

Draft

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
REGULAR MEETING May 21, 2007

ALEXANDER COUNTY
STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA

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

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, May 21, 2007 in the Catawba Valley Community College / Alexander Center Multipurpose Room, Taylorsville, North Carolina.

CALL TO ORDER

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

INVOCATION & PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Bradley Earp, EMS Director, gave the invocation. Bradley Daniels and Troy "Nate" Baumgarner led the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

COMMISSIONER'S REPORT

Commissioner Yoder recognized the Alexander Central High School students who performed the musical "Footloose" at the new auditorium on Thursday, May 17, 2007 and Saturday, May 19, 2007. He stated that the students did a fantastic job and he commended the ACHS Drama Department for putting the musical together.

ADOPTION OF AGENDA

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

EMS WEEK PROCLAMATION & RECOGNITIONS

The Board observed EMS Week with the following recognitions and announcements:

EMS Week Proclamation

Commissioner Bolick presented a proclamation declaring May 20-26, 2007 as Emergency Medical Services Week in Alexander County and encouraging the community to observe this week with programs, ceremonies, and activities.

Commissioner Yoder made a motion to approve the proclamation declaring May 20-26, 2007 as Emergency Medical Services Week in Alexander County. Commissioner Odom seconded the motion. The Board voted unanimously in favor of the motion.

20-Year Service Pin

Chairman Robertson recognized Connie Meredith for 20 years of service with EMS. He stated that Ms. Meredith has actually been employed with EMS for 21 years but had not yet received her 20-year service pin. Chairman Robertson stated that Ms. Meredith could not attend the meeting tonight but he congratulated her on a job well done and noted that her service pin would be passed along to her.

Recognition of Newest Paramedics

Commissioner Hammer recognized the EMS Department's newest paramedics including Troy "Nate" Baumgarner, Bradley Daniels, Trent Teddar, and Christopher Hyde. He explained that these individuals had successfully completed the paramedic class consisting of 1,200 hours of classroom and clinical time and passed the test for the N.C. State Certification.

Recognition of All EMS Employees

Commissioner Yoder recognized all EMS employees and their current service time, which included the following:

Medical Director Dr. Joel Inman – 3 years

EMS Director Bradley Earp – 19 years

A-Shift

Supervisor Doug Gillispie – 9 years

Assistant Supervisor Kevin Richards – 2 years

Paramedic Hansel Burke – 8 years full-time and 16 part-time

Paramedic Thomas Church – 2 years

Paramedic Eric Smith – 2 years

Paramedic Bradley Daniels – 9 months

B-Shift

Supervisor Jeffery Sigmon – 13 years
Assistant Supervisor Tommy Pennell – 19 years
Paramedic Terry B. Fox – 24 years
Paramedic Zenda Townsend – 22 years
Paramedic Timothy Mann – 10 months
Paramedic Trent Teddar – 9 years

C-Shift

Supervisor Tommy Dale Johnson – 17 years full-time and 7 part-time
Assistant Supervisor Charlie Dale Killian – 24 years
Paramedic Connie Meredith – 21 years
Paramedic John Goodnight – 4 years
Paramedic Troy “Nate” Baumgarner – 1 year

Part-Time Employees

Doug Bowman – 7 months	Bryson McAlpin – 1 month
Josh Davis – 7 months	Phillip McCurdy – 6 years
Justin Deal – 3 years	Keith Milsaps – 16 years
Jared Dyson – 1 year	Kenny Poole – 6 years
Kevin Elder – 7 months	Jerry Rogers – 11 years
Benjamin Ellis – 9 years	Reid Roper – 11 years
Tiffany Getz – 3 years	Michael Sherrill – 2 years
Deana Herman – 1 year	Mark Stafford – 2 years
Christopher Hyatt – 1 month	Bobby Taylor – 2 years
Mel Hyder – 3 years	Jeremy Wagner – 3 years
Billy Killian – 22 years	Lori Johnson – 2 years

Critical Care Paramedics

Commissioner Odom recognized Kevin Richards, John Goodnight, Thomas Church, and Phillip McCurdy for obtaining certification as Critical Care Paramedics. The Board thanked these individuals for the extra time and effort given towards receiving this certification.

HOSPITAL / EMERGENCY ROOM UPDATE

Chairman Robertson began by discussing the meeting with Serge Dihoff, Office of Rural Health & Resources, Department of Facility Services, on Tuesday, May 8, 2007 attended by Rick French, County Manager, and several County commissioners. He explained the purpose of the license, provider number, and the critical access designation in regard to the hospital which included the following:

- The license is approval that the facility is up to standard and can operate. Chairman Robertson explained that each medical facility in N.C. must be inspected and issued an operating license from the Department of Facility Services before any service can

be provided. He also stated that the current license number for the Alexander County hospital was still active and would be held as long as progress was being made to establish services in the vacant facility.

- The provider number is a permit issued to allow service providers to bill Medicare and Medicaid for services. The provider number is unique to each facility and belongs to the service provider. It can only exist for a period of time after operations have ceased. Chairman Robertson stated that the provider number for the hospital had already expired.
- The critical access designation is a federal license that allows for billing based on actual costs rather than Medicare and Medicaid benefits. A time limit is also attached to the designation after operations have ceased. Chairman Robertson stated that the purpose of the critical access designation was to allow hospitals to exist and survive in remote areas with small populations. He also stated that Representative Virginia Foxx was investigating the critical access designation for our hospital.

Chairman Robertson stated that once a service provider was identified and management terms were established, work could begin on upgrading the existing facility or constructing a new facility. He stated that securing a provider number could take 3 to 6 months, inspection of the facility and approval for use would take 4 to 6 weeks, work on the existing facility (roofing, HVAC, boiler, fire protection, etc.) would take 4 to 5 months, and preparation and approval of plans and securing proposals for the work would require another 2 to 3 months. Chairman Robertson pointed out that based on these time considerations, approximately 12 months would be required to have the existing facility operational.

Chairman Robertson mentioned that a sequence must be followed to determine whether a hospital could operate in Alexander County including locating a medical service provider that can operate and provide the required level of service, establishing an arrangement for the existing facility or a new facility, drafting a workable financial plan to include the establishment of a working facility with an annual budget. He noted that at least 3 medical groups had expressed an interest in providing services in Alexander County; however, he noted that none of those had provided any firm information for consideration.

Chairman Robertson stated that the effort to maintain a hospital had been bi-partisan and he noted that the public would be kept informed.

PUBLIC HEARING: REZONING CASE 07-2 – MARY PARKHURST

Sylvia Turnmire, Director of Planning & Development, presented Rezoning Case 07-2 submitted by Mary H. Parkhurst. The applicant requested rezoning of property located at 420 Taylorsville Beach Court from RA-20 (Residential-Agricultural) to H-C (Highway Commercial) to allow for expansion of an existing marina and additional retail sales. The size of the property is .570 acres and the current land use is a marina, retail sales, and a single-family residence. Ms. Turnmire stated that zoning within 100 feet of the property was RA-20 to the north, south, east, and west.

There are single-family residential homes to the north and Lake Hickory to the south, east, and west.

Ms. Turnmire stated that the subject property was currently occupied by a marina, bait shop, and a residence. She reported that current Tax Department records listed that the current building was renovated in 1982 and she noted that commercial uses have existed on the property since that time including a bait shop, restaurant, and a marina which have all existed simultaneously on the property. Ms. Turnmire stated that if approved, all current landscaping and parking requirements would apply.

Ms. Turnmire informed the Board that the purpose of the H-C District, according to Section 154.170 of the Alexander County Zoning Ordinance, was to provide suitable locations for those commercial activities which serve primarily the traveling public, including those which function rather independently of each other. Section 154.140 states that the RA-20 District is established as a district in which the principal use of the land is for low-density residential and agricultural purposes including single-family dwellings, two-family dwellings, individual manufactured homes, and related uses necessary for a sound neighborhood.

Ms. Turnmire stated that the 1993 Land Development Plan showed these properties as being in a "Limited Transition Area" which has the purpose of "providing for development in areas that will have some services but that are only suitable for lower densities than those associated with the Urban Transition class and / or areas that are geographically remote from existing towns and municipalities. Areas meeting the intent of the Limited Transition classification will experience increased development necessitating some municipal services such as community water or sewage systems." She also stated that the 1995 Alexander County Thoroughfare Plan did not mention any improvements for Taylorsville Beach Court.

Ms. Turnmire stated that letters were sent by first class mail to the property owners within 100 feet of the parcel boundary, a sign was posted on the property, and an advertisement was placed in *The Taylorsville Times*. She noted that staff had received two calls for information only.

Ms. Turnmire informed the Board that Planning & Development staff recommended approval of the rezoning request based on the following:

1. The proposed use existed on the property prior to the adoption of the Alexander County Zoning Ordinance.
2. The property lies within a Limited Transition area as defined by the Alexander County Land Development Plan.

She also pointed out that the Planning & Zoning Commission reviewed the request on May 3, 2007 and unanimously recommended approval based on the following:

1. The property was used for commercial purposes prior to the adoption of countywide zoning.
2. The current land use has existed for an extended period of time.
3. The property lies within a Limited Transition Area.

Ms. Turnmire explained that based on the information provided, the Board must determine whether the rezoning request meets the guidelines as set forth. She also noted the Section 154.351(C)(1) of the Alexander County Zoning Ordinance required the Board to provide a statement describing whether the proposed amendment is consistent with the Alexander County Land Development Plan and Thoroughfare Plan and if the proposed amendment is reasonable with regard to the public.

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

Commissioner Hammer made a motion to approve Rezoning Case 07-1 based on the fact that the property was used for commercial purposes prior to the adoption of countywide zoning, the current land use has existed for an extended period of time, and the property lies within a Limited Transition Area. Commissioner Bolick seconded the motion. The Board voted unanimously in favor of the motion.

PUBLIC HEARING: TEXT AMENDMENT 07-1

Sylvia Turnmire, Director of Planning & Development, presented Text Amendment 07-1 which detailed amendments to the Zoning Ordinance in order to allow for residential and mixed use planned development districts through a conditional use permit. She explained that planned development districts entailed a well-balanced mix of uses including single-family residential, two-family residential, multi-family residential, and non-residential uses.

Ms. Turnmire reviewed the text amendment with the Board, pointing out that suggestions made during the May 7, 2007 work session had been included and / or revised as requested.

Ms. Turnmire mentioned that there had not been any discussion in regard to a fee amount for residential and mixed use planned development districts. She stated that fees set by adjoining counties and towns ranged from \$300 to \$2,000 and she recommended a fee of \$500 for Alexander County based on conversations with County Manager Rick French. Several members of the Board felt that more discussion was needed before a fee amount was set and it was agreed that the fee amount would be considered at the June 11, 2007 Commissioners' Meeting.

Chairman Robertson called the public hearing to order and requested any public comment.

Public Comment

Shad Walters, McGill Associates, stated that he was present to represent his client who was interested in developing a mixed-use planned development district. He informed the Board that his client had reviewed the text amendment and had no problems with its regulations. He also mentioned that he and his client looked forward to working with the Board.

There being no further public comment, Commissioner Bolick made a motion to close the public hearing. Commissioner Odom seconded the motion. The Board voted unanimously in favor of the motion.

Commissioner Bolick made a motion to approve Text Amendment 07-1 as presented. Commissioner Hammer seconded the motion. The Board voted unanimously in favor of the motion.

SUPPORT OF TURNING LANE AT N.C. 16 NORTH / SUGAR LOAF ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Commissioner Hammer stated that a letter had been received from Jack Hoke, Alexander County Schools Superintendent, urging the Board to approve a resolution requesting the N.C. Department of Transportation to install a turning lane at Sugar Loaf Elementary School. He explained that traffic stopped on Highway 16 North during the morning and afternoon hours due to parents dropping off and picking up children which created a very congested traffic situation for the public.

Commissioner Hammer stated that the installation of a turning lane would cost approximately \$150,000. He noted that Senator Goss was working on getting some discretionary funding from the Senate budget this year to complete the project.

Commissioner Hammer made a motion to allow staff to prepare a resolution requesting the N.C. Department of Transportation to install a turning lane at Sugar Loaf Elementary School on Highway 16 North. Commissioner Yoder seconded the motion. The Board voted unanimously in favor of the motion.

Commissioner Hammer also mentioned that staff had received a letter from Lindo Tippet regarding the status of the traffic signal at the intersection of Highway 90 and Old Mountain Road in Hiddenite. The letter stated the N.C. Department of Transportation was currently designing traffic signal plans and working with local utilities in preparation for the road widening and signal installation. Plans are for the roadway work to be completed by October 31, 2007 and the signal to be installed afterwards.

UPCOMING MEETING SCHEDULE

Rick French, County Manager, discussed several upcoming meetings that the Board needed to attend including:

1. Budget Work Session on Wednesday, May 30, 2007 at 6:00 PM in the Administration Building Conference Room.

2. Budget Work Session on Monday, June 4, 2007 at 6:00 PM in the Administration Building Conference Room.
3. Commissioners' Meeting on Monday, June 11, 2007 at 6:00 PM at CVCC / Alexander Center Room 103. Public hearings will be held on the 2007-2008 budget and the hospital.

Commissioner Yoder made a motion to approve the upcoming meeting schedule as presented. Commissioner Hammer seconded the motion. The Board voted unanimously in favor of the motion.

BUDGET ORDINANCE AMENDMENTS #43 & #44

Rick French, County Manager, discussed the purpose of Budget Amendments #43 and #44, which included the following information:

Budget Amendment #43 – To increase the Garage budget due to high prices for gasoline. To budget for the use of federal and state forfeiture funds received in prior years. To increase the Resource Center budget for an additional allocation of Criminal Justice Partnership Program grant funds. To budget for contract services through CVCC. To increase a transfer to the Capital Improvements Fund for technology purchases.

Budget Amendment #44 – To increase the technology budget for the replacement of a repeater on the communications tower.

Commissioner Bolick made a motion to approve Budget Amendments #43 and #44. Commissioner Odom 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. David Huffman, Catawba County Sheriff, has invited the Board and several staff members to a ribbon cutting to celebrate the new jail expansion on Monday, June 4, 2007 at 11:00 AM.
- B. Connie Killian, Bethlehem resident and former member of the Planning & Zoning Commission, will be working with others in the community on a petition for the Highway 127 bridge in order to move the project forward on the Transportation Improvement Plan.
- C. Mr. French presented a proposed “responsibility of owner to control dogs” policy. He stated that Patty Gahagan, Animal Control Supervisor, had requested the Board

review this policy and he noted that discussion could take place at an upcoming work session.

CONSENT AGENDA

- A. Minutes from the May 7, 2007 Regular Commissioners' Meeting and Work Session.
- B. Assistance Policy for the Alexander County 2007 Single-Family Rehabilitation Program.

Commissioner Hammer made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda. Commissioner Bolick 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

Commissioner Yoder made a motion to enter into Closed Session at 7:20 PM to prevent the disclosure of confidential information and to discuss economic development, contractual matters, and personnel issues. Commissioner Hammer seconded the motion. The Board voted unanimously in favor of the motion.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, Commissioner Bolick made a motion to adjourn at 7:45 PM. Commissioner Odom seconded the motion. The Board voted unanimously in favor of the motion.

W. Darrell Robertson, Chairman

Jamie M. Starnes, Clerk to the Board