

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
REGULAR MEETING January 10, 2005

ALEXANDER COUNTY
STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA

PRESENT: William L. Hammer, Chairman
 W. Darrell Robertson, Vice-Chairman
 Wesley E. Bolick
 W. Norris Keever
 Larry Yoder

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

MEDIA: Gary Herman, The Taylorsville Times

The Alexander County Board of Commissioners held a regular meeting on Monday, January 10, 2005 in the Catawba Valley Community College / Alexander Center Multipurpose Room, Taylorsville, North Carolina.

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Hammer called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM

INVOCATION & PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Commissioner Bolick gave the invocation and Leah Morton, student at Wittenburg Elementary School, led the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

COMMISSIONER'S REPORT

Chairman Hammer stated that he wished to change the Chairman's Report portion of the meeting to the Commissioner's Report beginning January 24, 2005 to allow each commissioner an opportunity to discuss issues and on goings related to committees and advisory boards that each commissioner serves on.

Chairman Hammer stated that he wished to implement a "State of the County" to also begin at the January 24, 2005 meeting. He mentioned that this would be similar to President Bush's "State of the Union" and Governor Easley's "State of the State." Chairman Hammer stated that he would appreciate staff and the Board's input.

Chairman Hammer pointed out that Commissioner Keever and Rick French, County Manager, had been featured in the *County Lines* newspaper for serving on the Blue Ribbon Study Committee for Medicaid Reform. He noted that Commissioner Keever was one of only 4 of 5 commissioners across the state that spoke regarding the state taking over all Medicaid costs.

Chairman Hammer thanked everyone for showing concern and love for his family during the loss of his father who passed away on December 4, 2004. Chairman Hammer stated that he and his family appreciated the flowers, cards, calls, and visits.

ADOPTION OF AGENDA

Commissioner Keever made a motion to adopt the agenda as presented. Commissioner Robertson seconded the motion. The Board voted unanimously in favor of the motion.

BETHLEHEM SATELLITE OFFICE SURVEY RESULTS

Sylvia Turnmire, Director of Planning & Development, discussed the survey results for the Bethlehem satellite office located at 134 Bolick Lane, which was made available at the October 18, 2004 Commissioners' Meeting and later at Bethlehem Elementary School, West Alexander Middle School, the Planning & Development Office, and at the specified collections sites which included Bethlehem Restaurant, Lowes Foods, and Bethlehem Pharmacy. Ms. Turnmire officially thanked Jennifer Hefner, Principal of Bethlehem Elementary School, and Susan Gant, Principal of West Alexander Middle School, and staff for distributing the surveys within the schools. She also thanked Gary Sain from Bethlehem Pharmacy, Gary McKinney from Bethlehem Restaurant, and Mark Moretz from Lowes Foods.

Ms. Turnmire stated that of the 1,431 surveys that were distributed, only 76 were returned for a 5.3% response rate. She informed the Board that 39 surveys were collected from Bethlehem Pharmacy, 31 from Lowes Foods, 4 from Bethlehem Restaurant, and 2 had been collected by Jamie Starnes, Clerk to the Board. Ms. Turnmire stated that 43% of those were returned from students on behalf of their parents and the remaining 57% was from other residents.

Ms. Turnmire stated that citizens were allowed to review several different services in the survey which including building permits, Chamber of Commerce, a computer resource center, Cooperative Extension programs (youth and environmental programs), Health Department (immunizations, clinics, WIC, septic permits), library, recreation registration (secondary location), Senior Center activities (health programs and social events), a Sheriff's office, Social Services (family support and children's services), and tax payments. She explained that citizens were asked to rate these services from one to 10 with one being the most beneficial and 10 being the least beneficial. The survey results were as follows:

County Service	Priority	County Service	Priority
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Library	2	DSS – Children’s Services	5
Sheriff’s Office	3	Senior Center – Health Programs	5
Computer Resource Area	4	Recreation Registration	5
Health Dept. – Immunizations	4	Cooperative Ext. – Environmental Programs	5
Cooperative Ext.-Youth Programs	4	Senior Center – Social Events	6
Health Department - Clinics	4	Health Dept. – Septic Permits	6
Health Department - WIC	5	Building Permits	6
Tax Payments	5	Chamber of Commerce	7
DSS – Family Support	5		

Ms. Turnmire also stated that the survey requested citizens to indicate preferred hours of operation for the satellite office and she noted that citizens were able to choose between 2 hours, 4 hours, 6 hours, or 8 hours as well as “by appointment” or “as scheduled.” She informed the Board that citizens responded that Senior Center programs, Cooperative Extension programs, and services through DSS would be most beneficial by appointment or on an as scheduled basis. Septic permits and recreation registration was preferred on a 4-hour day and the library, Sheriff’s office, Health Department services, computer resource area, tax payments, and Chamber of Commerce was requested at 8 hours per day.

Ms. Turnmire stated that some citizens had hand written comments on the surveys. She presented generalized comments based on those written on the surveys which were that the library was top priority, more law enforcement was needed in the area, and that full-time staffing was needed at the satellite office. Someone also suggested operating hours of 9:00 AM to 6:00 PM instead of the usual 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM so people that worked out of the county could utilize the office.

Ms. Turnmire discussed services offered at a few other county satellite offices including:

<u>Alamance County</u>	<u>Caldwell County</u>	<u>Currituck County (8hr./day)</u>
Health Department (8hr./day)	Planning Dept. (8hr./day)	Planning/Zoning
Immunizations	Utility Payments (8hr./day)	Building Inspections
Sheriff’s Department	Water Department	Sheriff’s Department
Tax Department	Tax Payments (8hr./day)	Magistrate Services
Appraiser (4hr./wk)	Solid Waste Offices	Environmental Inspections
Cooperative Extension (8hr./day)		Library
Library (4hr./mo.)		Community Meeting Rm.
Social Services		
Food Stamps (8hr./mo.)		

Ms. Turnmire reported that the surveys indicated that the library and Sheriff's office were the most beneficial service to the Bethlehem Community based on an 8-hour workday and other activities could be provided as scheduled.

Commissioner Robertson asked if the surveys instructed citizens to place ones and tens on every service or if citizens were instructed to prioritize 10 services. Ms. Turnmire replied that the initial intent was to have citizens rank the services from one to 10; however, she noted that the surveys came back with every service rated one through 10.

Chairman Hammer stated that the Board would discuss these results during the budget process to determine the use of the Bethlehem satellite office. He thanked Ms. Turnmire for the report.

Commissioner Bolick also thanked Ms. Turnmire for the work done on this project. He also conveyed his appreciation to the citizens that filled out a survey.

2004 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT REVIEW

David Icenhour, Economic Development Director, presented an Economic Development report which included activities in 2004. Mr. Icenhour stated that a copy of the report had been given to the press and he noted that copies were available at the County Administration Office and on the County website.

Mr. Icenhour stated that he began focusing 100% on economic development when his position was changed from part-time to full-time Economic Development Director on May 24, 2004. He explained that he immediately began working on renewing the relationship between Alexander County and the Charlotte Regional Partnership. Mr. Icenhour felt that the Charlotte Regional Partnership was a valuable networking organization that provided an opportunity to discuss economic development with others in the region. He also stated that a significant benefit to being a member of the Charlotte Regional Partnership was the ability to post available property in Alexander County on the organization's website. Mr. Icenhour informed the Board that there were only 4 property sites listed on this website when he became Economic Development Director and he noted that there were 28 property sites listed to date. He also introduced Kenny McDonald, Vice President of Economic Development, and Vanessa Goeschl, Director of Research, from the Charlotte Regional Partnership who was present at the meeting.

Mr. Icenhour stated that the N.C. Department of Commerce also assisted Alexander County in bringing prospects for possible business or industry by providing a similar website service as the Charlotte Regional Partnership. He explained that information loaded to the Charlotte Regional Partnership website regarding property was automatically picked up by the N.C. Department of Commerce website, which provided a tremendous amount of exposure.

Mr. Icenhour stated that the County's own economic development website was posted on January 12, 2004 which he continually updated. He mentioned that the Economic Development Office had received many calls from parties interested in property they had viewed on one of these 3 websites.

Mr. Icenhour stated that working with existing industries and industrial recruiting was 2 major focuses for the Economic Development Office. Mr. Icenhour felt that it was extremely important to retain the jobs in the county and he stated that his number one effort in 2005 would be to do what he could to help companies already established in the county.

Some efforts with existing industry in 2004 included:

- Worked with Advantage Wood Products project, which was a spin-off of an existing industry. A previously empty 26,000 square foot manufacturing facility was purchased by the company to employ at least 29 residents. The Economic Development Office worked to secure a CDBG grant to provide water and sewer to the industry.
- Working with The Mitchell Gold Company concerning a 62,500 square foot addition to their manufacturing facility. The Economic Development Office assisted the company with exploring the use of an Industrial Revenue Bond for financing the project and later with the application for the County's Industrial Development Incentive Grant. The Economic Development Office is currently working with the company concerning financing for another project through the Revolving Loan fund.
- Assisted Paul Robert Chair in identifying an empty building which they are now leasing. The company also received assistance from the County in applying for an Industrial Revenue Bond for expansion.
- Helped Schneider Mills initiate a training program for potential employees.
- Assisted Innovative Wood Products concerning the availability for leasing of a 50,000 square foot building on company property.
- Initiated an existing industry visitation program in August 2004. Visitations are intended to inform local industry leaders that the Economic Development Office is available to provide assistance. Industries visited in the last 6 months of 2004 were The Mitchell Gold Company, Daniels Woodcarving, Advantage Wood Products, Alexvale Furniture, Schneider Mills, American Roller Bearing, Brushy Mountain Motor Sports, Huntington House Furniture, Innovative Wood Products, and Broyhill Furniture.

Mr. Icenhour informed the Board that efforts in 2004 unfortunately did not result in any new industry relocating or expanding in the county. He did mention that the Economic Development Office worked with the expansion of a retail company, Lake Norman Propane, into the county.

The Economic Development Office undertook the responsibility of writing a CDBG application for a water and sewer project. Mr. Icenhour stated that he had written a grant application for Advantage Wood Products, which was awarded on November 8, 2004 in the amount \$337,649 to fund 2,500 feet of sewer line and 12,800 feet of water line. Mr. Icenhour felt that grant writing, although time consuming, was valuable for future projects.

Mr. Icenhour elaborated on the Schneider Mills training program. He explained that the purpose of the program was to provide training to county residents in the textile industry for a guaranteed job interview with Schneider Mills upon completion of the program along with a strong likelihood of employment. Mr. Icenhour stated that the County had agreed to house the program, handle scheduling, and publicizing of the program. He informed the Board that 9 county residents began the program on December 6, 2004.

An application was also completed in 2004 for the County to be included in the N.C. Department of Commerce 21st Century Communities Program. Mr. Icenhour stated that the purpose of the program was to create a coalition of federal, state, and local agencies that will work directly with selected counties to improve economic competitiveness. Mr. Icenhour explained that if selected, an Economic Development Assistance Team of experienced economic developers would visit the county to conduct an initial evaluation of the community and then begin the process of identifying and prioritizing key local issues.

Mr. Icenhour briefly discussed the 2005 Plan of Action which included continuing to work with the Charlotte Regional Partnership and the N.C. Department of Commerce to discover methods for rural counties to benefit more from their industrial recruitment efforts, to establish at least one "certified site" under the criteria set forth by the N.C. Department of Commerce, and to increase the visitation program to at least 2 industries per month.

Kenny McDonald, who was introduced earlier, stated that the Charlotte Regional Partnership was a 16 county organization that was funded by the N.C. Legislature, by a per capita basis through each of the 16 counties, and by private industry. He stated that the program mission of the Charlotte Regional Partnership was to market the region to the world and to sell the assets of the entire region as opposed to the assets of one particular community or county. He noted that the second goal was to provide a platform for regional economic development dialogue. Mr. McDonald mentioned that the Charlotte Regional Partnership was consistently researching and preparing to compete with other regions for projects.

Mr. McDonald stated that the \$10,000 membership fee received from each county was developed into a \$1.4 million marketing program that was used to market the region directly to companies. He noted that that money did not go towards anyone's salary. Mr. McDonald informed the Board that the Charlotte Regional Partnership was constantly striving to deliver more results. He stated that the number of active projects had grown over the last year or so from approximately 8 projects to 25 or 30 projects per month. He pointed out that 80% of those projects were small to medium manufacturing employing 100 or less people. Mr. McDonald also stated that staff strived to keep each county informed of what types of sites and types of businesses clients were searching for in the area.

Mr. McDonald felt that the website was critical and he noted the importance of counties and communities keeping the information updated and correct. He stated that the Internet was the number one vehicle for people searching for data. He also noted that Mr. Icenhour had been a great help with developing rural economic strategies to target the 10 rural counties of the 16 involved with the Charlotte Regional Partnership.

Commissioner Bolick asked if the Charlotte Regional Partnership staff was aware of what each county in the region had to offer when marketing to potential clients. He also inquired as to how much emphasis was put on workforce in the area.

Mr. McDonald replied that staff practiced proactive marketing. He explained that staff talked with companies interested in expanding to determine if they wanted a more rural or more developed area and then marketed areas based on that information. He also noted that 80% of marketing efforts were for small to medium sized industry and business. Mr. McDonald explained that workforce was usually not top priority for business and industry. He informed the Board that the number one issue was incentives and business costs.

Commissioner Bolick asked if the Board could do anything to attract more industry to the county. Mr. McDonald stated that consistent funding and support of economic development operations in the county was critical. He also stated that having certified sites was something that would definitely attract more industry.

Commissioner Robertson inquired about the timeframe of the Charlotte Regional Partnership program to assist outlying rural counties that was discussed some time ago. Mr. McDonald replied that the program would be apart of next year's program schedule if not sooner.

Commissioner Bolick asked about the importance the school system played in attracting industry to certain areas. Mr. McDonald stated that clients occasionally wanted to visit the schools in the potential areas of interest. Commissioner Bolick asked if incorporated towns were a concern to clients. Mr. McDonald replied that they were not.

Chairman Hammer thanked Mr. Icenhour and Mr. French for their participation in the Charlotte Regional Partnership. He also thanked Mr. McDonald and Ms. Goeschl for attending the meeting.

ALEXANDER COUNTY PRE-TRIAL RELEASE PROGRAM BI-ANNUAL REPORT

Anita Price, Resource Center Director, presented the Pre-Trial Release Program Bi-Annual Report for the period beginning July 2004 and ending December 2004, which included the following information:

Admissions During Period

Interviewed during period	22	
Presented to judge	21	
Approved	21	100.0%
Rejected	0	0.0%
Pending decision	0	0.0%
Number of admissions to program	22	

Gender	Race	Age	Count	% of Admissions
Female	White	20-29	1	4.5%
Female	White	30-39	3	13.6%
Female	White	40-49	1	4.5%
Male	White	10-19	1	4.5%
Male	White	20-29	7	31.8%
Male	White	30-39	2	9.1%
Male	White	40-49	6	27.3%
Male	Black	30-39	1	4.5%

Condition of Release for New Admissions	Count	% of Admissions
Total conditions assigned	144	
Telephone contact	21	95.5%
Drug screening	20	90.9%
No alcohol/illegal substances	20	90.9%
Report in person to case manager	19	86.4%
Other	19	86.4%
Receive counseling – substance abuse	15	68.2%
Gain employment	13	59.1%
Daily curfew	5	22.7%
Have no contact with victim	4	18.2%
No contact with co-defendants	4	18.2%
Remain employed until court date	3	13.6%
Receive counseling – mental health	1	4.5%

Population During Period

Clients active during period	34	
Clients assessed as eligible	33	97.1%
Clients assessed as not eligible (Court/Magistrate requirement)	1	2.9%
Total number of days active by clients during period	1,640	
Average number of days active for a client during period	48	

Exits During Period

Exit Status	Count	% of Exits
All Exits	27	
Successful/Normal	23	85.2%

Successful/Expedited	1	3.7%
Violated Release Conditions	3	11.1%
Rearrested for New Charges	0	0.0%
Other	0	0.0%
Failed to Appear in Court (Exit status is one of the above)	1	3.7%

Disposition of Charges	Count	% of Total
Total count of charges	59	
Dismissed	28	47.5%
Probation	22	37.3%
Pending	5	8.5%
Active prison sentence	3	5.1%
Other	1	1.7%

Months Exiting Clients Were Active in Program	Count	% of Exits
1 or less	5	18.5%
2	10	37.0%
3	3	11.1%
4	2	7.4%
5	2	7.4%
6	2	7.4%
7	2	7.4%
8	1	3.7%
9	0	0.0%
10	0	0.0%
11	0	0.0%
12	0	0.0%
More than 12	0	0.0%

Jail Beds Saved During Period

Bed Savings Type	Days Saved	Savings (based on a bed cost of \$40.00)
Regular Pre-Trial	1,639	\$65,560.00
Expedited	1	\$40.00
Total	1,640	\$65,600.00

Commissioner Keever asked how the number of days saved was determined. Ms. Price explained that she counted the number of days beginning with the day the person was released

from jail in the Pre-Trial Release Program to the day the person went to court, which equaled the number of days that person would have remained in jail.

Ms. Price presented a N.C. Department of Correction Division of Community Corrections Program Cost Summary for 1999-2004, which outlined the cost per day per offender for each program including close, medium, and minimum custody prison, intensive probation, electronic house arrest, CJPP (sentenced offender), community/intermediate probation, CJPP (Pre-Trial Release, and community service work program.

Ms. Price also presented graphs which showed that 62% of clients in the Pre-Trial Release Program received substance abuse services. Of those clients, 79% received outpatient substance abuse treatment and 21% received inpatient treatment, such as Halfway House. Another graph showed that 14 defendants gained employment or remained employed during the program, 5 were enrolled in some type of educational program, 2 were disabled, 4 went to inpatient treatment, and 6 remained unemployed. Ms. Price also stated that 45% of charges to defendants were felonies and 55% were misdemeanors.

Commissioner Yoder stated that Ms. Price did a good job on the report. Chairman Hammer thanked Ms. Price for the report.

FINANCE SOFTWARE UPDATE / DEBT REFINANCING

Jennifer Herman, Finance Director, discussed the need for new software for the Finance and Personnel Departments. She stated that the current software did not provide very much flexibility and she noted that she had been researching several software packages during the past year. She noted that staff had been given some in-house demonstrations and had also visited another county similar in size to Alexander County to view a software program.

Based on research, Mr. Herman recommended purchasing financial and personnel software from MUNIS, Inc. She informed the Board that this software was used in over 40 North Carolina counties as well as numerous cities and towns throughout the state. She stated that the software would allow department heads to view information and transactions in their own budget over the computer instead of having to call the Finance Office. She stated that this information would be updated in real time so department heads would not have to wait until the last payroll or accounts payable run to have the information posted. Ms. Herman also mentioned that the software would allow Finance staff to print many different types of reports for the Board, department heads, and County Manager with as much or as little detail as needed.

Ms. Herman stated that she had met with Rick French, County Manager, and Greg Cronk, Information Technology Director, several times regarding the MUNIS software as well as the Finance Committee consisting of Commissioners Robertson and Kever. She also noted that she, along with Mr. French and Commissioner Kever, had met with Robert Campbell, County Attorney, on December 30, 2004 to discuss the proposed contracts with MUNIS, Inc.

Ms. Herman informed the Board that some computer hardware would need to be upgraded to be compatible with the new software. She noted that the total cost for the hardware and software was approximately \$160,000, which would be borrowed in full and paid in semiannual debt payments over 3 years. Ms. Herman stated that requests had been mailed to several banks for proposals on interest rates to finance the project. She promised to have a summary of the bids at the January 24, 2005 Commissioners' Meeting.

Ms. Herman also requested the Board consider a waiver of bid procedure for letting of public contracts. She explained the Section 143-129 of the N.C. General Statutes covered the formal bidding requirements for purchase contracts estimated to cost more than \$90,000. Section 143-129 (g) contains an exception to the formal bidding requirements for previously bid or "piggybacking" contracts. Ms. Herman stated that this exception would allow the County to "piggyback" off another governmental unit's contract with MUNIS that has occurred within the last 12 months. She stated that MUNIS would provide the County with the same or better pricing than the other governmental unit. Ms. Herman mentioned that a waiver of the bid procedure under this exception required governing board approval at a regular meeting upon 10 days of notice and she noted that the required notice had been published for 2 weeks beginning December 22, 2004.

Therefore, Ms. Herman requested the Board vote to waive the formal bid requirements by using the exception for previously bid contracts and also to vote to allow her and Mr. French to proceed with contract negotiations for the MUNIS, Inc. software.

Commissioner Bolick asked if staff had received any calls regarding the software after the notice was published. Mr. Herman replied that staff had not received any response.

Commissioner Keever pointed out that the current system had been installed in the late 1980s. Ms. Herman also pointed out that the current system would not allow staff to submit W-2 information to the IRS after January 1, 2006.

Commissioner Yoder asked if MUNIS, Inc. would be able to resolve a serious software problem in the same day or if staff would have to wait several days to operate. Ms. Herman replied that MUNIS, Inc. technical assistance prioritized calls that came in and she noted that a serious problem would be considered high priority and would be resolved as soon as possible.

Commissioner Robertson mentioned that there was a MUNIS user group that was made up of several counties, cities, and towns that used the software. He felt that this would also be a good local back up for resolving certain problems.

There being no further discussion regarding the hardware and software purchase, Commissioner Keever made a motion to waive the formal bid requirements by using the exception for previously bid contracts and also to vote to allow Ms. Herman and Mr. French to proceed with contract negotiations for the MUNIS, Inc. software. Commissioner Bolick seconded the motion. The Board voted unanimously in favor of the motion.

Chairman Hammer thanked Ms. Herman, Mr. French, and Commissioners Robertson and Keever for working so diligently on this project.

Debt Refinancing Discussion

Ms. Herman asked the Board to consider refinancing of 2 installment financing agreements that currently have interest rates over 5%. She stated that the Building Renovation Loan with BB&T had an interest rate of 5.61% and did not mature until June 2010. She informed the Board that BB&T had proposed to refinance the existing loan at a rate of 3.62%. Ms. Herman explained that the next savings of refinancing after paying the 1% prepayment premium that was included in the original contract would be approximately \$25,500. She also noted that BB&T's proposed rate was good through January 20, 2005.

Ms. Herman also stated that the CVCC Building and Land Loan with Wachovia had an interest rate of 5.79% and did not mature until December 2015. She informed the Board that Wachovia was still working on a proposal for a refinancing rate.

Ms. Herman stated that she had spoken to a representative from the Local Government Commission today regarding the refinancing. She explained that refinancing did not require a separate debt application and that the LGC only required copies of the new modification agreement and new amortization schedule.

Commissioner Keever made a motion to allow Ms. Herman to proceed with the refinancing of the installment financing agreements with BB&T and Wachovia as requested. Commissioner Robertson seconded the motion. The Board voted unanimously in favor of the motion.

BUDGET ORDINANCE AMENDMENT #21

Rick French, County Manager, discussed the purpose of Budget Amendment #21, which included the following information:

Budget Amendment #21 – To increase the budget for additional Family Planning State funds.

Commissioner Keever made a motion to approve Budget Amendment #21. Commissioner Bolick seconded the motion. The Board voted unanimously in favor of the motion.

BOARD APPOINTMENTS & REAPPOINTMENTS

Chairman Hammer presented the following appointments and reappointments:

A. ANIMAL CONTROL ADVISORY BOARD

Appoint Dr. Bill Southworth, veterinarian

2 year terms

Appoint Dwight Shook, public health member
Appoint Jason Moore, law enforcement member
Appoint Wilson Friday, hunter

B. CHAMBER OF COMMERCE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Appoint David Icenhour 1 year term

Chairman Hammer stated that there were still 3 appointments needed on the Animal Control Advisory Board including a rural area member, an urban area member, and a member at large. Chairman Hammer welcomed any suggestions for these appointments.

Chairman Hammer made a motion to approve the appointments and reappointments as presented. Commissioner Robertson seconded the motion. The Board voted unanimously in favor of the motion.

OTHER BUSINESS

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

- A. The NCACC Legislative Goals Conference is scheduled for January 13-14, 2005 in High Point. Mr. French stated that he, Chairman Hammer, Commissioner Keever were scheduled to attend. He also noted that one topic to be discussed would be regarding the Governor's comments of moving sales tax from counties.
- B. The grand opening for the Alexander County Branch of the American Red Cross is scheduled for January 20, 2005 at 11:30 AM.
- C. The annual meeting of the Western Piedmont Council of Governments is also January 20, 2005. Mr. French stated that the meeting would start at 6:30 PM at the Holiday Inn Select in Hickory.
- D. The annual Chamber of Commerce Meeting has been rescheduled for Thursday, February 3, 2005 at Davis Hall in Taylorsville. The President's Reception will begin at 6:30 PM and dinner will be held at 7:00 PM. Mr. French informed the Board that Ned Jarrett would be the guest speaker.
- E. Mr. French introduced Scott Ross who began as the new Senior Center Director on January 3, 2005.
- F. Mr. French stated that he met with Larry Mecimore on January 3, 2005 regarding a noise concern. Mr. Mecimore stated that loud music from an adjoining property owner had been reported to the Sheriff's Department. He informed Mr. French that a deputy had responded, but the loud music continued. Mr. French stated that the County noise ordinance, adopted in 1998, prohibited loud music between hours of

11:00 PM to 7:00 AM. Mr. French stated that Jamie Starnes, Clerk to the Board, was surveying surrounding counties' noise ordinances and he noted that he would report findings at the January 24, 2005 meeting.

- G. Sandra Gregory, Human Resources Director, has recommended a number of changes to the Alexander County Personnel Policy. Mr. French stated that Ms. Gregory's recommendations were based on changes in Fair Labor Standard Act and Family Medical Leave Act, which would simply make our policy up to date.

Commissioner Kever suggested this item be tabled until the January 24, 2004 Commissioners' Meeting.

- H. A meeting will be held with Senator John Garwood and Representative Mark Hollo on January 18, 2005 at 12:00 Noon. Mr. French stated that meeting would be held along with the Board of Education and would take place at the School Administration building.
- I. A joint meeting with the Board of Education, Town of Taylorsville, and County Commissioners has been set for January 12, 2004 at 4:00 PM. Mr. French stated that the purpose of the meeting was to talk with our newly elected Representative Virginia Foxx.
- J. Mr. French asked the Board to consider scheduling a work session in February to discuss a cost estimate for communications needs and to hear a presentation by YMCA for funding for a pool. Mr. French suggested the Board check their schedules for February 28, 2005.

CONSENT AGENDA

- A. Tax Release Requests for December \$86.05 and Tax Refund Requests for December \$7,661.83.
- B. Minutes from December 6, 2004 Regular Commissioners' Meeting.

Commissioner Robertson made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda. Commissioner Kever seconded the motion. The Board voted unanimously in favor of the motion.

CLOSED SESSION – N.C.G.S. 143-318.11(a)(1, 5, & 6) TO PREVENT DISCLOSURE OF CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION, CONTRACTUAL, & PERSONNEL

Chairman Hammer made a motion to enter into Closed Session at 7:31 PM to prevent the disclosure of confidential information and to discuss contractual matters and personnel issues pursuant to N.C.G.S. 143-318.11(a)(1, 5, & 6). Commissioner Kever seconded the motion. The Board voted unanimously in favor of the motion.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, Commissioner Bolick made a motion to adjourn at 8:50 PM. Commissioner Robertson seconded the motion. The Board voted unanimously in favor of the motion.

William L. Hammer, Chairman

Jamie M. Starnes, Clerk to the Board