 3-year terms:

Appoint Tamara Fawcette, Frye Regional Medical Center / Alexander Campus
Reappoint David Odom, Town Manager
Reappoint Sylvia Turnmire, Director of Planning & Development
Reappoint Patti Foster, Transportation Director
Reappoint David Icenhour, Economic Development Director
Reappoint Dave Bristol, American Red Cross
Reappoint Karen Hoyle, DSS Director

Commissioner Bolick made a motion to approve the appointment and reappointments as requested. Commissioner Hammer seconded the motion. The Board voted unanimously in favor of the motion.

Commissioner Keever made a motion to approve the LEPC annual report. Commissioner Robertson seconded the motion. The Board voted unanimously in favor of the motion.

PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

There was no one present to speak during the Public Comment Period.

NCACC MEDICAID RELIEF TASK FORCE PROPOSAL

Commissioner Keever stated that he and Rick French, County Manager, attended a NCACC Taxation and Finance Committee Meeting on January 26, 2006 where options for county Medicaid relief were discussed. Commissioner Keever explained that discussion centered on a Senate leadership proposal to redirect local proceeds from a local one cent sales tax to the state in exchange for elimination of county Medicaid financial participation with local authority to enact an additional one cent sales tax.

Commissioner Keever pointed out that the NCACC Medicaid Task Force was generally favorable to the Senate's approach, but offered the following recommendations in order to facilitate legislative and local board action:

1. General Assembly would be given the proceeds from one cent local sales tax.
 - a. Counties would surrender proceeds from Article 39 – one penny, point of delivery, recommended based on the following reasons:
 - i. It is the only local sales tax at full cent levy so it would be the cleanest and simplest trade for the state and counties.
 - ii. Counties choosing not to enact the additional one cent authority would not jeopardize proceeds for other counties (no per capita).
 - iii. No school capital earmarking requirements in Article 39.
2. General Assembly assumes all responsibility for Medicaid services.
 - a. Counties retain administrative responsibilities.
3. General Assembly authorizes counties to enact additional one cent sales tax.
 - a. New sales tax would mirror that provided to state – one penny, point of delivery, no required earmarking, sales tax applies to food.
 - b. New sales tax to be implemented either by resolution or referendum at discretion of board of county commissioners.
 - c. Cities would continue to receive normal distribution.
4. Legislation authorizing trade to occur during 2006 short session, with implementation beginning July 1, 2007.

Commissioner Keever informed the Board that the NCACC Medicaid Relief Task Force would be recommending the proposal to the entire NCACC Board of Director who would consider it on February 16, 2006.

Commissioner Keever discussed rank in tax burden for North Carolina and noted that Alexander County was rated 100th in the state. He also noted that the county's unemployment rate was equal to that of the U.S. – 4.7%.

BUDGET ORDINANCE AMENDMENTS #39 - #41

Rick French, County Manager, discussed the purpose of Budget Amendments #39 - #41, which included the following information:

Budget Amendment #39 – To increase the budget for medical / dental insurance. To increase the annual appropriation to the Chamber of Commerce. To increase the budget for Lexis-Nexis subscription invoices for the Clerk of Court. To increase the budget for an additional allocation for the Crisis Intervention Program. To increase the budget for a March of Dimes grant to encourage pregnant women to stop smoking.

Budget Amendment #40 – To cancel the Advantage Wood Products CDBG Project because the business was sold and the grant was de-obligated.

Budget Amendment #41 – To increase the budget for the County's share of the WPCOG's 2005-2006 Air Quality Budget.

Commissioner Kever asked that Budget Amendment #41 be considered separately.

Commissioner Kever made a motion to approve Budget Amendments #39 and #40. Commissioner Robertson seconded the motion. The Board voted unanimously in favor of the motion.

Commissioner Kever made a motion to approve Budget Amendment #41 with the stipulation that the appropriation only be used for engineering costs to obtain data to determine the cause of PM2.5 and ozone in the Unifour. Commissioner Robertson seconded the motion. The Board voted unanimously in favor of the motion.

OTHER BUSINESS

Rick French, County Manager, discussed the following issues during Other Business:

- A. The N.C. Highway 127 Water Project is underway. Water lines are currently being constructed.
- B. Staff is arranging a tour of the 911 Communications Center for the Board following the February 20, 2006 Commissioners' Meeting.
- C. A work session will be held following adjournment of the March 13, 2006 Commissioners' Meeting.
- D. The N.C. Board of Elections has announced that an additional \$3 million is available to counties at a flat rate of \$30,000 per county. This translates to zero out of pocket dollars for Alexander County.

CONSENT AGENDA

- A. Minutes from the January 23, 2006 Regular Commissioners' Meeting.
- B. Tax Release Requests for January \$1,835.88 and Tax Refund Requests for January \$2,789.12.

Commissioner Kever made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda. Commissioner Robertson seconded the motion. The Board voted unanimously in favor of the motion.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business for the regular meeting, Commissioner Robertson made a motion to adjourn at 6:48 PM to reconvene in the work session. Commissioner Hammer seconded the motion. The Board voted unanimously in favor of the motion.

Larry G. Yoder, Chairman

Jamie M. Starnes, Clerk to the Board

Draft

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
WORK SESSION February 6, 2006

ALEXANDER COUNTY
STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA

PRESENT: Larry G. Yoder, Chairman
W. Darrell Robertson, Vice-Chairman
Wesley E. Bolick
William L. Hammer
W. Norris Keever

STAFF: Rick French, County Manager
Jamie Starnes, Clerk to the Board

MEDIA: Gary Herman, The Taylorsville Times

The Alexander County Board of Commissioners held a work session following adjournment of the regular meeting.

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Yoder called the work session to order at 7:02 PM.

YMCA / AQUATIC CENTER DISCUSSION

Rick French, County Manager, discussed the recent decision to move forward with applying for a PARTF grant for an aquatic center in Alexander County. He stated that the County Attorney was currently working on an agreement between the County and the YMCA for operation of the facility. He also noted that the 5 acres located off Highway 64/90 would be transferred soon.

Marcheta Campbell, YMCA, distributed financial information and documentation which included income statements and operating budgets for the Statesville YMCA, Alexander County YMCA, and Statesville YMCA Aquatics Center, a current and projected operating fund for the current and new Alexander County YMCA facility, and an aquatic center budget performa. Ms. Campbell discussed the differences between the Statesville and Alexander County YMCA's. She stated that the largest expenses for an aquatic center was staffing and chemicals and she noted that expenses for the Alexander County Aquatic Center would be much less because there would only be one pool (as opposed to Statesville's two pools) and there would only be one full-time employee on staff.

Ms. Campbell also pointed out that the Statesville YMCA aquatic center was operating with a deficit, which she noted was normal for aquatic facilities. However, she mentioned that YMCA membership fees sustained the deficit for the aquatic center. She also noted that the YMCA would be responsible for the Alexander County Aquatic Center deficit.

Ms. Campbell discussed projections for memberships and revenue with construction of the new YMCA facility and the aquatic center. She felt membership would double which would contribute to aiding the deficit. She also mentioned several programs that would be offered at the aquatic center including the 2nd grade swimming program.

The group briefly discussed some budget figures and projections for each facility. Mr. French noted that staff should receive word regarding the PARTF grant near the end of May 2006. Once the grant is received, construction on the facility will begin sometime in late summer and will be ongoing for a year or more.

The Board thanked Ms. Campbell for attending the work session and providing this information.

BETHLEHEM BRANCH LIBRARY

Mr. French reviewed a proposal for locating the Bethlehem Branch Library in a building owned by Mark North of North Design in Bethlehem, N.C, as well as a revised suggestion for costs, which included the following:

Original Proposal

- \$ 1,700 monthly lease
- \$38,600 cost to renovate space
- \$62,000 print and audiovisual
- \$15,000 technology
- \$40,000 furniture/shelving annual operating budget
- \$58,893 operating budget

Revised Suggested Cost

- \$20,000 cost to renovate space (using County labor)
- \$30,000 (50% offer for print and audiovisual)
- \$15,000 technology costs remain the same
- \$90-91,000 annual budget (including monthly lease and lease purchase of furniture/shelving)

Mr. French also noted that the cost estimate for using the Triplett building would be the same minus the monthly lease payments.

The Board discussed the pros and cons for both buildings as well as parking and signage needs. Commissioner Robertson asked Mr. French to look at the current and 2006-2007 budget to determine if half the funding needed could be taken from the current budget and the remaining

half from the 2006-2007 budget. The Board also asked Mr. French to look into the possibility of the lease being extended for the Triplett building if it was chosen for the branch library.

Commissioner Bolick felt that cost for furniture and shelving could be cut drastically by purchasing used equipment. He suggested the new Purchasing Agent research vendors.

Mr. French stated he would provide more solid numbers and other information during the March 13, 2006 work session.

NORTHEAST WATER PROJECT

Mr. French discussed funding options for the Northeast Water Project. He informed the Board that USDA grants now required a bond referendum and he noted that N.C. Rural Center grants were now focused more on job creation. Therefore, he felt the Board needed to focus on N.C. Water Supply loans and grants as well as CDBG funding. Mr. French stated that N.C. Water Supply funding was available in March and September. He also noted that Representative Virginia Foxx was researching federal funding for the project as well.

BACKGROUND CHECKS FOR COACHES

Mr. French informed the Board that beginning with baseball season 2006, Alexander County would require a background check on all recreation coaching staff. He stated that the following behaviors would disqualify an individual from positions such as head coach, assistant coach, or team manager:

1. Felony convictions of any kind
2. Conviction for crime of violence (assault, domestic, etc.)
3. Conviction for any crime against children
4. Any sexual offense
5. Conviction for any drug-related charge
6. Conviction for embezzlement
7. DWI conviction – 2nd offense within 7 years.

Mr. French stated that prospective coaches should go to the Clerk of Court's Office to get the background check.

Chairman Yoder stated that the Sheriff's Department performed a more detailed background check which he felt was needed for these types of recreation positions. Chairman Yoder suggested these background checks be performed by the Sheriff's Department instead of the Clerk of Court and that prospective coaches getting the background checks completed be responsible for the cost, if any.

Mr. French noted that he would convey this suggestion to Jon Presnell, Recreation Director.

VETERAN'S FLAG HOLDER PROJECT

Mr. French stated that a total of 498 flag holders were needed for the remaining veteran's graves in the county and to complete this project. He mentioned that the price including shipping was \$13.00 per flag holder; therefore, he informed the Board that \$6,474 was needed to purchase the remaining flag holders. Mr. French stated that the order needed to be placed immediately to guarantee the price of \$13.00 and to have them ready to distribute by late spring 2006. He asked for the Board's approval to move forward.

The Board agreed to allow staff to move forward with the purchase of the remaining flag holders. Mr. French stated he would prepare a budget amendment to be considered at the February 20, 2006 Commissioners' Meeting.

HOSPITALIZATION INSURANCE FOR RETIREES

Mr. French explained that the County currently provided hospitalization insurance for employees who have worked for 20 or more years for the County and retired through the Local Government Employee Retirement System. However, he pointed out that the cost to provide this coverage was increasing each year. Therefore, he recommended a revision to the current policy which included a cut off date for coverage eligibility.

He explained that all current employees would still be eligible for this insurance and this would only apply to new hires. The Board agreed and also suggested possibly increasing the number of years of service to exceed 20 years.

PURCHASE OF NEW PATROL CARS

Mr. French discussed the need to purchase 5 new patrol cars – 3 as annual replacements and 2 replacements of wrecked vehicles. Mr. French informed the Board that purchasing all 5 vehicles would exceed the County's threshold of \$90,000 for vehicle purchases, requiring a bid process to take place. He noted that the new Purchasing Agent was researching the best deal for this purchase in hopes that the vehicles could be purchased for under \$90,000.

Chairman Yoder felt that the new vehicles, once purchased, needed to be given to the deputies on the road who were on the front lines.

Commissioner Robertson suggested smaller cars be purchased for detectives.

CLOSED SESSION – N.C.G.S. 143-318.11(a)(1, 4, 5, & 6) TO PREVENT DISCLOSURE OF CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, CONTRACTUAL MATTERS, & PERSONNEL

Commissioner Bolick made a motion to enter into Closed Session at 8:40 PM to prevent the disclosure of confidential information and to discuss economic development, contractual matters, and personnel issues pursuant to N.C.G.S. 143-318.11(a)(1, 4, 5, & 6). Commissioner Hammer seconded the motion. The Board voted unanimously in favor of the motion.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further discussion, Commissioner Keever made a motion to adjourn at 8:50 PM. Commissioner Hammer seconded the motion. The Board voted unanimously in favor of the motion.

Larry G. Yoder, Chairman

Jamie M. Starnes, Clerk to the Board