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**BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**  
**REGULAR MEETING**     October 8, 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, October 8, 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**

Brandal Phillips, NJROTC Cadet Commanding Officer, gave the invocation. Mr. Phillips also led the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag along with First Lieutenant Brennan Abernathy, Operations Officer Erica Bennett, and Administrative Officer Brittany Overcast.

**COMMISSIONER'S REPORT**

Commissioner Hammer encouraged everyone to attend the Apple Festival on Saturday, October 20, 2007. He stated that a lot of work had been put into this year's festival by the Taylorsville Hometown Development Council as well as other volunteers and he noted that a record number of booths were expected.

**ADOPTION OF AGENDA**

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

**\*\*\*SPECIAL RECOGNITIONS\*\*\***

The following recognitions took place:

**Growing Healthy Bodies Project**

Margo Mosley, Extension Agent, who originally attended the August 20, 2007 Commissioners' Meeting to discuss the Growing Health Bodies demonstration project, was present to introduce several students that participated in the project including Monica Moore, Mark Worley, Candace Crawford, Gavin Adams, Janae Bailey, and Zeek Bailey.

The Board thanked the students for participating and also their parents for supporting them. Each student was given a County pin.

**Scott Ross Recognition**

The Board recognized Scott Ross, Senior Center Director, who recently participated in the National Senior Olympics swimming competition in Louisville, KY. After competing in the Unifour Senior Games in the spring of 2006, Mr. Ross won medals in the State Finals in Raleigh which qualified him to compete in Louisville. The Board congratulated Mr. Ross and conveyed their appreciation for setting a good example for seniors in the county.

Mr. Ross stated that the competition was a wonderful experience that promoted active seniors. He informed the Board that many participants were in their nineties and that swimming was good exercise for older adults. He felt an aquatics center in the county would greatly benefit seniors as well as citizens of all ages.

Vickie Burgess, DSS Social Worker, stated that she worked with Mr. Ross on a regular basis and that he was an asset to the seniors of the county.

Mr. Ross briefly discussed the Senior Center and mentioned a few of its many activities provided for seniors including exercise and yoga classes, line dancing, knitting, crocheting, and golf. He stated that the center provided support groups and promoted fun and involvement. He also pointed out that the center mailed out a newsletter and calendar each month for anyone interested in receiving information.

**PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD**

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

**PUBLIC HEARING: REVOLVING LOAN FUND**

David Icenhour, Economic Development Director, stated that Carrigan & Sons Trucking, Inc. had applied for a \$30,000 loan from the County's Revolving Loan Fund to purchase equipment essential to the continued operation of the business at its current location. He explained that the public benefit derived from making this loan consisted of the retention of 19 jobs, the creation of one new job, and an expanded tax base. Mr. Icenhour noted that the repayment terms of the loan would be annual payments over a 5-year period at one percent interest.

Mr. Icenhour pointed out that the Revolving Loan Fund was created from state funds and that no local ad valorem taxes were used to create the fund. He also emphasized that these state funds were established for the sole purpose of supporting local economic development projects that retain existing employment and/or create new employment opportunities.

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 the \$30,000 loan to Carrigan & Sons Trucking, Inc. from the County's Revolving Loan Fund contingent upon loan documents being prepared by the County Attorney and those documents being acceptable to the Board and Carrigan & Sons Trucking, Inc. Commissioner Bolick seconded the motion. The Board voted unanimously in favor of the motion.

### **HIDDENITE HALF-MARATHON RACE UPDATE / RECOGNITIONS**

Rick French, County Manager, discussed the first Hiddenite Half-Marathon held on Saturday, September 22, 2007 in conjunction with the Hiddenite Celebration of the Arts. He stated that 38 people participated in the race and that 22 of those were Alexander County residents. He also presented a slide show that included photos from the race and several participants.

Mr. French recognized County employees Greg Cronk, Information Technology Director; Mike Koenig, Computer Support Technician; and Vickie Burgess, DSS Social Worker, who participated in the race. He stated that Ms. Burgess walked the entire course at a 16 minute pace.

Mr. French thanked all the volunteers, Pleasant Hill Baptist Church, and Animal Control for their efforts. He also stated that the half-marathon would be planned again for next year as well as a 10K race.

Greg Cronk stated that he enjoyed the half-marathon. He thanked Mr. French for putting the race together as well as all the volunteers who helped make it a success.

### **FORMER ELECTED OFFICIALS PICTORIAL UPDATE**

Chairman Robertson presented a slide show from the September 24, 2007 Commissioners' Meeting where all former County Commissioners, Sheriffs, Registers of Deeds, and a Clerk of Court were recognized. The slide show included photos of each individual recognized along with their years of service including:

**County Commissioner**

Fred Walker (1962-1966)	Vernon Broyhill (1966-1970)
Dr. Glenn P. Deal (1970-1978)	J.M. Lackey (1970-1978)
Mack Treadway (1970-1978)	Harry Robertson (1978-1982)
Hurschel Teague (1978-1982)	Grier Lackey (1982-1986)
Dr. Ruby Little (1982-1986)	Tim Glass (1986-1998)
Craig Mayberry (1986-1998)	Douglas King (1986-1990)
Norris Keverer (1988-1992 & 2002-2006)	Phil Icard (1988-1996)
Johnny Campbell (1990-1994)	Fred Lackey (1992-1996)
Guy Kerley (1994-1998)	David Odom (1998-2003)
Joel Harbinson (1998-2002 & 6/2003-7/2004)	John Watts (1998-2002 & 8/2004-11/2004)

**Sheriff**

Tom Bebber (1959-1962 & 1970-1990)	Ray Warren (1990-2002)
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**Register of Deeds**

Nuel Kester Martin (1946)	Ray Lackey (1950-1954)
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**Clerk of Court**

Martha Adams (1972-1982)

Chairman Robertson thanked each of these individuals for their efforts, talent, and service. He also noted that the photos could be found on the County's website.

**CLEAN ALEXANDER DAY ANNOUNCEMENT**

Josh Mitchell, Solid Waste Director, announced that the third Clean Alexander Day would be held on Saturday, October 27, 2007. He explained that this day had been set aside to allow county citizens to dispose of their trash for free.

Mr. Mitchell stated that the convenience sites and the landfill would be open from 8:00 AM to 4:00 PM and would resume normal operating hours on Monday, October 29, 2007. He pointed out that convenience sites would only accept bagged household trash and he noted that the following items would not be accepted at the landfill: any liquid material, light ballast,

fluorescent bulbs, hazardous materials, and any material containing asbestos. Mr. Mitchell stated that the landfill would accept car batteries and empty gas cans with holes in them but he noted that citizens would have to wait until the Household Hazardous Chemicals Day held in April 2008 to dispose of any liquid materials.

Chairman Robertson conveyed his appreciation to Mr. Mitchell and the Solid Waste staff for their preparation for and work on Clean Alexander Day and he asked the citizens to be mindful of lines and some delays on October 27, 2007.

Mr. Mitchell also mentioned that the NC Department of Transportation had donated 300 tarps to the Solid Waste Department which were distributed, along with a vehicle litter bag and brochure, this past Saturday to help reduce the amount of litter on county roads. He also stated that he would be attending a meeting this week regarding the implementation of an electronics program that would allow citizens to dispose of televisions and other electronic devices at the landfill.

## **CONSIDERATION OF RULES FOR ALEXANDER COUNTY PARKS**

Rick French, County Manager, stated that staff was in the process of reorganizing several aspects of the Recreation Department and he discussed the need for a uniform set of rules at all County parks. He presented the following set of rules for consideration:

It shall be unlawful for any person to:

1. Have motorized vehicles in parks except on designated lots.
2. Climb or hang on any fences surrounding park property.
3. Remove, destroy, or deface any park property.
4. Have handguns and / or concealed weapons on any park property.
5. Discharge or cause to be discharged any type of firearm in any County park.
6. Consume, display publicly, or be under the influence of any alcoholic beverages and/or drugs.
7. Use profanity, abusive language, or be guilty of disorderly conduct of any kind.
8. Make or kindle a fire except in designated fireplaces or grills.
9. Deposit garbage of any type on park property, except in designated garbage containers.
10. Dig, cut, bruise, or mutilate any plant material.
11. Make or do any indecent or vulgar motion in view of any person within any County park.
12. Have skateboards, rollerblades, bicycles, and / or strollers on tennis courts.

Mr. French stated that the County had experienced many problems with vandalism at County parks and he noted that this was a step towards reducing and hopefully eliminating the problem. He stated that the rules would also apply to walking trails. He suggested an effective date of November 1, 2007.

Chairman Robertson suggested adding an additional rule to state that there would be no hazing, cat calls, harassment, or inappropriate conversation allowed in any County park.

Mr. French informed the Board that the Alexander County School System had approved a policy prohibiting the use of any tobacco product on school facilities, including parks, and he noted that the County may need to consider approving a similar policy since the Recreation Department used school facilities for practices on a regular basis. The Board agreed and asked that the no tobacco use be included in the rules.

Commissioner Yoder asked that another rule be included to state that dogs must be on a leash, cleaned up after, and under the owner's control at all times. He also asked if the County had an ordinance in place to enforce these rules. Mr. French replied that an ordinance would be drafted following approval of the rules and then reviewed by the County Attorney, a process that could take several weeks.

Commissioner Odom suggested that, once approved, each coach receive copies of the rules and that staff review the rules with them.

Commissioner Yoder made a motion to approve the park rules and regulations presented by Mr. French to also include additional rules suggested by Board members relating to hazing, cat calls, harassment, and inappropriate conversation as well as tobacco use and dogs at the parks. He also stated that the motion would include Commissioner Odom's suggestion that all coaches would receive copies of the rules and that the rules would be explained in detail to each coach. Commissioner Odom seconded the motion. The Board voted unanimously in favor of the motion.

## **RESCHEDULING OF DECEMBER COMMISSIONERS' MEETING**

Rick French, County Manager, requested the December 10, 2007 Commissioners' Meeting be rescheduled for December 17, 2007 so that he could attend a statewide mental health meeting.

Chairman Robertson suggested holding the meeting on December 3, 2007 instead. He stated that oaths of office would be given on that day for elected officials and he felt it would be an appropriate time to elect a new chairman.

Commissioner Yoder made a motion to reschedule the December 10, 2007 Commissioners' Meeting to be held on December 3, 2007 at 6:00 PM. Commissioner Hammer seconded the motion. The Board voted unanimously in favor of the motion.

## **BUDGET ORDINANCE AMENDMENTS #10 - #12**

Rick French, County Manager, discussed the purpose of Budget Amendments #10 - #12, which included the following:

Budget Amendment #10 – To budget for the 3% COLA for 2007-2008 effective with the 9/14/2007 payroll.

Budget Amendment #11 – To budget for the 3% COLA for 2007-2008 effective with the 9/14/2007 payroll.

Budget Amendment #12 – To budget for deductible payments on the 2007-2008 worker's compensation policy.

Commissioner Hammer made a motion to approve Budget Amendments #10 - #12. Commissioner Yoder 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 Alexander County Board of Elections unanimously agreed to schedule a countywide election on Tuesday, January 8, 2008 for a ¼ cent (.25%) local sales tax.
- B. Mr. French will be attending a meeting in Asheville on Wednesday, October 10, 2007 regarding Rural Center grant funding for water and sewer projects.
- C. A letter was received from the City of Hickory requesting a 5-year financial commitment from Alexander County to fund the efforts of the Protect the Catawba Coalition (inter-basin transfer issue). Alexander County has already committed \$10,000 for FY 2007 and \$15,000 for FY 2008. Mr. French recommended the Board commit to \$15,000 each year for FY 2009, FY 2010, and FY 2011 subject to budget

approval. He also stated that other counties involved in the coalition were doing the same.

Commissioner Yoder made a motion to approve the appropriation of \$15,000 per year for FY 2009, FY 2010, and FY 2011 to the Protect the Catawba Coalition subject to budget approval. Commissioner Hammer seconded the motion. The Board voted unanimously in favor of the motion.

## **CONSENT AGENDA**

- A. Tax Release Requests for September \$13,740.08 and Tax Refund Requests for September \$1,091.73.
- B. Unseal Closed Session Minutes from January 5, 2004 to December 12, 2005.

Commissioner Hammer made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda. Commissioner Yoder 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 Odom made a motion to enter into Closed Session at 8:16 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 Yoder seconded the motion. The Board voted unanimously in favor of the motion.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business, Commissioner Hammer made a motion to adjourn at 8:38 PM. Commissioner Bolick seconded the motion. The Board voted unanimously in favor of the motion.

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W. Darrell Robertson, Chairman

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Jamie M. Starnes, Clerk to the Board