

Draft

**BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**  
**REGULAR MEETING**     February 2, 2015

**ALEXANDER COUNTY**  
**STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA**

**PRESENT:**    Larry Yoder, Chairman  
                  Ryan Mayberry, Vice-Chairman  
                  Milton H. Campbell  
                  Josh Lail  
                  Ronnie Reese

**STAFF:**        Rick French, County Manager  
                  Jamie Starnes, Clerk to the Board

The Alexander County Board of Commissioners held a regular meeting on Monday, February 2, 2015 at the CVCC / Alexander Center in Room 103, Taylorsville, North Carolina.

**CALL TO ORDER**

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

**INVOCATION & PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

Commissioner Lail gave the invocation and Chairman Yoder led the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

**ADOPTION OF AGENDA**

Chairman Yoder requested several changes to the agenda including the removal of Agenda Item #8 (Veterans Services Update) due to illness, a revised list of Equalization & Review appointees for Agenda Item #13 (Board Appointments & Reappointments), and addition of a Review Officer resolution under the Consent Agenda, and made a motion to adopt the agenda as amended. Vice-Chairman Mayberry seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

There was no one present to speak during the public comment period.

## **PUBLIC HEARING: CLOSEOUT OF 2011 SCATTERED SITE HOUSING PROJECT**

Laurie Powell, WPCOG Community Development Administrator, conducted the public hearing for the closeout of the 2011 CDBG Scattered Site Housing Rehabilitation Project #11-C-2302. The \$400,000 grant was used to rehabilitate 8 homes, clear one severely substandard structure, relocate one home, and provide emergency rehabilitation repairs on 12 homes within Alexander County. All grant activities benefited low and very low income families and CDBG funds financed 100% of total project costs. She added that this would be the last Scattered Site Housing grant due to this category being eliminated.

Chairman Yoder called the public hearing to order and requested any comments. There being none, Vice-Chairman Mayberry made a motion to close the public hearing. Commissioner Lail seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

Vice-Chairman Mayberry made a motion to approve the closeout of the 2011 Scattered Site Housing Project #11-C-2302. Commissioner Reese seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

## **DUKE ENERGY UPDATE**

Robin Nicholson, Duke Energy Government & Community Relations District Manager, discussed the 100-year history of the company, noting that Duke Energy Carolinas and Duke Energy Progress served 3.2 million retail customers and employed 13,200 employees with 8,700 retirees in NC. Other items mentioned included rate comparisons, generation types (nuclear, coal, natural gas, hydro, oil, renewable), and efforts to provide clean energy sources such as coal plant retirement, natural gas plants, and wind/solar facilities. She also provided statistics specific to Alexander County including number of customers and employees, property taxes paid, and grant funding provided.

The Board conveyed its appreciation to Duke Energy for the \$250,000 grant for the CVCC Applied Technologies Project.

## **NATURAL GAS EXPANSION AGREEMENT & RESOLUTION**

David Icenhour, Economic Development Director, presented a Pipeline Construction / Operating and Sale Agreement with Public Services Company of NC (PSNC) for the purpose of extending a current natural gas line owned and operated by PSNC approximately one mile from NC Highway 90 down Millersville Road to benefit Mitchell Gold + Bob Williams. He also presented a resolution in support of the project and committing to matching grant funds, noting that approval of both documents was necessary in order to submit a full grant application to the NC Department of Commerce.

The total project costs are estimated at \$260,000, of which \$200,000 will be provided by the Department of Commerce grant, if awarded, which will also require a \$50,000 match. Mitchell

Gold + Bob Williams has pledged \$10,000 toward the project as well as 20 new jobs. He advised that due to grant requirements, the County must own the gas line for the 5-year grant period; however, ownership would revert to PSNC after the grant period expires.

Commissioner Campbell made a motion to approve both the agreement with PSNC and the resolution allowing staff to move forward with submitting a full grant application to the NC Department of Commerce. Commissioner Reese seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

Mr. Icenhour also provided several before and after photos of the Craftmaster Building Reuse Project following a grant inspection visit to several locations within the county on January 22, 2015.

### **BUY LOCAL CAMPAIGN UPDATE**

Gary Herman, Small Business Development Coordinator, gave an update on the Alexander County Buy Local Campaign, which included information regarding Business Spotlight and Alexander County Now videos, social media efforts, website analytics, business listing webpage, and the Recent Readers' Choice Awards. He also mentioned other efforts such as e-newsletters to promote economic development and the Buy Local Campaign, a weekly radio spot, and plans to create a Cash Mob in March for local businesses.

### **HIGHWAY 127 BRIDGE MAINTENANCE / REPAIRS**

Gary Herman, Small Business Development Coordinator, announced that the NCDOT was planning general maintenance and repairs to the Highway 127 bridge beginning April 1, 2015 with completion by September 11, 2015. Proposed work includes pressure washing, painting, and bridge deck/structural steel repairs that will take place from 6:00 AM to 7:00 PM Monday through Friday to minimize the impact to traffic; however, these repairs could result in frequent narrowing or closing of lanes. He advised that work under the bridge will be done via a barge and will occur at any time with boat traffic still allowed in most cases.

Chairman Yoder reported that the NCDOT, who had continually postponed the replacement of the Highway 127 bridge with the latest projection for 2020, was planning to construct a new bridge connecting Catawba and Caldwell Counties. He encouraged the public to draft letters to the NCDOT requesting the replacement of the Highway 127 bridge which is desperately needed due to age and heavy use. Vice-Chairman Mayberry suggested citizens also contact Senator Andy Wells and Representative Lee Zachary.

### **FOSTER TO ADOPT FAMILIES RECRUITMENT**

Tennille Hileman, DSS Human Services Coordinator, discussed the continual need for foster homes, noting that 77% of the 31 licensed foster homes in the county were currently being

utilized; however, 100% have been used within the past year. She mentioned that many foster-to-adopt families do not stay licensed once an adoption has taken place which creates the need for additional homes.

Within this fiscal year, 6 adoptions have been completed and 7 are pending. Five of those completed were foster-to-adopt families. As of December 2014, a total of 46 children had been taken in DSS custody and half of those were placed in licensed homes.

She announced that Model Approach to Partnerships in Parenting (MAAP) classes would begin with a general orientation on February 12, 2015 at 6:00 PM at the DSS Office for anyone considering becoming a foster parent. Classes begin the following week and are held on Mondays and Thursdays.

## **INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY UPDATE**

Greg Cronk, Information Technology Director, gave an update on the progress of the Information Technology Department in the past 16 years which included information related to number of staff, PC's, and servers; internet connection speeds, major software applications, and backup/recovery; GIS and 911 Addressing services; PEG Channel, website, and social media support; and plans for the future such as increased use of mobile devices, replacement of manual processes with paperless web-based applications, multi-angle aerial photography, and digital imagery for records storage.

## **BOARD OF HEALTH RECOMMENDATION FOR HOME HEALTH PROGRAM**

Leeanne Whisnant, Health Director, reported that, due to lack of use and continual loss of revenue, the Alexander County Board of Health met on January 26, 2015 and voted to recommend to the County Commissioners to begin exploring the option to sell the Alexander County Home Health Program. She stated that the process could take anywhere from 10 to 15 months to complete due to the need for extensive research, public forums, development and accepting of proposals, employee transitions, etc.

Commissioner Lail made a motion to allow staff to begin the process of exploring the option to sell the Alexander County Health Program as recommended. Commissioner Campbell seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

## **2015-2016 LEGISLATIVE GOALS**

Chairman Yoder and Vice-Chairman Mayberry reviewed the top 5 legislative goals approved by voting delegates at the NCACC Legislative Goals Conference held January 15-16, 2015 in Pinehurst as follows:

1. Support continued State funding of Medicaid and support efforts by the State to provide healthcare access for all citizens.
2. Seek legislation to restore the statutory requirement that 40% of the net lottery proceeds be allocated to counties for school capital needs and increase the annual appropriation of lottery funds until the 40% allocation is restored.
3. Seek legislation to repeal the statutory authority under N.C.G.S. 115C-431(c) that allows local school boards to file suit against a county board of commissioners over county appropriations for education.
4. Oppose any shift of State transportation responsibilities to counties.
5. Oppose unfunded mandates and shifts of State responsibilities to counties.

Vice-Chairman Mayberry made a motion to approve and support the NCACC Legislative Goals. Commissioner Lail seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

## **PERSONNEL POLICY CHANGES**

Sylvia Turnmire, Human Resources Director, reported that, due to Affordable Care Act regulations, employers were now required to carry medical insurance on employees through a “stability period” even if they drop from full-time to part-time status. Due to the financial constraints this would place on the County, she proposed several changes to the Alexander County Personnel Policy to state that the County would no longer be able to transfer employees from full-time to part-time status without a 13-week break in service. Amendments were suggested for Section 7 (Definitions), Section 8 (Rehiring), and Section 11 (Transfer) of the Personnel Policy.

Commissioner Reese made a motion to approve the changes to the Personnel Policy as presented. Vice-Chairman Mayberry seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

## **BOARD APPOINTMENTS & REAPPOINTMENTS**

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

Equalization & Review Board – Reappoint Doug Ramsey, David Odom, Linda Barnette, Bobby Norton, and Darrell Robertson for one year.

WPCOG Sister Cities Association – Reappoint Dwight Shook and David Icenhour (alternate) for one year.

Alexander County Review Officer, Watershed / Floodplain / Subdivision Administrator, and Planning & Development Director – Appoint Jon Pilkenton.

Vice-Chairman Mayberry made a motion to approve the appointments and reappointments as presented. Commissioner Campbell seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

## **BUDGET ORDINANCE AMENDMENTS #21 - #25**

Rick French, County Manager, reviewed the purpose of Budget Amendments #21 - #25 as follows:

Budget Amendment #21 – To increase the Information Technology budget for payment of computer user license fees from prior years and current year to comply with Microsoft user license agreement (prior fees paid were based on fewer than actual number of computers). To increase the Inspections budget for permit forms library and the annual maintenance fee for the new inspections software installed at the end of 2014. To increase the Detention budget for accrued leave payout due to an employee leaving County employment (vacation and holiday time payouts were not included in the original budget). To increase the DSS budget for additional Crisis Intervention Payment funds and a Walmart grant.

Budget Amendment #22 – To budget for a transfer to the School Capital Improvements Fund based on FY 2014 school sales tax revenue in excess of FY 2014 school debt service payments.

Budget Amendment #23 – To budget for half of the local match required for the Rocky Face Park Phase 2 Project PARTF grant (remaining local match will be included in the FY 2015-2016 budget).

Budget Amendment #24 – To budget for materials costs for the installation of a water line on Teague Town Road (3,900 linear feet of 8” water line and 7 hydrants beginning from Cedar Wood Road to Jack Shook Lane). City of Hickory will cover construction costs.

Budget Amendment #25 – To budget for materials costs for the installation of a water line on US 64-90 West (5,900 linear feet 12” water line and 7 hydrants from All Healing Springs Road to Ellendale Park Lane. City of Hickory will cover construction costs.

Vice-Chairman Mayberry made a motion to approve Budget Amendments #21 - #25 but requested clarification on Budget Amendment #21 as to why or how a miscalculation of computers occurred. Commissioner Lail seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

Mr. French replied that he would provide a response to Vice-Chairman Mayberry once he spoke with appropriate County staff.

## **OTHER BUSINESS**

Rick French, County Manager, discussed the following issues during Other Business:

- A. A total of \$1,581,000 has been collected in sales tax revenue for the 2014-2015 budget year. This is 43.87% of the \$3,605,000 budgeted and an 8.93% increase over last year.
- B. For the month of January 2015, the average total population per day at the Detention Center was 105.5 inmates with an average of 96 males and 9.5 females. The high male population day was January 15<sup>th</sup> with 101 inmates and the high female population day was January 29<sup>th</sup> with 13 inmates.

### **CONSENT AGENDA**

- A. Minutes from the January 12, 2015 Called Meeting.
- B. Tax Release Requests (\$3,885.06) and Tax Refunds (\$9,902.43) for January 1-23, 2015.
- C. Resolution Requesting the Alexander County Board of Commissioners to Appoint a Review Officer for Alexander County – Jon Pilkenton.

Commissioner Lail made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda. Commissioner Reese seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

### **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 Yoder 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). Vice-Chairman Mayberry seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business, Commissioner Lail made a motion to adjourn at 9:08 PM. Commissioner Lail seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

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Larry G. Yoder, Chairman

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Jamie M. Starnes, Clerk to the Board