

Draft

**BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**  
**REGULAR MEETING**     March 16, 2009

**ALEXANDER COUNTY**  
**STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA**

**PRESENT:**    W. Darrell Robertson, Chairman  
                  Wes Bolick, Vice-Chairman  
                  Ryan Mayberry  
                  Harold M. Odom  
                  Larry G. Yoder

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

**MEDIA:**        Micah Henry, The Taylorsville Times

The Alexander County Board of Commissioners held a regular meeting on Monday, March 16, 2009 in the Catawba Valley Community College / Alexander Center Multipurpose Room, Taylorsville, North Carolina.

**CALL TO ORDER**

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

**INVOCATION & PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

Commissioner Bolick introduced Dave Washington, former professional football player, and current prison ministry advocate who gave the invocation. Commissioner Bolick led the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

Chairman Robertson stated that he greatly respected Mr. Washington who graduated college with a degree in chemistry before playing professional football and then continued a successful career in teaching. Chairman Robertson thanked Mr. Washington for attending tonight and also for the example he was setting through his ministry.

**COMMISSIONER'S REPORT**

Commissioner Bolick mentioned the recent trip to the NACo Legislative Conference in Washington D.C. that he attended along with Commissioners Yoder and Mayberry as well as County Manager Rick French. He discussed the many workshops that were held during the

conference including those on clean water, immigration, health care, transportation, veteran's needs and opportunities, and the economy. Reports were heard from the Secretaries of Housing, Department of Energy, and the Interior. He stated that the group was able to meet with several of our representatives where issues relating to Alexander County such as the jail, water, roads, and economic stimulus funding were discussed. Senators Richard Burr and Kay Hagan and Representatives Patrick McHenry and Howard Coble spoke during a Congressional Delegation Breakfast and committee meetings regarding public safety and environment/energy/land use were attended.

Commissioner Mayberry stated that the group had a busy week but enjoyed themselves. He felt that the relationships made in Washington would last beyond the conference and would benefit the County in the future.

Commissioner Yoder stated that the conference was very informative, noting that the group learned a lot about the economic stimulus funding that could benefit Alexander County. He pointed out money could be available for fire department construction and he noted that grants would be applied for soon in attempt to obtain some of the economic stimulus monies for many projects throughout the county.

Another topic mentioned by Commissioner Yoder was that the GOP recently filed a bill that would change the NC Education Lottery to just the NC Lottery. He stated that he was opposed to the change and to any of the lottery proceeds being used for any purpose other than for education, noting that the lottery was advertised to and passed by the citizens for that intention only. He requested a letter be drafted to state the Board's opposition to the bill to be sent to the Governor, Lt. Governor, House and Senate leaders, and the NCACC and to request a constitutional amendment for NC lottery proceeds to be used for education as intended.

Chairman Robertson suggested that staff prepare a resolution addressing these concerns to be considered at the April 6, 2009 Commissioner's Meeting. The Board agreed.

## **ADOPTION OF AGENDA**

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

## **CDBG AWARD – VASHTI ROAD WATER PROJECT**

Chairman Robertson announced that Alexander County had received word from the NC Department of Commerce that the \$750,000 Vashti Road CDBG had been funded. The grant will be used to install approximately 24,000 liner feet of 6 and 8-inch water lines and household taps/connections and would provide administrative funds for the project. He explained that the water lines would serve low and moderate income residents on Highway 16 North from Frank Smith MHP to Vashti Road, ending just before the intersection of Lawson Childers Road.

Because Alexander County has been designated as a 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community, no local match is required for the project. Chairman Robertson pointed out that the water lines would be owned by the County and that EnergyUnited Water Corporation would provide the water, maintenance, meter reading, and billing for these customers.

## **NEW ANIMAL WELFARE LAW REPORT**

Mark Sharpe, Animal Control Director, began by presenting a new civil citation form reviewed and approved by District Attorney Sarah Kirkman. He pointed out that the new form, which was constitutionally correct, provided ordinance references and would be used for both warnings and citations. He explained that use of the new form would allow cases of non-payment to be given directly to the magistrate to be handled legally.

Commissioner Odom made a motion to approve the new citation form as presented. Commissioner Bolick seconded the motion. The Board voted unanimously in favor of the motion.

Mr. Sharpe discussed the new Animal Control laws to become effective on January 1, 2011, including a requirement to provide protection from excessive sun and inclement weather as well as holding the animal at an ambient temperature between 50 and 85 degrees F from the time the animal is picked up until they arrive at the shelter, for which he noted that staff was seeking grants to help with the purchase of equipment to maintain that temperature on current Animal Control vehicles.

He also reviewed House Bill 6 – An Act to Provide for Humane Euthanasia of Animals in Animals Shelters, to become effective April 1, 2011. Mr. Sharpe informed the Board that the state required counties to construct a special type of euthanasia chamber in May 2007 at a cost of \$3,000; however, he noted that they now wished to enact House Bill 6 which would prevent the use of any type of gas to euthanize animals but would allow for lethal injection or use of a powder form of the euthanasia drug. He mentioned that the Animal Control Department currently employed two certified technicians to administer the lethal injections.

Mr. Sharpe briefly mentioned the many services offered at the Animal Shelter including adoptions, rabies vaccinations, and spay/neuter programs.

## **2009 ECONOMIC STIMULUS WATER PROJECTS**

The following economic stimulus water projects were discussed:

### **Bethlehem Water System Improvements**

Gene Haynes, HSMM, introduced Johnsie Hingley who presented the preliminary engineering report for the Bethlehem Water System improvements. The purpose of the project is to consolidate the water system to operate from one pump station and one tank and also address the low pressure problems on Webb Price Road. Ms. Hingley explained

that the proposal included installing a one million gallon tank near the intersection of Highway 127 and Highway 64 as well as 11,000 feet of 8-inch water main to tie Webb Price Road with Fellowship Church Road and Icard Ridge Road. Once the project is completed, several storage tanks throughout the system can be abandoned. She informed the Board that the estimated cost for the project was \$3 million.

Chairman Robertson discussed the possibility of retaining some of the tanks for future storage needs.

#### **Polly Bowman / Deal Farm Road Improvements**

Doug Chapman, McGill Associates, stated that this project would provide water lines along Polly Bowman, Deal Farm, Hammer Ridge, Espie Little, Kirkpatrick, and Miller Point Drive for a total of 17,000 feet of 8-inch line with some 2-inch lines in dead end cul-de-sacs. This project will serve 50 to 55 homes at an estimated cost of \$600,000.

#### **Liberty Grove / Ned Herman Road**

Mr. Chapman stated that this project would provide water lines along Liberty Grove Church Road as well as Ned Herman, Zeb Watts, and Dula Loop and tie into the existing line on Three Forks Church Road for a total of 28,000 feet. He also noted that these lines would provide a second feed off Highway 90 to the Sugar Loaf area. This project will serve 95 homes, excluding poultry producers, at an estimated cost of \$1 million.

Kevin Greer, City of Hickory, discussed the economic stimulus money, noting that Alexander County would be competing against many other projects throughout the state for funding. He pointed out that \$64 million would be available for water projects for \$2.3 billion in requests, as well as \$70.2 million for wastewater projects for \$2 billion in requests. Water projects will be reviewed in April and the first round of funding should be allocated in June.

### **REPORT ON ARTICLE 46 SALE TAX**

Rick French, County Manager, informed the Board that the NC Department of Revenue discovered a sales tax allocation error for the 8 counties whose voters approved Article 46, which allowed those counties to levy a new ¼ cent sales tax. Due to a software error, those counties received double the amount they should have received since beginning the collection of revenue.

He stated that this mistake would cost Alexander County \$206,221.91 and the Town of Taylorsville \$11,111.09 and he noted that the state would take this money back over an 8-month period.

### **BOARD APPOINTMENTS & REAPPOINTMENTS**

Rick French, County Manager, recommended the appointment of Linda Barnette to the Equalization & Review Board for a one-year term.

Commissioner Yoder made a motion to approve the appointments as requested. Commissioner Mayberry seconded the motion. The Board voted unanimously in favor of the motion.

### **BUDGET ORDINANCE AMENDMENTS #28 - #31**

Rick French, County Manager, discussed the purpose of Budget Amendments #28 - #31, which included the following information:

Budget Amendment #28 – To budget for the March/June architect fees for the Jail Project. To increase the Public Buildings budget for estimated costs to renovate office space leased for Sheriff's Office personnel.

Budget Amendment #29 – To transfer funds from the General Fund to the Capital Improvements Fund for cable channel start-up costs.

Budget Amendment #30 – To transfer funds to the County Water and Sewer Fund for engineering costs associated with proposed water projects.

Budget Amendment #31 – To increase the budget for CDBG 2007 Infrastructure Hook-Up Project.

Commissioner Bolick made a motion to approve Budget Amendments #28 - #31. Commissioner Odom seconded the motion. The Board voted unanimously in favor of the motion.

### **OTHER BUSINESS**

Chairman Robertson presented a slide show presentation from the John Locke Foundation related to local government costs in NC counties and cities. Information included tax burdens, property tax average dollar amount, combined city and county taxes and fees as a percentage of income and average dollar paid, etc.

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

- A. Departmental budget requests are due March 31, 2009. Budget work sessions will be scheduled in late April and early May.
- B. Mr. French requested a work session be held on Monday, March 30, 2009 at 6:00 PM in the County Administration Conference Room to discuss projects. Therefore, Commissioner Yoder made a motion to schedule the work session as requested. Commissioner Bolick seconded the motion. The Board voted unanimously in favor of the motion.

### **CONSENT AGENDA**

- A. Minutes from the February 16, 2009 and March 2, 2009 Regular Commissioners' Meetings.
- B. Agreement between the WPCOG and Alexander County for the Provision of Technical Assistance – Rocky Face Park Master Plan.
- C. Agreement between the WPCOG and Alexander County for the Provision of Grant Management Assistance – Infrastructure Connection Grant.
- D. Approval to submit application for continuation of funding for the Criminal Justice Partnership Program (CJPP) for FY 2009-2010.

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

**CLOSED SESSION – N.C.G.S. 143-318.11(a)(1, 4, 5, & 6) TO PREVENT THE DISCLOSURE OF CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, CONTRACTUAL, & PERSONNEL**

Chairman Robertson made a motion to enter into Closed Session at 7:15 PM to prevent the disclosure of confidential information and to discuss economic development, contractual matters, and personnel issues pursuant to N.C.G.S. 143-318.11(a)(1, 4, 5, & 6). Commissioner Bolick 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 8:10 PM. Commissioner Mayberry seconded the motion. The Board voted unanimously in favor of the motion.

---

W. Darrell Robertson, Chairman

---

Jamie M. Starnes, Clerk to the Board