

Draft

**BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
SPECIAL CALLED MEETING** June 13, 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 special called meeting on Monday, June 13, 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 6:02 PM.

INVOCATION & PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Commissioner Robertson gave the invocation and Chairman Hammer led the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

ADOPTION OF AGENDA

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

PUBLIC HEARING: APPROVAL OF ROAD NAMES

Chairman Hammer requested approval of the following road names:

<u>Road No.</u>	<u>Road Name</u>	<u>Road Location</u>
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3747HB	Bost Court	Off Alspaugh Dam Road
3810AH	Duck Creek Drive	Off Dover Church Road
3746EF	Friday – Cockrell Lane	Off Rabbit Hollow Lane
3778AI	Lynnbrook Lane	Off Maplewood Lane
3873EC	T J Campbell Lane	Off Tom Kerley Lane

Chairman Hammer also stated that a petition had been submitted to rename Industrial Park Drive to W.E. Baab Industrial Drive.

Chairman Hammer called the public hearing to order and requested any public comment. There being no public comment, Commissioner Kever made a motion to close the public hearing. Commissioner Yoder seconded the motion. The Board voted unanimously in favor of the motion.

Commissioner Bolick made a motion to approve the road names and road renaming as presented. Commissioner Kever seconded the motion. The Board voted unanimously in favor of the motion.

CONSIDERATION OF 2005-2006 ALEXANDER COUNTY BUDGET ORDINANCE

Rick French, County Manager, presented the 2005-2006 Alexander County Budget Ordinance for consideration. He also presented a draft copy of an Alexander County manual of fees and charges that included fire tax rates, water rates, and solid waste fees as well as proposed inspections fees, EMS fees, and animal control fees. Mr. French stated that the convenience site fees had been restructured slightly to focus more on recycling. He also pointed out that the mileage rate would be increased from 34.5 cents to 40.5 cents to follow along with the IRS rate increase.

Mr. French informed the Board that the House budget included some proposed Medicaid relief for counties in the amount of \$15 million. He explained that the proposal included \$7.5 million for all counties and another \$7.5 million for the 40 counties with Medicaid costs that exceed 20% of their budget.

At this time, several motions were made regarding solid waste fees. Commissioner Kever made a motion to increase the landfill tipping fees for solid waste, construction debris, and metal from \$44.33 per ton to an even \$45 per ton. Commissioner Robertson seconded the motion. The Board voted unanimously in favor of the motion.

Commissioner Kever made a motion to set a convenience center and landfill fee of \$24 for a loaded 6 foot pickup bed and \$28 for a loaded 8 foot pickup bed. Commissioner Robertson seconded the motion. The Board voted unanimously in favor of the motion.

Commissioner Robertson made a motion to place all increases and amendments to fees in effect August 1, 2005. Commissioner Kever seconded the motion. The Board voted unanimously in favor of the motion.

Chairman Hammer stated that 45% of the budget expenditures had been mandated by the state. He also noted that, as Superintendent Jack Hoke as mentioned at the last meeting, the field house and most of the auditorium was being constructed with half cent sales tax monies. The County is only contributing a small amount towards the auditorium but not enough to impact the property tax increase. Chairman Hammer stated that the property tax increase was proposed because of increases in Medicaid, DSS, and school system costs. He also mentioned that a third, or roughly \$9 million, of the County budget was for expenditures for DSS and the Health Department.

Commissioner Robertson compared tax levies based on population for Alexander and surrounding counties including \$274 per capita for Alexander, \$323 per capita for Caldwell, \$425 per capita for Catawba, \$440 per capita for Iredell, and \$410 per capita for Wilkes. He felt that, based on these numbers, it was evident that Alexander County operated more efficiently than the other counties and he thanked the employees and department heads for that. He also thanked Mr. French as well as Finance Director Jennifer Herman and the Finance staff for their work on the budget while learning a new software system. Commissioner Robertson discussed the proposed property tax increase and stated that he felt a sales tax was a more fair and equitable tax. He felt it was unfair to place the burden of tax increases solely on property owners and he noted that he would be proposing that the Board pursue another sales tax after the budget was adopted.

Commissioner Keever stated that House bill 1142 had been introduced that would allow all counties to levy a menu of options currently enforced by other counties, including some local option sales taxes.

There being no further discussion regarding the budget, Commissioner Bolick made a motion to approve the 2005-2006 Alexander County Budget Ordinance as presented. Commissioner Keever requested a Friendly Amendment to Commissioner Bolick's motion to include the amendments and changes to the solid waste fees as discussed earlier. Commissioner Bolick accepted Commissioner Keever's Friendly Amendment. Commissioner Robertson seconded the amended motion. The Board voted unanimously in favor of the motion.

Sales Tax Discussion

Commissioner Bolick discussed the Board's recent efforts of requesting support from our local representatives in the General Assembly to allow the County to enact a local option sales tax. He stated that there was some hard feeling towards Representative Mark Hollo for not supporting the request in the House of Representatives; however, Commissioner Bolick felt that Representative Hollo had a lot of integrity and he commended him for taking a stand on what he felt was right. Commissioner Bolick stated that Representative Hollo did not "bow down" to the pressure he received because of his stand on the sales tax for and he noted that he respected Representative Hollo for that.

Commissioner Robertson stated that he understood that Representative Hollo had signed onto the "No Tax Pledge" when he entered into office; however, Commissioner Robertson noted that the Board did not ask him to increase taxes but only to give the County the authority to increase the

sales tax. Commissioner Robertson stated that every board member he had ever served with had agreed it was fairer to increase sales tax rather than property taxes and he felt that the Board should continue to pursue the sales tax.

Commissioner Keever stated that our local representatives in the General Assembly were elected to support the best interests of the county. He stated that these representatives were to take recommendations from county leaders on what the needs were and he noted that those representatives would not be supported in the next election for voting on a issue without considering the county's needs and requests.

Commissioner Robertson made a motion to draft another resolution similar to the one approved on February 21, 2005 in support of a one-cent sales tax to be placed on the agenda for the June 20, 2005 Commissioners' Meeting. Commissioner Keever seconded the motion. The Board voted unanimously in favor of the motion.

SURPLUS PROPERTY

Chairman Hammer stated that there were currently 3 in-ground County vehicle lifts in the old Dayton building that were extremely aged that he wished to have declared as surplus.

Therefore, Chairman Hammer made a motion to declare the 3 vehicle lifts as surplus. Commissioner Keever seconded the motion. The Board voted unanimously in favor of the motion.

OTHER BUSINESS

Rick French, County Manager, informed the Board that our National Guard would be deployed on July 30, 2005. He stated that Joyce Kilby was organizing a cookout on July 23, 2005 at 5:00 PM at the National Guard Armory Facility in Taylorsville to honor the troops and their families. Ms. Kilby has contacted the County and Town for financial support.

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

Commissioner Robertson made a motion to enter into Closed Session at 6:34 PM to discuss contractual matters and personnel issues pursuant to N.C.G.S. 143-318.11(a)(5 & 6). Commissioner Keever 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 7:50 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