

Draft

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
REGULAR MEETING December 7, 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

The Alexander County Board of Commissioners held a regular meeting on Monday, December 7, 2009 in the CVCC / 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

Nan Campbell, Domestic Violence Resource Center Interim Executive Director, gave the invocation and also led the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

Ms. Campbell thanked the County for its recent support of the Domestic Violence Resource Center, which helped them keep their doors open. She announced that a grant deposit of \$16,000 had been received which would also help. There are 3 other grants pending.

She stated that Domestic Violence was a non-profit organization and could give tax credits for donations. Monetary donations as well as food, toiletries, detergent, soap, etc. are accepted. Old cell phones and empty ink cartridges are also encouraged.

Commissioner Odom suggested the County Administration Building be set up as a drop off location for these items.

Chairman Robertson pointed out the many positions held by Ms. Campbell including DSS Director, Hospice Interim Director, and now Domestic Violence Interim Director. He thanked her for her willingness to give her time and efforts to help others.

COMMISSIONER'S REPORT

Chairman Robertson stated that Commissioner Bolick was on vacation and would not be attending tonight's meeting.

Chairman Robertson also pointed out that today was Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day and he encouraged the public to remember those who served to preserve and protect the freedoms we take for granted.

Commissioner Yoder discussed the open house held yesterday at the new Stony Point Fire Department Substation. He commended members of the fire departments and pointed out that residents in the area could receive a discount on their home owner's insurance by being closer to a fire department.

Commissioner Mayberry reported that the Bethlehem Star Lighting was held this past weekend, noting that the event was the kick-off for Christmas in Bethlehem.

ADOPTION OF AGENDA

Chairman Robertson requested the discussion of two Rural Center Grant applications as Agenda Item #5A.

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

2009 GOVERNOR'S AWARD FOR VOLUNTEER SERVICE

Commissioner Mayberry recognized Kimberly Jones as a 2009 Governor's Award for Volunteer Service recipient. Commissioner Mayberry explained that Kimmie had volunteered at the Animal Shelter for two years, where staff was limited. She has helped provide better service and created a friendly atmosphere for the public and animals alike by assisting with adoptions, care of animals, and administrative duties.

Commissioner Mayberry explained that the Governor's Award for Volunteer Service honored volunteerism in the state by recognizing individuals that made a significant contribution to their community through volunteer service. He presented Ms. Jones with a certificate, letter from the Governor, and lapel pin.

Mark Sharpe, Animal Control Director, discussed the difficulties in having to make the decisions for animals at the shelter, noting that it took someone with compassion and understanding to do the job. He stated that Kimmie's volunteerism at the shelter showed a lot about her character. Mr. Sharpe mentioned that she was one of a kind and that he appreciated her efforts.

Ms. Jones, now in her first semester at NC State University, explained that volunteering at the animal shelter began as an Ag Project through one of her classes at ACHS but turned into something she loved and helped her grow as a person. She stated that the staff at the animal shelter was a big family to her and that the experienced had changed her life. Ms. Jones also informed the Board that her career goal was to become a veterinarian.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Pat Daniels, Manager at Wendy's, announced a few recent and upcoming events at their location including the distribution of approximately 500 coupons for free junior frosties at Taylorsville Elementary and participating in Dine Out Days where 10% of all proceeds went to the Alexander International Center.

He stated that Santa Claus would be at Wendy's on December 12th and then again on December 15th from 6:00-8:00 pm. Junior frosties will be given away and children can have their pictures taken with Santa.

Mr. Daniels discussed the economy, noting that the local Wendy's was dedicated to keeping prices low, offering many items on the 99 cent menu, while other stores were increasing to \$1.29, and also \$2.99 value meals. Free coffee is also available on Sunday nights.

ELECTION OF BOARD CHAIRMAN

Chairman Robertson called for nominations for chairman. Commissioner Mayberry nominated Commissioner Yoder to serve as chairman for 2010.

There being no further nominations, Commissioner Odom made a motion to close the nominations and approve the election of Commissioner Yoder as chairman beginning the first meeting in January 2010. Commissioner Mayberry seconded the motion. The Board voted unanimously in favor of the motion.

Chairman Robertson thanked members of the Board, County Manager Rick French, Clerk Jamie Starnes, the Administration staff, and all employees for their hard work and cooperation in 2009.

ELECTION OF BOARD VICE-CHAIRMAN

Chairman Robertson called for nominations for vice-chairman. Commissioner Yoder nominated Commissioner Mayberry to serve as vice-chairman for 2010.

There being no further nominations, Commissioner Yoder made a motion to close the nominations and approve the election of Commissioner Mayberry as vice-chairman beginning

the first meeting in January 2010. Commissioner Odom seconded the motion. The Board voted unanimously in favor of the motion.

PARAGON FILMS WATER PROJECT

David Icenhour, Economic Development Director, presented a proposed construction contract for the water tank and pump for the Paragon Films Water Project. He explained that G.L. Wilson Building Company was the low bidder at \$271,000. Other bids received were \$498,000 and \$313,709. He recommended the Board accept the low bid and award the construction contract to G.L. Wilson.

He explained that the project was scheduled for completion in late February 2010.

Commissioner Yoder made a motion to accept the low bid of \$271,000 and award the contract to G.L. Wilson Building Company for the Paragon Films Water Project. Commissioner Mayberry seconded the motion. The Board voted unanimously in favor of the motion.

NC RURAL CENTER GRANT APPLICATIONS

David Icenhour, Economic Development Director, discussed two potential Rural Center Building Reuse grant applications including one for \$19,000 for Composite Fabrics of America, a subsidiary of Schneider Mills, for heating upgrades at the building on Pierpoint Lane. The other grant is for a company that wishes to remain anonymous at this time. Mr. Icenhour explained that the company was considering major renovation of an existing building resulting in 40 new jobs. The grant application will request \$480,000.

He explained that, based on the Rural Center's guidelines, the County could provide matching funds through in-kind services which would be the time he and Jason Williams, Assistant Economic Development Director, spent in preparing the applications and administering the grants, if awarded. Applications are due December 14, 2009 and should be awarded in February 2010.

Commissioner Yoder made a motion to allow Mr. Icenhour to proceed with the Rural Center grant applications for Composite Fabrics of America as well as the anonymous company. Commissioner Odom seconded the motion. The Board voted unanimously in favor of the motion.

NC DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT TIER RANKINGS

David Icenhour, Economic Development Director, advised the Board that the NC Department of Commerce Economic Development tier designation for Alexander County for 2010 would change from a Tier 2 to a Tier 1. He explained that rankings were based on an assessment of

each county's unemployment rate, median household income, population growth, and assessed property value per capita, and he noted that they determined the available amount of tax credits for job creation and business property investment in eligible industries.

Potential benefits to companies under each tier designations include:

- Tier 1 - \$12,500 tax credit per new job with a requirement to create at least 5 jobs and a 7 percent tax credit for eligible business property expenditures.
- Tier 2 - \$5,000 tax credit per new job with a requirement to create at least 10 jobs and a 5 percent tax credit for eligible property expenditures of more than \$1 million.
- Tier 3 - \$750 tax credit per new job with a requirement to create at least 15 jobs and a 3.5 percent tax credit for eligible business property expenditures of more than \$2 million.

Mr. Icenhour pointed out that tier rankings remained in force for 2 years regardless of economic change.

JOINT USE AGREEMENT FOR SCHOOL FOOD SERVICES BUILDING

Rick French, County Manager, recommended the approval of the joint use agreement between Alexander County and the School System for the School Food Services Building. He reported that the lease was for 5 years and that the County would pay all utilities and provide insurance on the property. Several offices including Emergency Services and Red Cross will be moving to this location, which would also provide more storage.

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

WPCOG CHARTER POLICY PROPOSED REVISIONS

Chairman Robertson informed the Board that the WPCOG needed to amend their charter to allow for them to hold ownership of real property. The WPCOG has rented office space since their beginning and now wishes to purchase their own. Chairman Robertson stated that the charter amendment had been approved by the WPCOG Policy Board.

Chairman Robertson made a motion to approve the WPCOG charter policy amendment. Commissioner Yoder seconded the motion. The Board voted unanimously in favor of the motion.

BOARD APPOINTMENTS & REAPPOINTMENTS

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

Industrial Facilities & Pollution Control Financing Authority – Appoint Rick French, David Icenhour, Jason Williams, and Bill Oram. Reappoint Mark Odom, Wesley Fox, and Andrew Jackson for 2 years.

Transportation Advisory Board – Reappoint Tim Lackey and Russell Greene for 2 years.

Mr. French stated that 3 individuals were needed to represent the County on the Town Planning Board of Adjustments. He also noted that any changes to commissioner appointments needed to be made at the next meeting.

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 AMENDMENT #20

Rick French, County Manager, discussed the purpose of Budget Amendment #20 to increase the Extension Service budget for United Way grant revenue and donations from outside sponsors received in October 2009.

Commissioner Yoder made a motion to approve Budget Amendment #20. 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 groundbreaking for the Paragon Films expansion is set for Friday, December 18, 2009.
- B. The County Animal Shelter received a good inspection report from the state.
- C. For the month of November, 16 inspections were performed in the Town of Taylorsville and County staff received 17 animal control calls.
- D. The Smoky Mountain Center will hold an open house at the new Lenoir office on Friday, December 11, 2009 from 2:30-5:30 pm.

CONSENT AGENDA

- A. Minutes from the November 23, 2009 Regular Commissioners' Meeting.
- B. Tax Release Requests for October \$3,736.00 and Tax Refund Requests for October \$25,524.85.

Commissioner Odom made 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 7:02 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 Mayberry 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 7:35 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