

Draft

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
REGULAR MEETING December 4, 2006

ALEXANDER COUNTY
STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA

PRESENT: W. Darrell Robertson, Vice-Chairman
 Wes Bolick
 William L. Hammer
 Harold M. Odom

ABSENT: Larry G. Yoder, Chairman

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

MEDIA: Micah Henry, The Taylorsville Times

The Alexander County Board of Commissioners held a regular meeting on Monday, December 4, 2006 in the Catawba Valley Community College / Alexander Center Multipurpose Room, Taylorsville, North Carolina.

CALL TO ORDER

Vice-Chairman Robertson called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM.

INVOCATION & PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Rev. Jeff Chapman, Little River Baptist Church, gave the invocation and Jacob Abernathy, student at Stony Point Elementary School, led the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

COMMISSIONER'S REPORT

Vice-Chairman Robertson mentioned that Wake County had contacted the N.C. Association of County Commissioners with a concern that the more populated counties paid more in taxes than they received from the state. Vice-Chairman Robertson pointed out that less populated counties had the same problem and noted that Alexander County may need to respond on behalf of the smaller counties.

ADOPTION OF AGENDA

Vice-Chairman Robertson stated that Agenda Item #3 (Existing Industry Recognition Program – Taylor King Furniture) needed to be removed from the agenda. He also noted that several items and equipment from the Sheriff's Department needed to be added to the Consent Agenda to be declared as surplus.

Vice-Chairman Robertson made a motion to adopt the agenda as amended. Commissioner Bolick seconded the motion. The Board voted unanimously in favor of the motion.

ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN

Vice-Chairman Robertson called for nominations for chairman. Commissioner Hammer nominated Vice-Chairman Robertson to serve as chairman for the next year.

There being no further nominations, Commissioner Hammer made a motion to close the nominations for chairman. Commissioner Odom seconded the motion. The Board voted unanimously in favor of the motion.

Commissioner Hammer made a motion to approve the election of Vice-Chairman Robertson as chairman. Commissioner Bolick seconded the motion. The Board voted unanimously in favor of the motion.

Vice-Chairman Robertson presided over the remainder of the meeting as Chairman seeing that Commissioner Yoder was absent.

ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIRMAN

Chairman Robertson called for nominations for vice-chairman. Commissioner Hammer nominated Commissioner Bolick to serve as vice-chairman for the next year.

There being no further nominations, Commissioner Hammer made a motion to close the nominations for vice-chairman. Commissioner Bolick seconded the motion. The Board voted unanimously in favor of the motion.

Commissioner Hammer made a motion to approve the election of Commissioner Bolick as vice-chairman. Chairman Robertson seconded the motion. The Board voted unanimously in favor of the motion.

POWER POINT PRESENTATION FOR 2006 AUDIT

Brian Gant from Martin Starnes & Associates presented a Power Point Slide Show Presentation for the 2005-2006 Audit Summary, which was as follows:

Audit Results

- Unqualified opinion
- Unreserved fund balance \$2,978,503
- Increase in fund balance \$270,559
- Unreserved fund balance is 11.7% of general fund expenditures

Fund Balance History

- \$4,275,486 in 2003
- \$4,558,214 in 2004
- \$5,031,746 in 2005
- \$5,302,305 in 2006

Property Valuation History (in thousands)

- \$1,995,247 in 2003
- \$1,995,114 in 2004
- \$2,035,168 in 2005
- \$2,064,963 in 2006

Comparative Averages for N.C. Counties with Population of 25,000 to 49,999

	<u>Alexander County</u>	<u>Average</u>
Available General Fund fund balance	\$2,978,503	\$9,517,707*
Property tax rate	0.510	0.5748*
Appraisal adjusted rate	0.4305**	0.4634*
Collection percentage	96.54%	95.86%
Excluding motor vehicles	97.65%	97.00%
Motor vehicles	88.46%	85.05%

* Reference: LGC memo #1030 (6/30/05 averages)

** 6/30/05 appraisal adjusted rate

Note: Alexander's figures are as of 6/30/06, except as noted above

Net Cost of Services Provided – Governmental

- Education – 33%
- Public Safety – 23%
- Human Services – 20%
- General Government – 16%
- Cultural & Recreation – 3%
- Environmental Protection, Economic Development, & Physical Development – 1%
- Interest & Fees – 4%

Revenues – General Fund

- Ad Valorem Taxes – 40%
- Local Option Sales Tax – 25%
- Restricted Intergovernmental – 19%
- Sales & Services – 11%
- Permits, Fees, & Other Revenue – 2%
- Interest – 1%
- Other – 2%

General Fund Revenues 2005 & 2006

- Ad Valorem Taxes - \$9,620,324 in 2005 & \$10,680,833 in 2006
- Other Intergovernmental - \$4,584,152 in 2005 & \$4,930,151 in 2006
- Local Option Sales Tax - \$6,352,813 in 2005 & \$6,715,072 in 2006
- Sales & Services - \$2,248,001 in 2005 & \$2,856,272 in 2006
- Permits, Fees, & Other Revenue - \$544,170 in 2005 & \$655,861 in 2006
- Investment Earnings - \$98,026 in 2005 & \$189,399 in 2006
- Other Taxes & Licenses - \$201,205 in 2005 & \$145,946 in 2006

Expenditures – General Fund

- Human Services – 38%
- Education – 20%
- Public Safety – 18%
- General Government – 13%
- Debt Service – 7%
- Cultural & Recreation – 2%
- Environmental Protection – 1%
- Economic Development & Physical Development – 1%

General Fund Expenditures 2005 & 2006

- Human Services - \$8,948,736 in 2005 & \$9,593,106 in 2006
- Education - \$4,530,950 in 2005 & \$5,094,679 in 2006
- Public Safety - \$4,321,660 in 2005 & \$4,508,072 in 2006
- General Government - \$2,638,043 in 2005 & \$3,268,382 in 2006
- Debt Service - \$1,753,630 in 2005 & \$1,867,039 in 2006
- Environment Protection & Economic Development - \$493,050 in 2005 & \$502,976 in 2006
- Cultural & Recreation - \$556,432 in 2005 & \$571,739 in 2006

Solid Waste Fund Overview

2004

2005

Cash from operations	\$130,714	\$136,496
Budgetary net income	\$ (61,424)	\$104,058
GAAP net income	\$ (41,097)	\$ 28,443

Water Funds Overview

	<u>Highway 16 S</u>	<u>Bethlehem</u>	<u>Sugar Loaf</u>
Cash from operations	\$ 94,500	\$330,269	\$146,036
Budgetary net income	\$ 89,101	\$ (12,018)	\$ 47,819
GAAP net income	\$440,651	\$ 40,062	\$ 14,470

Commissioner Hammer made a motion to accept the 2005-2006 Audit Summary as presented. Commissioner Bolick 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.

UPDATE ON RESIDENTIAL & COMMERCIAL CODE CHANGES

Sylvia Turnmire, Director of Planning & Development, informed the Board that two important sections of the building and fire codes were set to change in the next couple of weeks.

Ms. Turnmire explained that the N.C. Attorney General had advised local inspection departments to require retaining walls, piers, docks, and waterway structures built on residential sites to be designed by a licensed engineer or architect. She stated that permits and inspections would continue to be required; however, she noted that retaining walls exceeding 5 feet in height would have to be inspected by a third party. She also mentioned that this change took effect immediately.

Ms. Turnmire also stated that effective January 1, 2007 the Fire Code would require street numbers to be 4 inches high as opposed to the 3 inches currently enforced. She reported that the new requirement would apply to all structures and would supercede the local ordinance. She also noted that staff would submit a formal revision to the local ordinance in a public hearing for the Board's consideration at a future meeting.

CONSIDERATION OF BIDS FOR NEW AMBULANCE

Russell Greene, Emergency Services Director, informed the Board that bids for a new replacement EMS ambulance had been opened today, December 4, 2006 at 4:15 PM. He stated that 3 bids had been received including bids of \$105,132 from Taylor Made Ambulances, \$116,249 from Southeast Marque, and \$121,656 from Wheel Coach.

Mr. Greene stated that each company estimated a 90-day build time upon receipt of the 2007 Chevrolet C4500 chassis; however, he pointed out that Taylor Made Ambulances and Wheel Coach did not currently have chassis available. He explained that Taylor Made Ambulances could have a chassis in 30 to 90 days and that Wheel Coach could have a chassis with a week but would have to increase the bid by \$3,000. Mr. Greene reported that Southeast Marque did, in fact, have a chassis on the lot that was not spoken for and could begin production by mid to late December.

Mr. Greene stated that several EMS staff members along with the County Mechanic traveled to McDowell County to inspect a Taylor Made Ambulance and he reported that the County Mechanic felt the workmanship quality of the ambulance box was not acceptable and would not hold up for the 5 years estimated for the chassis. Therefore, Mr. Greene recommended the Board accept the bid of \$116,249 from Southeast Marque. He also mentioned that radios (\$4,800) and a stretcher (\$3,821) would need to be purchased for the new ambulance increasing the total cost to \$124,870.

Several commissioners voiced their concerns with accepting a bid that was \$11,000 higher than the lowest bid. Chairman Robertson suggested Mr. Greene contact Taylor Made Ambulances to inquire as to whether the bid price would increase if the quality of the workmanship inside the ambulance box was improved.

Chairman Robertson made a motion to approve the appropriation of \$124,870 for the purchase of a new ambulance and equipment as outlined but to allow staff to contact Taylor Made Ambulances to determine if they could provide the level of quality required. If so, the bid will be awarded to Taylor Made Ambulances and if not, the bid will be awarded to Southeast Marque. Commissioner Hammer seconded the motion. The Board voted unanimously in favor of the motion.

Commissioner Bolick asked the Mr. Greene personally inspect and compare the Taylor Made and Southeast Marque ambulances.

The Board agreed that the delivery date for the ambulance needed to be the end of March 2007.

CONSIDERATION OF THE 2007 COMMISSIONERS' MEETING SCHEDULE (JANUARY 2006 – JUNE 2006)

Rick French, County Manager, presented the first 6 months of the 2006 Commissioners' Meeting Schedule. He stated that staff had developed the schedule by working around specific conferences and conflicts; therefore, he noted that the meetings would not necessarily be held on the first and third Mondays. The schedule was as follows:

January 8, 2007
January 22, 2007

April 16, 2007
(only one meeting in April)

February 12, 2007
February 26, 2007

May 7, 2007
May 21, 2007

March 12, 2007
March 26, 2007

June 11, 2007
June 25, 2007

Commissioner Hammer made a motion to approve the first 6 months of the 2006 Commissioners' Meeting Schedule as presented. Commissioner Odom seconded the motion. The Board voted unanimously in favor of the motion.

CONSIDERATION OF THE 2007 ALEXANDER COUNTY HOLIDAY SCHEDULE

Rick French, County Manager, presented the 2007 Alexander County Holiday Schedule as follows:

New Year's Day Monday, January 2, 2007
Martin Luther King Jr.'s Birthday Monday, January 15, 2007
Good Friday Friday, April 6, 2007
Memorial Day Monday, May 28, 2007
Independence Day Wednesday, July 4, 2007
Labor Day Monday, September 3, 2007
Veteran's Day Monday, November 12, 2007
Thanksgiving Thursday & Friday, November 22 & 23, 2007
Christmas Monday & Tuesday, December 24 & 25, 2007

Commissioner Bolick made a motion to approve the 2007 Alexander County Holiday Schedule as presented. Commissioner Hammer seconded the motion. The Board voted unanimously in favor of the motion.

BOARD APPOINTMENTS & REAPPOINTMENTS

Chairman Robertson presented the following commissioner appointments:

Harold Odom – Partnership for Children & Juvenile Crime Prevention Council
Wes Bolick – Senior Center Advisory Committee
Larry Yoder – Finance Committee

Chairman Robertson stated that there were several other committees that needed a commissioner appointment; however, he felt that the Board should wait until January to make these appointments after the return of Commissioner Yoder. The Board agreed.

Chairman Robertson made a motion to approve the commissioner appointments as presented. Commissioner Hammer seconded the motion. The Board voted unanimously in favor of the motion.

OTHER BUSINESS

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

- A. The Election Office moved into its new facility today.
- B. The School for Newly Elected Commissioners is scheduled for January 24-26, 2007 in Hickory.
- C. A reception honoring Dale Clary and Jim Lowe, former members of the Board of Education, will be held on December 12, 2006 at the ACHS cafeteria from 5:30-6:30 PM.
- D. The NCACC Legislative Goals Conference will be held in Pinehurst on January 11-12, 2007 and a Voting Delegate is needed.

Commissioner Robertson made a motion to appoint Commissioner Hammer as the Voting Delegate for the NCACC Legislative Goals Conference. Commissioner Bolick seconded the motion. The Board voted unanimously in favor of the motion.

- E. Several Inter-Basin Transfer Meetings are scheduled for the next month including December 11, 2006 in Lincolnton, December 13, 2006 in Dallas, December 14, 2006 in Morganton, and December 20, 2006 in Raleigh.

CONSENT AGENDA

- A. Minutes from the November 20, 2006 Regular Commissioners' Meeting.
- B. Tax Release Requests for November \$3,102.60 and Tax Refund Request for November \$11,430.88.
- C. Sheriff's Department Surplus Property.

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

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

Chairman Robertson made a motion to enter into Closed Session at 7:10 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.

W. Darrell Robertson, Chairman

Jamie M. Starnes, Clerk to the Board