

Draft

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
REGULAR MEETING December 2, 2019

ALEXANDER COUNTY
STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA

PRESENT: Dr. Jeff Peal, Chairman
 Ronnie Reese, Vice-Chairman
 Ryan Mayberry
 Marty Pennell
 Larry Yoder

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

The Alexander County Board of Commissioners held a regular meeting on Monday, December 2, 2019 in Room 103 of the CVCC / Alexander Center in Taylorsville, North Carolina.

CALL TO ORDER

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

INVOCATION & PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

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

*****SPECIAL RECOGNITIONS*****

Brenda Price and Lindsay Cox with the Alexander County Foster Parents Association were present to promote the annual fundraiser to provide Christmas gifts to foster children in Alexander County. Ms. Price explained that the Foster Parents Association began in 1986 when only 14 children were in foster care. Today there are 50 children and Christmas gifts have been given to as many as 70 in years past. She mentioned that all donations were tax deductible and that leftover funds were used throughout the year to pay for field trips, yearbooks, prom dresses, braces, etc.

Captain Phillip Starnes with the Alexander County Sheriff's Office discussed the Santa Cops Program that was started in 2009 by Captain Mike Harrison whose goal was to help the children of Alexander County Detention Center inmates, who may not otherwise receive gifts, to have a memorable Christmas. He explained that officers speak directly with family members to determine each child's interests and gifts are handpicked based on that information. Collection

boxes are available at the Sheriff's Office, Courthouse, Services Center, Taylorsville and Bethlehem Branch libraries, Stony Point Fire Department, and the Oliver's Landing clubhouse. Recipients must be a biological or legally adopted child of an Alexander County Detention Center inmate, must live in Alexander County, and be under 16 years of age.

Several commissioners provided toys and monetary donations.

COMMISSIONER'S REPORT

Vice-Chairman Reese attended the recent grand opening of Freedom HVAC in Hiddenite, which he felt was a great addition to Alexander County. He also wished everyone a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.

Chairman Peal highlighted several 2019 projects and accomplishments including the opening of the Services Center, the Water System and Bethlehem Sewer Extension Projects, creation of the Consolidated Human Services Agency, planned expansion of Wittenburg Access and Dusty Ridge Parks, increased funding to the School System, Emergency Services, and DSS while also adding to the Fund Balance, several new restaurants and businesses, and a low unemployment rate. He also felt the widening of Highway 127 would result in further development in the Bethlehem community.

ADOPTION OF AGENDA

Chairman Peal requested consideration of a Board of Education per diem increase as Agenda Item #11, moving Other Business to Agenda Item #12.

Commissioner Pennell made a motion to adopt the agenda as amended. Commissioner Mayberry seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

PUBLIC COMMENT

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

2018-2019 AUDIT REPORT

Erica Brown with Martin Starnes & Associates gave a slide show presentation for the 2018-2019 Audit Summary, which included the following information:

- General Fund revenues – ad valorem taxes, local option sales taxes, restricted intergovernmental (federal and state grants), sales and services (Health Department, Detention, EMS, License Plate Agency), permits and fees (Inspections and Register of Deeds), and other (donations, private grants, ABC tax, video programming tax)

- General Fund expenditures – general government (11.6% increase), public safety (7.8% increase), environmental protection, economic and physical development, human services (4.1% increase), culture and recreation, education (7.9% increase), and debt service
- General Fund debt – \$5,479,097 as of 6/30/2019
- Fund Balance overview – 31.70% (\$17,047,761 total / \$12,586,869 available)
- Solid Waste Fund overview
- Water Funds overview
- GASB 87 – new lease standard defining capital and operating leases and how they are reported (effective with 2020-2021 budget year)

Commissioner Yoder made a motion to accept the 2018-2019 Audit Summary as presented. Vice-Chairman Reese seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN

Commissioner Yoder made a motion to approve the election of Ryan Mayberry as Chairman for 2020. Vice-Chairman Reese seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIRMAN

Vice-Chairman Reese made a motion approve the election of Larry Yoder as Vice-Chairman for 2020. Commissioner Mayberry seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

SPECIAL EVENTS ORDINANCE FEE SCHEDULE

Rick French, County Manager, presented the proposed Special Events Ordinance fee schedule as follows:

- For events requiring law enforcement security - \$30 per hour/per officer with a minimum of 3 hours paid directly to the officer(s). Number of officers needed will be at the discretion of the Sheriff.
- For events requiring fire department staff - \$12-\$14 per hour/per firefighter with a minimum of 3 hours paid directly to the fire department.
- For events requiring EMS staff - \$25 per hour/per unit with a minimum of 3 hours paid directly to Alexander County.

Vice-Chairman Reese made a motion to approve the Special Events Ordinance fee schedule. Commissioner Mayberry seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

SPECIAL EVENTS ORDINANCE

After a brief overview by Rick French, County Manager, Commissioner Yoder made a motion to approve the Special Events Ordinance and application. Commissioner Mayberry seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

Chairman Peal pointed out that feedback received following the two public hearings had been addressed and incorporated into the final version of the ordinance.

ADOPTION OF 2020-2021 BUDGET CALENDAR

Rick French, County Manager, presented the 2020-2021 budget calendar as follows:

February 20, 2020	Budget information distributed to department heads and mailed/mailed to outside agencies.
March 6	Technology request forms due from department heads to IT Department.
March 20	Budget requests and revenue estimates from County departments as well as outside agency requests due to Finance.
By April 17	School System representatives meet with the Finance Committee to discuss budget request prior to submission.
April 20	Finance provides first budget printout to County Manager.
April 30	School System budget request due to County Manager.
May 4	Commissioners' Meeting – discussion of budget topics.
May 5-14	Budget work sessions as needed.
May 18	Commissioners' Meeting – County Manager submits budget and budget message to the Board and files a copy with the Clerk for public inspection. Clerk makes copies available to news media.
May 20	Clerk publishes public hearing notice.
May 21-28	Budget work sessions as needed.
June 1	Commissioners' Meeting – budget public hearing.
June 2-8	Budget work sessions as needed.

June 15

Commissioners' Meeting – budget adoption.

Commissioner Yoder made a motion to approve the 2020-2021 budget calendar as presented. Commissioner Mayberry seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

CHRISTMAS IN BETHLEHEM PROCLAMATION

Commissioner Mayberry made a motion to approve a proclamation declaring December 1-31, 2019 as Christmas in Bethlehem. Commissioner Yoder seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

BUDGET ORDINANCE AMENDMENTS #24 - #28

Rick French, County Manager, reviewed the purpose of Budget Amendments #24 - #28 as follows:

Budget Amendment #24 – To increase the Sheriff's Office budget to purchase 800MHz handheld radios with Federal grant funds passed through the NC Department of Public Safety / Governor's Crime Commission.

Budget Amendment #25 – To budget for a donation made to the Bethlehem Branch Library.

Budget Amendment #26 – To budget for a true-up adjustment for FY 2019 tax revenues compared to FY 2019 disbursements to fire districts.

Budget Amendment #27 – To budget for the closeout of the Shurtape Job Retention Sewer Project and transfer the remaining cash balance of local funds back to the General Fund.

Budget Amendment #28 – To budget for the closeout of the Industrial Park Pump Station Replacement Project and transfer the remaining cash balance of local funds back to the General Fund.

Commissioner Yoder made a motion to approve Budget Amendments #24 - #28. Vice-Chairman Reese seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

BOARD APPOINTMENTS & REAPPOINTMENTS

Rick French, County Manager, requested the appointment of Doug Gillispie and Andrew Ferguson as well as the reappointment of Leeanne Whisnant, Chris Bowman, and Patricia Baker to the Local Emergency Planning Committee, all for 3-year terms.

Vice-Chairman Reese made a motion to approve the appointments and reappointments. Commissioner Yoder seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

BOARD OF EDUCATION PER DIEM INCREASE REQUEST

Chairman Peal advised that the Alexander County Board of Education was requesting the following per diem increase that must be approved by the Board of Commissioners pursuant to N.C.G.S. 115C-38:

<u>Current</u>	<u>Requested</u>
Monthly meeting - \$120 / \$240 for Chair	Monthly meeting - \$600 for all
Special called meetings - \$40	No change
Other school system functions - \$20	No change

Commissioner Yoder felt this was a budgetary issue that should be considered along with the 2020-2021 budget and, in an effort to be transparent with the public, should be placed on a printed agenda instead of being added at the last minute. Therefore, he made a motion to table the request to allow for review by the Finance Committee during the 2020-2021 budget process. Vice-Chairman Reese seconded the motion.

Chairman Peal disagreed that this was a County budgetary issue because the funds would be taken from the School System's budget.

Vice-Chairman Reese agreed with Commissioner Yoder since this would be a recurring operational expense that would contribute to the School System's use of Fund Balance and result in them asking for more money from the County.

Commissioner Pennell did not see the School System's per diem increase request any differently than the County's monthly budget amendments.

Chairman Peal suggested tabling the request until January.

Commissioner Mayberry stated that the expense would come from the Schools budget and that the Board of Education answered to the public as did the Board of Commissioners; however, he was also agreeable to waiting until January as suggested.

Although Commissioner Yoder's motion was to table the request to be reviewed by the Finance Committee for consideration with the 2020-2021 budget, he was agreeable to it being placed on the agenda for January. He explained that, because the letter sent by BOE Chairman David Odom outlining the request stated "as you are working to establish a budget for the 2019-2020 fiscal year," he felt the letter was intended to read 2020-2021 fiscal year since the 2019-2020 budget had already been approved.

Chairman Peal mentioned that, although the letter from Mr. Odom stated "your consideration to provide additional funding to cover an increase in the Board of Education's per diem would be greatly appreciated," the BOE was fully prepared to cover the expenses without any additional revenue from the County.

There being no further discussion, the amended motion (to table the request until January 2020) passed unanimously.

OTHER BUSINESS

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

- A. Buckeye Bridge continues to work in the Wittenburg Springs Subdivision, the beginning phase of the Water System Extension Project.
- B. The bid opening for the Bethlehem Sewer Extension Project is scheduled for December 5th and a contract will be awarded at the December 16th Called Meeting.
- C. A total of \$1,275,375 has been collected in sales tax revenue through November 2019 (\$407,167 is new sales tax for economic development, public education, and community colleges). This amount is 24.94% of the \$5,113,000 budgeted with 25% of the budget year expired and an increase over last year of 8.82%.
- D. Early bird registration for the 2020 NACo Conference in Washington, D.C. ends next week. Refunds are not given on registrations or hotel reservations, so Board members should be certain they are attending before having staff make arrangements.
- E. The annual Christmas Parade will be held this Saturday, December 7th at 3:00 PM. The Bethlehem Star Lighting will take place at 6:30 PM.

CONSENT AGENDA

- A. Minutes from the November 4, 2019 Regular Meeting.
- B. Tax Release Requests (\$2,051.23) and Tax Refunds (\$22,146.91) for October 26 – November 22, 2019.
- C. Surplus a 1997 Chevy Kodiak dump truck, VIN #1GBM7H1J6VJ114786 with 121,620 miles; a 2004 Ford Crown Victoria, VIN #2FAFP71W34X107915 with 187,421 miles; a 2005 Ford Crown Victoria, VIN #2FAFP71WX5X148298 with 195,620 miles; a 2004 Ford Crown Victoria, VIN #2FAFP71W04X157302 with 218,650 miles; a Great Dane 25HP zero turn mower, PIN #TCRZ25H020493 with 52-inch deck and unknown hours; and a Bobcat 29HP zero turn mower, PIN #94225400508 with 62-inch deck and unknown hours.

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

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

The Board entered into Closed Session at 7:14 PM to discuss economic development and personnel issues pursuant to N.C.G.S. 143-318.11(a)(4 & 6).

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, Commissioner Yoder made a motion to adjourn at 8:12 PM. Commissioner Mayberry seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

Jeffrey P. Peal, Chairman

Jamie M. Starnes, Clerk to the Board