

Draft

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
REGULAR MEETING June 1, 2009

ALEXANDER COUNTY
STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA

- PRESENT:** W. Darrell Robertson, Chairman
 Wes Bolick, Vice-Chairman
 Ryan Mayberry
 Larry G. Yoder
- ABSENT:** Harold M. Odom
- 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, June 1, 2009 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. He asked that everyone remember Commissioner Odom, who was experiencing complications from surgery, and his family in their prayers.

INVOCATION & PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Judy Lail, Deputy Director of Elections, gave the invocation and also led the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

Ms. Lail described her duties at the Alexander County Board of Elections, which included registering of voters, removal of registrations due to death or felony convictions, organizing training for precinct officials, and searching for duplicates throughout the entire state system. She also discussed the One Stop Voting process and noted that the Board of Elections conducted 6 elections last year. Ms. Lail stated that Alexander County has 23,737 registered voters and she announced that the next candidate filing would be held February 8-26, 2010.

The Board thanked Ms. Lail as well as Linda Mundy, Elections Director, for attending the meeting.

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

Chairman Robertson presented a Key to the County to Seth Chapman for his service as Clerk of Court for Alexander County from December 6, 1982 to May 31, 2009. Chairman Robertson thanked Mr. Chapman for his dedication in providing excellent service to the citizens for over 26 years.

Mr. Chapman thanked the Board for the recognition and noted that it had been a pleasure serving the community.

COMMISSIONER'S REPORT

Commissioner Yoder congratulated the ACHS Girl's Softball Team who would be attending the state championship in Raleigh.

He also stated that the YMCA held their grand opening ceremony on Saturday, May 30, 2009 and he encouraged everyone to stop by to visit the new facility.

ADOPTION OF AGENDA

Chairman Robertson requested the addition of a public hearing for the CDBG Program, which was mistakenly omitted from the agenda.

Commissioner Yoder made a motion to adopt the agenda as amended. Commissioner Mayberry 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.

NC DRINKING WATER STATE REVOLVING FUND – ARRA 2009 PROJECT REPORT

Rod Watts, EnergyUnited Water Corp General Manager, reported that EnergyUnited had applied for stimulus funding to install 3 miles of water line to Love Valley, of which 1 ½ miles would be located in Alexander County. He explained that half of the \$856,000 project would be paid with grant funding and the remaining half with a 20-year 0% interest loan that would be paid by EnergyUnited. Mr. Watts stated that crews would begin working on the project in the summer, which would take approximately 6 months to complete.

Other projects discussed including the Goble Road water line scheduled to begin in the next week and the Old Charlotte Highway water line to start this fall.

Mr. Watts also thanked the Board for its efforts with the Northeast Water Project, noting that the Vashti community was extremely grateful to have water.

PUBLIC HEARING: COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT PROGRAMS

Nancy Coley, WPCOG Community Development Administrator, informed the Board that North Carolina received CDBG funds each year from the Department of Housing and Urban Development for the Small Cities Program which local governments could apply for various activities that benefited low to moderate income persons with severe needs. She stated that two public hearings must be held to receive public comment on any project and noted that this was the first public hearing. Ms. Coley stated that local governments could receive funding from the following categories:

Community Revitalization projects use CDBG-funded activities to revitalize a residential area or two residential sub-areas through improvements, preservation, or development. Applicants may request up to \$850,000 for a basic grant for housing, water, sewer, drainage, or streets and up to \$1 million for an innovation activity. Applications will be accepted until September 30, 2009.

Scattered Site Rehabilitation grants are made on a non-competitive basis to each county every three years to improve the housing conditions of very low income households with incomes at or below 50% of area median income. Alexander County received \$400,000 in 2008.

Infrastructure grants are to improve the quality of life in a residential area or in a local government's jurisdiction by using CDBG funds to eliminate severe water and sewer problems with health and environmental consequences. Activities include the installation of public water or sewer lines, the replacement of public water or sewer lines or appurtenances, and improvement to water or sewer treatment plants that have specific problems. Because Alexander County has been designated as a 21st Century Community, no local match funds are required. The maximum grant amount is \$750,000 and applications will be accepted until June 30, 2009. Alexander County received \$750,000 in 2008 for the Vashti Road Water Project.

Infrastructure Hook-Up grants are designed to enable eligible local governments with existing public water and/or sewer lines to connect low or moderate income households to non-funded CDBG lines. The maximum grant amount is \$75,000 and the program will open its window on July 6, 2009. Alexander County received \$75,000 in 2008 for this program.

Housing Development Tax Credit / Regular Housing Development category is to support projects that create additional units of affordable housing for low and moderate

income people. The grants are divided into two pots of money, one for homeownership and regular rental housing and the other for tax credits. The Department of Commerce received letters of interest for the Tax Credit Program until May 15, 2009. Eligible activities of the Regular Housing Development Program are installation of public infrastructure, removal of hazardous material, rent to own, and land acquisition. The maximum amount available per applicant is \$250,000 with a \$6,000 per unit maximum for multi-family projects and \$18,000 for single-family owner occupied units. This window opens July 31, 2009.

Capacity Building grants assist local non-profits in partnership with their local governments in developing appropriate and competitive projects. The maximum award is \$75,000.

Small Business & Entrepreneurial Assistance programs provide funding to local governments to develop a coordinated effort to stimulate growth within the existing small business/entrepreneurial sector and to aid in the development of an entrepreneurial environment. A total of \$25,000 is available for each job created. Applications are due before July 27, 2009.

Individual Development Account will provide funding to support home ownership for first-time homebuyers with low to moderate incomes. The maximum award is \$70,000 with \$1,000 in down payment assistance for each participant that completes the program.

Urgent Needs grants are to be used to help assist local governments in solving critical problems affecting the local public water supply system that meet the CDBG definition of urgent needs. Urgent Needs grants are available on an as-needed basis.

Economic Development funds provide grants to local governments for creating and retaining jobs. These applications are received on a continuing basis. CDBG funds are granted for various types of infrastructure improvements to assist for-profit businesses create or retain jobs. Under certain conditions, financial assistance to private companies is available as loans to be negotiated by the local government applicant and a participating North Carolina commercial bank at a level not to exceed 50% of the total loan need. For public facilities, a 25% local match is required. The maximum amount of funds available per project is \$1 million.

Ms. Coley stated that local governments could not receive more than a total of \$1,250,000 in combined awards in one year; however, she noted that Scattered Site Housing funds received by counties were not included in the annual maximum.

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

N.C. GOVERNOR'S HIGHWAY SAFETY PROGRAM LOCAL GOVERNMENT RESOLUTION & AGREEMENT

Rick French, County Manager, stated that the Sheriff's Department wished to apply for a Traffic Safety Equipment Grant from the NC Governor's Highway Safety Program in the amount of \$11,200. He explained that the grant would be used to purchase checkpoint equipment such as an enclosed trailer, traffic cones, traffic vests, check point signs, a generator, tower lights, extension cords, and flashlights. Mr. French noted that no local match was required for the grant and he requested the approval of the resolution and agreement to move forward with the application.

Commissioner Bolick made a motion to approve the resolution and agreement to apply for an \$11,200 Traffic Safety Equipment Grant from the NC Governor's Highway Safety Program. Commissioner Mayberry seconded the motion. The Board voted unanimously in favor of the motion.

SMOKY MOUNTAIN CENTER WESTERN REGIONAL OFFICE PROJECT UPDATE

Chairman Robertson stated that the Smoky Mountain Center, whose headquarters was located in Sylvia, would be opening a western regional office to improve services to this area. Bids will be opened on May 19, 2009 to up-fit the former Duke Power building on Highway 18 in Lenoir and the project must be completed by October 16, 2009.

ADOPTION OF JUNE 24, 2009 ADDITIONAL CALLED COMMISSIONERS' MEETING

Chairman Robertson requested an additional called Commissioners' Meeting on Monday, June 24, 2009 at 6:00 PM at the CVCC / Alexander Center to adopt the 2009-2010 budget. It was noted that the meeting could be postponed and rescheduled to another night if needed depending on any action taken by the General Assembly before that date.

Commissioner Yoder felt counties needed to work with the NCACC to take a stand against the state in refusing mandates which force counties to increase the property tax rate.

Chairman Robertson made a motion to approve the additional called Commissioners' Meeting on June 24, 2009. Commissioner Bolick seconded the motion. The Board voted unanimously in favor of the motion.

JAIL PROJECT UPDATE

Rick French, County Manager, pointed out that Jack Hemphill, Jail Architect, was close to completing the plans for the Jail Project.

NORTHEAST AREA WATER PROJECT

Rick French, County Manager, stated that all pipe had been installed and that bids for the Hopewell Church Road project would be opened on June 16, 2009.

BOARD APPOINTMENTS & REAPPOINTMENTS

Rick French, County Manager, presented the following appointments and reappointments to County boards and committees:

CVCC Board of Trustees – Reappoint John Watts for 4 years.

Animal Control Advisory Board – Appoint Gary Schaeffer, Dwight Shook, Jason Moore, Wilson Friday, Lanny Keever, James Hill, Colleen Philmon, and Commissioner Bolick for 2 years.

Mr. French explained that the Dangerous Dog Appeal Board was being combined with the Animal Control Advisory Board; therefore the Dangerous Dog Appeal Board would hereby be dissolved.

Commissioner Yoder made a motion to approve the appointments and reappointments as presented. Commissioner Mayberry seconded the motion. The Board voted unanimously in favor of the motion.

BUDGET ORDINANCE AMENDMENTS #53 - #57

Rick French, County Manager, discussed the purpose of Budget Amendments #53 - #57, which included the following information:

Budget Amendments #53 – To increase the Social Services budget for a Crisis Intervention payment additional allocation.

Budget Amendments #54 – To account for the school’s portion of Article 40 and 42 half-cent sales tax revenues in the Capital Improvements Fund rather than the General Fund. To reduce the estimated revenue for sales tax and Medicaid hold harmless based on year-to-date revenues received.

Budget Amendment #55 – To account for the school’s portion of Article 40 and 42 half-cent sales tax revenues in the Capital Improvements Fund rather than the General Fund.

Budget Amendment #56 – To increase the Multi-Year Operating Grants Fund budget for additional grant funds from the NC Rural Center.

Budget Amendment #57 – To increase the budget for an increase in Fire District Fund expenditures.

Commissioner Yoder made a motion to approve Budget Amendments #53 - #57. 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. The next budget work session is scheduled for Monday, June 8, 2009 at 6:00 PM in the County Administration Building Conference Room.
- B. Mr. French along with Russell Greene, Emergency Services Director, will be meeting with a consultant on June 3, 2009 regarding stimulus funding for the construction of fire departments.

CONSENT AGENDA

- A. Tax Release Requests for May \$1,839.86 and Tax Refund Requests \$2,136.51.
- B. Minutes from the May 18, 2009 Regular Commissioners' Meeting.
- C. Declare 2000 Ford Crown Victoria #2FAFP71W1YX138442 from the Sheriff's Department as surplus.

Commissioner Bolick made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda. Commissioner Mayberry 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 7:07 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 Bolick seconded the motion. The Board voted unanimously in favor of the motion.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, Commissioner Yoder made a motion to adjourn at 7:40 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