

Draft

**BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
REGULAR MEETING March 7, 2016**

**ALEXANDER COUNTY
STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA**

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

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

The Alexander County Board of Commissioners held a regular meeting on Monday, March 7, 2016 at the CVCC / Alexander Center in Room 103, Taylorsville, North Carolina.

CALL TO ORDER

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

INVOCATION & PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

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

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

Commissioner Yoder presented a Key to the County to Connie Meredith in recognition of 31 years of dedicated service to Alexander County EMS, noting that Ms. Meredith came to work for Alexander County in July 1985 and had since served as paramedic, assistant supervisor, and supervisor, and had filled in during the EMS Director's absence. Ms. Meredith's official retirement date was March 1, 2016.

COMMISSIONER'S REPORT

Commissioner Yoder recognized Micah Henry whose photograph entitled "Making Molasses" has been selected as one of 50 finalists in the 13th Annual Appalachian Mountain Photography

competition. These photos are currently on display at Appalachian State University until June 4th.

ADOPTION OF AGENDA

Commissioner Reese made a motion to adopt the agenda as presented. Commissioner Lail seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

PUBLIC COMMENT

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

NEW RETAIL PRESENTATION – TRUE VALUE HARDWARE

Gary Herman, EDC Small Business Development Coordinator, announced that Bethlehem residents Randy and LaShae Bock would be opening a True Value Hardware store in the former McLeod-Feimster Hardware located at 1352 NC Highway 16 South. The soft opening will be held on April 25th and a grand opening is scheduled for June 3rd & 4th with vendor demonstrations, hot dogs and drinks, and \$3,000 worth in giveaways including a pressure washer and gas grill.

Items available for purchase will include tools, equipment, automotive supplies, sporting goods, and household items as well as plants and home/garden items. The Bock's have also purchased the mini storage warehouses which will also be available for rent.

The Board thanked the Bocks for their investment in the community.

PUBLIC HEARING: MINIMUM HOUSING CASE 151021 – BASHAM

Seth Harris, Zoning Administrator, presented Minimum Housing Case 151021 for property located at 1860 Heritage Farm Road owned by Glenn Wayne & Margaret Basham. He explained that Mr. Basham obtained a zoning permit to construct a home on the subject property in 1995. In 1997 a building permit and an environmental health permit were also issued; however, the last building inspection on the structure was completed in 2001. The building permit expired one year after this last routine inspection.

The property was found in violation of the Alexander County Minimum Housing Ordinance after an inspection was conducted on October 21, 2015 by Building Inspector Lynn Teague and Code Enforcement Officer Seth Harris following the initial complaint filed on October 16th. A notice of violation was served to the property owner on November 3rd that outlined Ordinance violations and notified the owner of a hearing scheduled for November 18th at 10:00 AM which the property owner did not attend or provide a written statement. Following the hearing, the

Building Inspector determined that the structure was dilapidated and would need to be removed by the property owner within 90 days beginning on November 24th. To date, the structure has not been removed.

Mr. Harris advised that the Building Inspector recommended that the Board approve an Ordinance directing the Minimum Housing Inspector to remove, repair, or demolish the property described as unfit for human habitation and directing that a notice be placed thereon that the structure may not be occupied. All removal costs incurred by Alexander County will be placed as a lien on the property.

Chairman Mayberry called the public hearing to order and requested any comments. One individual spoke:

Public Comment

Larry Riddle asked if any interest or penalties would be charged to the lien over time since the County would not recoup any funds until the property changed hands, or possibly never if the property owner passed away.

Several Board members and staff explained that the property owner's estate would pay the lien in full in the event of their death; therefore, no interest or fees would be charged.

There being no further comments, Vice-Chairman Campbell made a motion to close the public hearing. Commissioner Reese seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

Commissioner Reese made a motion to approve the Order requiring the property owner to remove the dilapidated structure as well as the abovementioned Ordinance to demolish the property. Vice-Chairman Campbell seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

PUBLIC HEARING: TEXT AMENDMENT 16-1 – CLUSTER SUBDIVISIONS

Jon Pilkenton, Director of Planning & Development, presented Text Amendment 16-1 to the Alexander County Subdivision Ordinance to add the following text under Section 157.007(F) Cluster Subdivisions, Item (5):

(A) Sidewalks must be installed on at least one side of any street and must extend the entire length of the cluster subdivision. Sidewalks are to be constructed to meet the minimum standards according to the North Carolina Department of Transportation.

He advised that this amendment was proposed by a joint committee of Planning & Zoning and Board of Commissioners members to provide development guidelines that will enhance the appearance of new development within Alexander County. The Planning & Zoning Commission met on February 4, 2016 and unanimously recommended approval.

Chairman Mayberry requested that the text amendment be changed to read “sidewalks must be installed on at least one side of any street ***of any new subdivision*** and must extend the entire length of cluster subdivision...”

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

Chairman Mayberry made a motion to approve Text Amendment 16-1 to include the additional wording pertaining to new subdivisions. Commissioner Lail seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

AMENDMENT TO AGREEMENT WITH ENERGYUNITED WATER CORPORATION

Rick French, County Manager, reported that Alexander County and EnergyUnited Water Corporation formed an agreement in 2008 to provide water to the Vashti community. As part of the agreement, EnergyUnited has set aside half of the minimum water charge for each active water user along the lines installed with the Northeast Area Water Project for Alexander County to provide financial support for any water projects agreed upon by both parties.

He recommended removal of Section 7 (Repayment) of the 2008 agreement in exchange for EnergyUnited transferring their former office building and property located on Cheatham Ford Road to Alexander County, noting that the space could be used for a number of satellite offices (Senior Center, Sheriff’s Department, etc.)

Commissioner Reese made a motion to remove Section 7 of the 2008 agreement between Alexander County and EnergyUnited Water Corporation as recommended. Commissioner Yoder seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

SALES TAX & FINANCE REPORT

Rick French, County Manager, reported that a total of \$1,992,124.10 had been collected in sales tax revenue through February 2016. This amount is 51.20% of the \$3,891,000 budgeted with 50% of the budget year expired and an increase over last year of 4.63%.

He also gave an overview of revenues and expenditures as well as percentage of salary line items spent in several County departments through the first 6 months of the 2015-2016 budget.

BOARD APPOINTMENTS & REAPPOINTMENTS

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

Juvenile Crime Prevention Council – Appoint Josh Sherfy, Brandon Caudle, Adolph Gordon, and Miranda Burgin for two years.

Region E Adult Care & Nursing Home CAC – Appoint Carol Biggs for one year.

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

BUDGET ORDINANCE AMENDMENTS #29 & #30

Rick French, County Manager, reviewed the purpose of Budget Amendments #29 & #30 as follows:

Budget Amendment #29 – To increase the Governing Body budget for Workers’ Comp claims based on the unpaid balance of open claims. To increase the Detention budget for estimated costs for the remainder of FY 2016 for contracted detention paid to the State for juveniles and Central Prison safekeeper inmates. To increase the Emergency Services budget for additional grant funds from the NC Division of Emergency Management. To increase the Inspections Department budget for estimated demolition costs during FY 2016 for violations of the Minimum Housing Ordinance.

Budget Amendment #30 – To increase the Animal Services budget for increased spay/neuter services and to prepare animals selected by rescue groups for travel. To increase the DSS budget for increased funding from the State. To increase the Library budget for donations received during FY 2016.

Vice-Chairman Campbell made a motion to approve Budget Amendments #29 & #30. Commissioner Reese seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

OTHER BUSINESS

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

- A. Vandalism has occurred at Jaycee Park (spray paint and damage to covered picnic area by a vehicle) and East Park (windows shot out). Maintenance staff is repairing the damage and reports have been made with the Sheriff’s Department.
- B. The County has until July 1, 2016 to submit a backup 911 Communications PSAP to the State 911 board. Staff is working on plans and proposals that will be reviewed by the Board at the April Commissioners’ Meeting.
- C. Mr. French reviewed animal intakes, adoptions, rescues, returns to owner, and euthanasia totals for the Animal Services Department for 2013, 2014, and 2015.

- D. Anita Price, Pre-Trial Release/RRS Director, has requested converting the part-time Monitoring Coordinator/Case Manager position to full-time, allowing more opportunity to release additional non-violent inmates from the Detention Center and provide supplementary supervision which has a potential saving of \$100,375 (\$55 per jail bed per day x 5 additional offenders x 365 days) or a total of \$461,725 for 23 offenders.
- E. The City of Hickory Public Works Department has recommended a 1.8% water rate increase; however, over the past two years, the Hickory City Council has adjusted the amount requested by the Public Works Department. Staff is also in discussions with the City of Hickory regarding restructuring of water rates throughout Alexander County.

CONSENT AGENDA

- A. Minutes from the February 1, 2016 Regular Meeting.
- B. Unseal February 12, 2007 – December 7, 2009 Closed Session Minutes.
- C. Tax Release Requests (\$3,161.77) and Tax Refunds (\$1,559.57) for January 23 – February 29, 2016.
- D. FY 2016 Audit Contract.

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

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, Chairman Mayberry made a motion to adjourn at 7:08 PM. Commissioner Yoder seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

Ryan N. Mayberry, Chairman

Jamie M. Starnes, Clerk to the Board