
Draft

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
REGULAR MEETING May 4, 2009

ALEXANDER COUNTY
STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA

PRESENT: W. Darrell Robertson, Chairman
 Ryan Mayberry
 Harold M. Odom
 Larry G. Yoder

ABSENT: Wes Bolick, Vice-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, May 4, 2009 in the Catawba Valley Community College / Alexander Center Multipurpose Room, Taylorsville, North Carolina. A quorum was present.

CALL TO ORDER

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

INVOCATION & PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Tim Lackey, DSS Adult Services Supervisor, gave the invocation and also led the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

He stated that he had been employed with the Alexander County Department of Social Services since August 1975 and currently managed the following services:

- Adult Home Care Case Management
- Adult Home Licensure
- Adult Day Care
- Adult Protective Services
- At Risk Program
- Guardianship Program
- Community Alternatives Program
- Housing/Home Improvement

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- In-Home Aid
 - Nutrition Program (congregate and home delivered)
 - Representative Payee
 - Special Assistance In-Home
 - Services for the Blind

The Board thanked Mr. Lackey for attending the meeting and for the services he provided to the citizens.

COMMISSIONER'S REPORT

Chairman Robertson stated that Commissioner Bolick was on a mission trip and would not be attending the meeting.

ADOPTION OF AGENDA

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

PUBLIC COMMENT

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

ALEXANDER COUNTY GOVERNMENT ACCESS TELEVISION POLICY

Greg Cronk, Information Technology Director, stated that the County currently provided announcements to Charter Communications to be posted on their electronic bulletin board system as well as DVD recordings of Commissioners' Meetings; however, he stated that due to increased staff turnover at Charter, it was becoming more difficult in getting information placed on the system and at appropriated times. Therefore, he announced that the County would begin programming the channel and upgrading the content to provide better quality, graphics, and video capabilities as well as added services such as weather, scrolling informational crawls, departmental information and videos, etc.

He explained that the equipment would be housed in the Alexander County Administration Building and that information would be added to and controlled by County staff. The channel will be available to all citizens with Charter cable and will also be visible on the County website. Mr. Cronk pointed out that staff was working with AT&T to make this channel available to their subscribers once their service was available in the county.

Mr. Cronk mentioned that he anticipated going live with the new channel on May 15th, contingent on Charter following through with their agreement with the County. He submitted a

draft policy for AlexTV and requested the Board's comments and suggestions for official consideration in June.

Chairman Robertson suggested adding phrases to state that no abusive, vulgar, or offensive content would be displayed on the channel.

Commissioner Mayberry asked that the 15-minute monthly program allotted for each commissioner to address constituents on government related issues be changed to two 10-minute slots per month per commissioner. Chairman Robertson added that these monthly slots should only be used to discuss County business and not to promote political activity or events.

Other issues such as advertising community and school events were discussed. Rick French, County Manager, suggested the Board discuss these matters further at a work session to be scheduled in the near future.

REPORT ON INVOICE FOR UPGRADES TO COUNTY PUMP STATIONS & WASTEWATER LINES

Rick French, County Manager, requested the Board's direction regarding a bill received from the Town of Taylorsville on April 21, 2009 in the amount of \$32,543 for upgrades to the county pump station and wastewater lines, items which were not budgeted for in the 2008-2009 fiscal year.

He stated that the County, while responsible for repairs, generated no revenue from those lines which were located beyond the town limits, an agreement which was approved over 10 years ago. He felt that a new agreement was needed and suggested a meeting with Town representatives be held to work out the details.

Chairman Robertson directed Mr. French to schedule a meeting within a 30-day time frame to keep the bill from being paid late.

JAIL PROJECT UPDATE

Rick French, County Manager, stated that staff planned to meet with representatives from the USDA on May 12, 2009 to discuss possible loans for construction of the new jail and law enforcement center. He also mentioned two letters recently received including one from Reuben Young, NC Department of Crime Control and Public Safety, who reported that possible funding may be available through the Governor's Crime Commission and another from US Representative Virginia Foxx in support of the Jail Project.

Commissioner Yoder suggested Mr. French meet with Seth Chapman, Clerk of Court, who is a member of the Governor's Crime Commission.

NORTHEAST AREA WATER PROJECT UPDATE

Rick French, County Manager, reported that the crew was currently working on Vashti Road and were proceeding slowly due to rock. Approximately 5,400 linear feet of pipe was installed in April bringing the total to 22.8 miles with only 3 miles left to go. He stated that the current deadline for substantial completion was June 6th. Plans and specifications for Hopewell Church are complete and have been submitted to governmental agencies for review. Staff hopes to put the project out to bid in May.

FINAL HIDDENITE SEWER PROJECT UPDATE

Rick French, County Manager, gave the final update for the Hiddenite Sewer Project, which included the following:

- All of the gravity sewer and force mains are complete and tested.
- The Statesville Pallet Pump Station is complete with the exception of the main power connection with Duke Energy. The fence around this pump station should be completed this week.
- The water main was tied into the 10 and 12-inch water mains. Testing should begin this week.
- The water booster pump station and reduced pressure zone assembly have been set.
- The electrical contractor should finish all wiring at the water booster station and Craftmaster Pump Station this week.

RESOLUTION AFFIRMING WATER RATE FOR VASHTI ROAD WATER PROJECT

Rick French, County Manager, presented a resolution which affirmed the water rate for the CDBG Vashti Road Water Project. He explained that it was necessary for the County to approve a resolution to set the residential water rate for 5,000 gallons usage at .75% of the median household income of \$38,684 or \$24.18 before receipt of funds could occur.

Commissioner Yoder made a motion to approve the resolution. Commissioner Mayberry seconded the motion. The Board voted unanimously in favor of the motion.

DISCUSSION OF SENATE TAX PLAN

Chairman Robertson discussed the Senate's plan to restructure state and local taxes and fees to raise \$500 million in new revenues, effective October 1, 2009. Senator Dan Clodfelter believes this plan, which will disentangle state revenues from local revenues, will help protect local revenues during a state fiscal crisis.

He explained that the plan included extending sales tax to "end point" services such as plumbing maintenance and service, reducing the general sales tax from 6.75 to 6 percent, eliminating the

public agency sales tax refund provision, and restricting non-profits to refunds less than \$5 million. This plan will also repeal local and state privilege licenses and expand franchise fees as well as lower the corporate tax from 6.9 to 4.25%. Chairman Robertson also stated that County ADM funds would be eliminated entirely and that personal income tax rates would be lowered and eliminated for families earning less than \$10,000.

Chairman Robertson informed the Board that Senator Clodfelter calculated local governments having a net gain of \$131 million in 2009-2010 and \$177 million in 2010-2011 as a result of the sales tax changes. However, state fiscal analysts project \$80 million in 2009-2010 and \$119 million in 2010-2011.

Commissioner Yoder expressed his concerns regarding how the new tax plan would affect not only counties but the schools as well. He mentioned Governor Perdue's recent use of \$40 million in lottery funds to offset the state's budget and he stated that education should be left alone.

Commissioner Mayberry pointed out that North Carolina had the highest corporate income tax in the country and that lowering the tax could help more businesses locate here.

Rick French, County Manager, stated that he and Commissioner Bolick traveled to Raleigh on April 29th where they heard Senator Clodfelter's plan. He stated that the plan definitely needed improvement and that there were a number of unanswered questions involved.

TERMINATION OF CONTRACT TO PROVIDE BUILDING INSPECTION SERVICE TO THE TOWN OF TAYLORSVILLE

Rick French, County Manager, presented a Contract to Provide Building Inspection Service to the Town of Taylorsville signed in November 1989. The contract states that the Town will pay the County \$2,500 annually for providing inspection service, which Mr. French explained was not required by NC Statutes.

He stated that the Inspections budget totaled \$291,892 and noted that approximately 10% of all inspections throughout the county were provided in town limits. Therefore, Mr. French requested the current 1989 contract be terminated effective July 1, 2009 so that the Board and/or staff could meet with Town representatives to draft a new contract if agreed upon by the boards.

Commissioner Yoder made a motion to terminate the 1989 contract and enter into negotiations for a new contract with the Town of Taylorsville. Commissioner Mayberry seconded the motion. The Board voted 3 in favor of the motion (Commissioners Mayberry, Robertson, and Yoder) and one abstention (Commissioner Odom).

BUDGET ORDINANCE AMENDMENTS #42 - #47

Rick French, County Manager, discussed the purpose of Budget Amendments #42 - #47, which included the following:

Budget Amendment #42 – To increase the Sheriff’s Department budget to place orders for ammunition to be received in summer/fall 2009. To increase the Animal Control budget to order rabies vaccines and mandatory forms. To decrease the DSS Foster Care budget. To increase the Recreation budget for estimated cost of \$5,000 to install a grill and hood system at Bethlehem Parking (using cumulative net profits from the Matheson Tournament).

Budget Amendment #43 – To increase the Highway 16 South Water Fund budget to cover estimated expenditures through the end of the fiscal year.

Budget Amendment #44 – To increase the Bethlehem Water Fund budget to cover estimated expenditures through the end of the fiscal year.

Budget Amendment #45 – To increase the Sugarloaf Water Fund budget to cover estimated expenditures through the end of the fiscal year.

Budget Amendment #46 – To transfer funds between line items for the Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) portion of the Hiddenite Industrial Water and Sewer Project. The ARC budget amendment request was approved at the 4/6/09 meeting.

Budget Amendment #47 – To budget for the Vashti Road CDBG and NC Rural Center Water Project.

Commissioner Yoder made a motion to approve Budget Amendments #42 - #47. Commissioner Mayberry 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. Staff continues to work on the pre-approval budget process. County departments are working together to save funding since it is very important for the 2008-2009 budget close without using fund balance. This is being made even more difficult due to the situation with the state.
- B. Alexander County is currently accepting proposals for engineering services for the Vashti water line. This is part of the CDBG process. Proposals must be submitted by 2:00 PM on Tuesday, May 12, 2009.

CONSENT AGENDA

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- A. Tax Release Requests for April \$5,183.23 and Tax Refund Request for April \$1,295.68.
 - B. Minutes from the April 20, 2009 Regular Commissioners' Meeting.
 - C. Agreement between the Western Piedmont Council of Government and Alexander County for the Provision of Administrative Assistance NC Rural Center Vashti Road Water Project.

Commissioner Odom 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 THE DISCLOSURE OF CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, CONTRACTUAL, & PERSONNEL

Chairman Robertson made a motion to enter into Closed Session at 7:22 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 Odom made a motion to adjourn at 8:27 PM. Commissioner Mayberry seconded the motion. The Board voted unanimously in favor of the motion.

W. Darrell Robertson, Chairman

Jamie M. Starnes, Clerk to the Board