

Draft

**BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
REGULAR MEETING** March 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, March 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

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

ADOPTION OF AGENDA

Chairman Yoder requested the addition of an appointment to the Region E Adult Care & Nursing Home Community Advisory Committee as Consent Agenda Item D and made a motion to adopt the agenda as amended. Vice-Chairman Mayberry seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Rick Lanier, Co-founder and Vice-Chairman of the US Motto Action Committee, invited Alexander County to join the growing list of counties and municipalities who are voting yes to displaying the US Motto “In God We Trust” in and on government buildings, a legal right protected by the First Amendment. He added that the words “In God We Trust” were approved

as the official national motto by US Congress in 1956 and were reaffirmed in 2011 by the US House of Representatives. The words have been used on US currency since 1864 and are engraved above the entrance to the US Senate Chamber as well as above the Speaker's seat in the US House of Representatives.

He provided examples of the anodized aluminum letters used in other counties and cities, noting that a local business owner had agreed to cover the full cost of displaying the motto in Alexander County.

Chairman Yoder advised that the Board would take the request under consideration and would respond after consulting with the County Attorney.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT GRANT ANNOUNCEMENTS

David Icenhour, Economic Development Director, announced that two local industries had received grants from the NC Department of Commerce totaling \$700,000 as follows:

Mitchell Gold + Bob Williams received a \$200,000 Industrial Development Fund Utility Account grant to install a one-mile natural gas pipeline to serve a new office addition and allowing the company to convert the entire 330,000 square foot facility to natural gas. Alexander County will provide a \$50,000 match. Mitchell Gold + Bob Williams has pledged \$10,000 toward the project as well as 20 full-time jobs.

Huntington House received a \$500,000 Building Reuse Program grant to support the reuse and renovation of the former Clayton Marcus building to expand current operations. Alexander County will provide a \$25,000 match and Huntington House has committed to the creation of 40 full-time jobs.

Representing Mitchell Gold + Bob Williams was CFO John Bounous and Chief Engineer Steve Brittain. Mr. Bounous thanked the Board and staff for their support and assistance to the company which employs 623 in Alexander County, (563 at the local facility and 60 through the local employment agency) and 169 in 14 retail stores throughout the country. He added that there were currently 24 open positions locally and 27 within retail stores.

Representing Huntington House was original founders Danny Meadlock and Donny Teague. Mr. Teague also expressed appreciation to the Board and staff, noting that the company was at full capacity in its currently 100,000 square foot facility. Huntington House currently employs 145 and plans to be in the new facility by the end of the year, using as many local sub-contractors as possible for the renovation.

RESOLUTION DECLARING INTENT TO SELL THE HOME HEALTH AGENCY

Leeanne Whisnant, Health Director, presented a resolution declaring the County's intent to sell the Alexander County Home Health Agency pursuant to N.C.G.S. 131E-13. Notice of this

proposed action was published in *The Taylorsville Times* on February 18th and a public hearing will be scheduled for April 13th. She explained that the resolution directed the County Manager to request proposals of purchase by direct solicitation of at least 5 prospective buyers. Staff is currently preparing bid packets and has already received two inquiry calls.

Vice-Chairman Mayberry made a motion to approve the resolution declaring intent to sell the Alexander County Home Health Agency. Commissioner Campbell seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

2015 ALEXANDER COUNTY INDEPENDENCE CELEBRATION UPDATE

Kathy Riddle, Chair of the Independence Celebration Planning Committee, announced that the 2nd Annual Independence Day Celebration would be held on Saturday, July 11th and that all activities, including the parade, games, vendors, food, and fireworks would take place on the ACHS grounds. The event is being sponsored by Habitat for Humanity and the Independence Celebration Committee.

New attractions this year include fire department competitions, live music, and tailgating. Space is available for 40 plus vendors. She mentioned that donations were needed to make this event possible and that any profit would be given to Habitat for Humanity.

VETERANS SERVICE UPDATE

Ginger Annas, Veterans Service Officer, reported on the number of veterans living in Alexander County (2,980), pension and benefits paid to Alexander County veterans by the Department of Veterans Affairs (\$15,137,000), and services provided by the Veterans Office for veterans and their dependents including service-connected disability, pensions, healthcare, and educational benefits. She also mentioned activities of the Veterans Committee, special events throughout the year, and the Our History, Our Heroes video interviews.

Ms. Annas is accredited with the NC Division of Veterans Affairs, American Legion, DAV, National Association of County Veterans Service Officers, Retired Enlisted Association, and Vietnam Veterans of America.

2015 ROCKYFEST UPDATE

Gary Herman, Small Business Development Coordinator, promoted RockyFest 2015 set for Saturday, May 9th at Rocky Face Park. A 5K as well as 10 & 20K trail races will be held in addition to free rock climbing classes beginning at 10:00 AM, children's activities from 11:00 AM until 6:00 PM, and guided nature hikes. Live music will take place from Noon until 6:00 PM and craft, food, and non-profit vendors will be available. Parking for the event will be located at Rocky Face Baptist Church and a shuttle will be provided.

Other attractions will include a “pickin’ tent,” a chainsaw carving artist, the NC Wildlife Sensory Safari trailer, and the Piedmont Astronomy Club will have telescopes onsite for views of the sun.

LITTLE FREE LIBRARIES IN ALEXANDER COUNTY

Laura Crooks, Library Director, discussed the Little Free Libraries Program, a take a book, return a book gathering place where neighbors share their favorite books and stories. This is a worldwide effort that is just getting starting in Alexander County with locations at Rocky Face Park, the Hiddenite Center, and the Vashti Volunteer Fire Department. A dedication ceremony is planned for Saturday, March 21st at 1:00 PM at Rocky Face Park.

EVIDENCE STORAGE LEASE AGREEMENT

Rick French, County Manager, presented a lease agreement between Alexander County and Phil & Johnsie Lackey for a 12,860 square foot building located at 91 Industrial Boulevard to be used as an evidence storage facility for the Sheriff’s Office. He advised that the County would pay a monthly fee of \$1,200 for 3 years. The lease agreement also included two one-year extensions.

Commissioner Reese made a motion to approve the lease agreement with the Lackey’s for the evidence storage building. Commissioner Lail seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

BUDGET ORDINANCE AMENDMENTS #26 - #31 & PROJECT BUDGET ORDINANCES P-3, P-4, & P-5

Rick French, County Manager, reviewed the purpose of Budget Amendments #26 - #31 and Project Budget Ordinances P-3, P-4, & P-5 as follows:

Budget Amendment #26 – To increase the budget for self-funded group medical due to actual claims paid that exceed the estimated insurance premiums charged to County departments. To increase the Finance Department budget for amount to be paid in FY 2015 for the State Auditor’s requirement to have an agreed-upon procedures engagement related to eligibility for certain major federal programs – Medicaid, TANF, Adoption Assistance, Children’s Health Insurance Program, and WIC. To increase the Information Technology budget to 1) purchase increased storage capacity for the existing backup storage device to have a complete 14-day cycle rather than 12 days, 2) to cover the first year’s maintenance costs for the increased backup storage capacity, and 3) to cover the annual user license fee for the Munis software system used by Finance, Human Resources, Inspections, and Planning.

Budget Amendment #27 – To increase the Public Buildings budget for the estimated cost of a fence, shelving, and other items to be added to the building leased for evidence storage for the Sheriff’s Office. To increase the Sheriff’s budget for 1) FY 2015 lease payments for the evidence storage building and 2) for accrued leave payouts for two

employees receiving comp time payouts in February after reaching the 480-hour limit. To decrease the Sheriff's budget due to less money available from State unauthorized substance tax. To increase the Detention budget for an accrued leave payout due to an employee leaving County employment. To increase the Communications budget for an accrued leave payout due to an employee transferring from full-time to part-time status.

Budget Amendment #28 – To budget for a payment to reimburse the School System for a portion of the school sales tax used for debt service on the auditorium. To adjust the budget estimate for sales tax hold harmless funds to the School System based on year-to-date receipts.

Budget Amendment #29 – To increase the General Fund budget for the County's matching portions of the NC Commerce grants for 1) the Huntington House Building Reuse Grant Project and 2) the Mitchell Gold + Bob Williams Natural Gas Expansion Grant Project.

Budget Amendment #30 – To amend the Project Budget Ordinance to expand the project scope to include the installation of water lines to improve supply to the Advent Church Road area.

Budget Amendment #31 – To amend the budget for an additional transfer of local funds to the Bethlehem / Ellendale Water Capital Project Fund to expand the project scope.

Project Budget Ordinance P-3 – To budget for the Mitchell Gold + Bob Williams Natural Gas Expansion Grant Project.

Project Budget Ordinance P-4 – To budget for the Huntington House Building Reuse Grant Project.

Project Budget Ordinance P-5 – To budget for the Rocky Face Park Phase II Expansion Project.

Vice-Chairman Mayberry questioned whether the County was benefiting financially by being self-funded for medical insurance (Budget Amendment #26). Mr. French replied that the County was not benefiting and that he would recommend transitioning to fully insured with approval of the 2015-2016 budget.

Vice-Chairman Mayberry made a motion to approve Budget Amendments #26 - #31 as well as Project Budget Ordinances P-3, P-4, & P-5. Commissioner Campbell seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

NCACC FEBRUARY UPDATE VIDEO

A video prepared by the NC Association of County Commissioners was shown to provide an overview of the Legislative Goals Conference held in January and the list of Legislative Priority

Goals developed by voting delegates from NC counties. The NCACC Government Relations Team was also introduced.

OTHER BUSINESS

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

- A. He presented a sales tax summary outlining each sales tax Article, year enacted, its amount, distribution method, and restrictions.
- B. A total of \$1.9 million has been collected in sales tax revenue for the 2014-2015 budget year, which is an increase of approximately 8% over last year. The amount budgeted for the year was \$3,605,000.
- C. Action is needed at the next Commissioners' Meeting to schedule a budget work session on either April 20th or April 27th.
- D. Upcoming projects include the CVCC / Alexander Applied Technologies Building, evidence storage building, Phase II of Rocky Face Park, a water line from All Healing Springs Road to Ellendale Park Lane, and a water line along Teague Town Road from Cedar Wood Road to Jack Shook Lane.

CONSENT AGENDA

- A. Minutes from the February 2, 2015 Regular Meeting and February 12, 2015 Work Session.
- B. Tax Release Requests (\$1,568.54) and Tax Refunds (\$1,779.50) for January 24 – February 20, 2015.
- C. FY 2015 Audit Contract.
- D. Appointment of Geneva Deal to the Region E Adult Care & Nursing Home Community Advisory Committee for a one-year term.

Commissioner Reese made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda. Vice-Chairman Mayberry seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

CLOSED SESSION – N.C.G.S. 143-318.11(a)(1, 3, 4, 5, & 6) TO PREVENT THE DISCLOSURE OF CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION, ATTORNEY/CLIENT PRIVILEGE, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, CONTRACTUAL, & PERSONNEL

Chairman Yoder made a motion to enter into Closed Session at 7:34 PM to prevent the disclosure of confidential information, for the purpose of attorney/client privilege, and to discuss economic development, contractual matters, and personnel issues pursuant to N.C.G.S. 143-

318.11(a)(1, 3, 4, 5, & 6). Vice-Chairman Mayberry seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, Chairman Yoder made a motion to adjourn at 8:33 PM. Commissioner Campbell seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

Larry G. Yoder, Chairman

Jamie M. Starnes, Clerk to the Board