

Draft

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
REGULAR MEETING August 7, 2017

ALEXANDER COUNTY
STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA

PRESENT: Milton H. Campbell, Chairman
 Ronnie Reese, Vice-Chairman
 Josh Lail
 Ryan Mayberry
 Dr. Jeffrey P. Peal

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

The Alexander County Board of Commissioners held a regular meeting on Monday, August, 2017 at the CVCC / Alexander Center in Room 103, Taylorsville, North Carolina.

CALL TO ORDER

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

INVOCATION & PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

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

COMMISSIONER'S REPORT

Commissioner Mayberry mentioned a recent article in the Economic Indicators Newsletter published by the Western Piedmont Workforce Development Board that reported Alexander County's unemployment rate of 3.4%, the lowest in the Unifour (Burke, Caldwell, and Catawba Counties are all at 4%). In addition, the per capita personal income in Alexander County has increased by 14.1% from 2012 to 2015 compared to 9.6% in Burke, 7% in Caldwell, and 9.1% in Catawba, beating the statewide average of 5.7% and national average of 8.8%.

ADOPTION OF AGENDA

Vice-Chairman Reese made a motion to adopt the agenda as presented. Commissioner Peal seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

PUBLIC COMMENT

The following comments were heard:

Frank Lopez felt the Board was deliberately violating the U.S. Constitution by continuing commissioner-led invocations at meetings and attempting to find legal loopholes to maintain a Christian-only county. He mentioned rulings in 12-696 Town of Greece vs. Galloway and 15-1591 Lund vs. Rowan County related to allowing prayers of various faiths, not compelling audience participation, and Christian-only prayers by municipal leaders, stating that religious freedom pertaining to prayer in schools along with religious slogans, monuments, and literature on/in government property was hypocritical, never applying to all religions equally. Mr. Lopez reported that he had not received an explanation as to the whereabouts of the Koran, Torah, and book on Buddhism he left in the Sheriff's Office lobby and would soon be filing a lawsuit against the County for violation of the 1st and 14th Amendments. Other comments included mention of "the tyranny of the majority" in the Federalist Papers and a Tibetan chant (see video for complete remarks).

George Holleman, Mayor of the Town of Taylorsville, presented a letter from more than 165 citizens requesting the Alexander County Board of Trustees to name the History Room at the Library in memory of Opal Watts Harrington. He added that Ms. Harrington fought hard for the History Room to house many one-of-a-kind documents and felt the alternative option of naming the collection was not acceptable.

ALEXANDER COUNTY EMS 50TH ANNIVERSARY PROCLAMATION

Doug Gillispie, EMS Director, requested approval of a proclamation declaring August 26, 2017 as Alexander County EMS Day in recognition of the department's 50th Anniversary. He advised that a special dinner would be held on that day to honor all past and present employees as well as several special guests. A short slide show that included photos and departmental facts such as call volume, staff, and skills/procedures ability was shown.

The Board thanked Mr. Gillispie and the entire EMS staff for their hard work and dedication to Alexander County citizens and congratulated them on 50 years.

Commissioner Mayberry made a motion to approve the proclamation declaring August 26, 2017 as Alexander County EMS Day. Commissioner Lail seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

EMERGENCY SERVICES AIR TRAILER BID APPROVAL

Russell Greene, Emergency Services Director, reported that 3 sealed bids were opened on July 31st to replace the current 1987 model mobile air trailer purchased used from SC at least 15 years ago that requires constant repair and maintenance. Because of discrepancies in original bids

such as one not including taxes, door variations, etc., staff reached out to all 3 bidders to determine an “apples to apples” comparison resulting in the following final bids:

- Breathing Air Systems - \$112,024 including a direct diesel compressor, tongue mounted 6 KW generator.
- Stallion Air - \$107,501.62 including an electric compressor, 36-45 KW Genset interior generator.
- Safe Air System - \$106,906.91 including a direct diesel compressor, tongue mounted 6.5 KW generator.

Staff recommends accepting the bid submitted by Stallion Air due to the ecofriendly electric compressor and higher performance generator.

Vice-Chairman Reese made a motion to accept Stallion Air’s bid of \$107,501.62 for the mobile air trailer. Commissioner Peal seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

Mr. Greene publically thanked the Alexander County Sheriff’s Office, Rescue Squad, Wilkes County Sheriff’s Office, NC Highway Patrol, and NCDOT blood hound for their assistance in locating a lost elderly citizen over the weekend.

DISCUSSION OF REQUESTS TO HONOR OPAL HARRINGTON AT LIBRARY

Chairman Campbell had no aversion to honoring Opal Harrington and felt the recognition was well deserved. However, he pointed out that the Library Board of Trustees had yet to meet on the subject. It was his understanding that the Trustees would be meeting on August 14th to discuss their formal recommendation to the Board of Commissioners.

Commissioner Mayberry reviewed the many variations of ways to honor Ms. Harrington that had been suggested and agreed the recommendation should come from the Library Board of Trustees, especially when considering the members were more knowledgeable about Ms. Harrington’s service and contribution to the Library.

Vice-Chairman Reese concurred on the Library Board making the recommendation, noting that advisory boards and committees were appointed by the County Commissioners to make these types of decisions.

Commissioner Peal’s desire was for the Library Board of Trustees and Friends of the Library to come together on this project. He viewed this type of decision being made by a Board of Commissioners as heavy-handed micro management.

Commissioner Lail felt the Library Board was more qualified to make this decision and that their ability and authority should not be discounted. He was also in favor of honoring Ms. Harrington and stated that this Board would be supportive of the Trustees’ recommendation.

BOARD APPOINTMENTS & REAPPOINTMENTS

Rick French, County Manager, requested the appointment of Shirley Mays to the Senior Center Advisory Committee for a two-year term.

Commissioner Lail made a motion to approve the appointment as requested. Vice-Chairman Reese seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

BUDGET ORDINANCE AMENDMENTS #3 - #6

Rick French, County Manager, reviewed the purpose of Budget Amendments #3 - #6 as follows:

Budget Amendment #3 – To budget for architectural services for Phase 2 – Design Development / Construction Documents for the bank building renovations.

Budget Amendment #4 – To increase the Health Department budget for additional WIC State funds.

Budget Amendment #5 – To adjust the Shurtape Job Retention Wastewater Project budget for revised cost estimates from the July 13, 2017 bid opening.

Budget Amendment #6 – To increase the General Fund local match for the Shurtape Job Retention Wastewater Project for revised cost estimates from the July 13, 2017 bid opening.

He requested Budget Amendment #3 be tabled and considered along with Agenda Item #8 (Community One Bank Office Building Project).

Commissioner Mayberry made a motion to table consideration of Budget Amendment #3 as requested and to approve Budget Amendments #4 - #6. Vice-Chairman Reese seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

SHURTAPE WASTEWATER PROJECT BID APPROVAL

Rick French, County Manager, informed the Board that 3 bids were received on July 13th for the Shurtape Job Retention Wastewater Project. The low base bid of \$1,175,861.90 was submitted from Buckeye Bridge, LLC of Canton, NC along with two alternates (\$70,306 for a chemical feed system and \$44,435 for a metering manhole) which are not recommended at this time. Therefore, West Consultants recommends the contract be awarded to Buckeye Bridge.

Vice-Chairman Reese made a motion to accept the base bid of \$1,175,861.90 and award the contract for the Shurtape Job Retention Wastewater Project to Buckeye Bridge, LLC. Commissioner Lail seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

COMMUNITY ONE BANK OFFICE BUILDING PROJECT PRESENTATION

Ernie Sills and Steve Walker with CBSA Architects, Inc. reviewed plans and drawings prepared for the Community One Bank Office Building Project that provides space for the Tax Office, Register of Deeds, Planning & Development / Inspections, Environmental Health, Cooperative Extension, Soil & Water, Public Works, Parks & Recreation, and Greenway and includes a large meeting room. A project budget of \$1,905,447 was presented along with 3 alternates (\$84,000 for fire sprinkler system, \$50,000 for asphalt paving, and \$3,113 for exterior painting) bringing the total to \$2,049,416 when including a 5% contingency of \$6,856.

Discussion was held regarding building security, benefits of a sprinkler system, and utilization of technology, specifically debit/credit card payments, once completed. Rick French, County Manager, added that staff was looking into financing options for this project.

Commissioner Mayberry made a motion to approve Budget Amendment #3. Vice-Chairman Reese seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

Commissioner Mayberry made a motion to approve the Community One Bank Office Building Project budget of \$2,049,416 (includes alternates) with CBSA Architects. Vice-Chairman Reese seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

SALES TAX & FINANCIAL REPORT

Rick French, County Manager, reported that a total of \$3,988,133.99 had been collected in sales tax revenue through July 2017 (\$1,239,362.09 is new sales tax for economic development, public education, and community colleges). This amount is 90.19% of the \$4,422,000 budgeted with 91.67% of the budget year expired and an increase over last year of 5.85%.

OTHER BUSINESS

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

- A. Staff received letters of intent from the State regarding the loans to complete the 2008 list of needed water projects and for sewer in the Bethlehem area. The first \$3 million of each loan will be interest free and the remaining balance (\$1,971,335 water / \$2,181,300 sewer) will be at 1.91%. RFQ's will be received until August 25th and a recommendation will be presented at the September 11th Commissioners' Meeting.
- B. Copies of the NC Administrative Code related to State aid for public libraries was distributed along with a draft Local History Policy for the Alexander County Library to be considered at the September 11th meeting. Mr. French noted that restricting use of the History Room would result in the loss of approximately \$100,000 from the State. Several commissioners felt Board approval of departmental policies was unnecessary.

- C. A Mindcare Kiosk Unveiling is scheduled for Thursday, August 10th at 2:00 PM at the Alexander County Health Department. The kiosk will offer quick, anonymous screening assessments for treatable conditions such as depression and anxiety.
- D. On August 18th, the first annual “Clear the Kennels” adoption event will be held at the Alexander County Animal Shelter. Adoption fees will be lowered from \$80 to \$25 and will include spay/neuter, first vaccines, and microchip.
- E. Due to safety concerns for runners and lack of volunteers, the Hiddenite Festival Road Race will no longer be held.

CONSENT AGENDA

- A. Minutes from the July 17, 2017 Regular Meeting.
- B. Tax Release Requests (\$14,827.16) and Tax Refunds (\$1,647.48) for July 8-31, 2017.
- C. Surplus a 2008 Ford Crown Victoria, VIN #2FAFP71V58X172133 with 221,986 miles; another 2008 Ford Crown Victoria, VIN #2FAFP71VX8X108718 with 199,061 miles; and a 2000 Subaru Impreza, VIN #JF1GC4357YH500521 with 115,498 miles and blown motor.
- D. Forest Ranger Funding Agreement with the NC Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services / NC Forest Service, District 2.

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

CLOSED SESSION – N.C.G.S. 143-318.11(a)(4, 5, & 6) ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, CONTRACTUAL, & PERSONNEL

Commissioner Peal made a motion to enter into Closed Session at 7:53 PM to discuss economic development, contractual matters, and personnel issues pursuant to N.C.G.S. 143-318.11(a)(4, 5, & 6). Commissioner Lail seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, Commissioner Mayberry made a motion to adjourn at 9:14 PM. Commissioner Peal seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

Milton H. Campbell, Chairman

Jamie M. Starnes, Clerk to the Board