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**BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**  
**REGULAR MEETING**     May 18, 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, May 18, 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**

Billie Walker, Director of Nursing at the Health Department, gave the invocation and also led the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

She stated that she had been a registered nurse for 9 years and had been employed with the Health Department for 5 years. Programs overseen by Ms. Walker include family planning, maternal health, immunizations, communicable diseases, and child health exams. She informed the Board that the Health Department strived to prevent, protect, and promote and operated an "open access" policy, meaning that patients could receive services the same or next day after stopping in.

The Board thanked Ms. Walker for attending the meeting and for her service to the citizens of the county.

**\*\*\*SPECIAL RECOGNITIONS\*\*\***

Chairman Robertson, on behalf of the entire Board, presented a Key to the County to the Hiddenite Volunteer Fire Department for 60 years of service to the citizens of Alexander County. Chairman Robertson pointed out that Hiddenite was the first fire department in the county.

Tim Keever, Grover Sharpe, and Frank Durmire were present to represent the fire department. Mr. Keever discussed the department's history from its beginnings in 1949 and he named each chief since that time – Roy Warren, Donald Kerley, Howard Keever, Grover Sharpe, and himself. Mr. Sharpe and Mr. Durmire thanked the Board and the citizens for the continued support.

Several commissioners thanked the Hiddenite Volunteer Fire Department members as well as other departments for volunteering their time to protect the county and for working together. Chairman Robertson conveyed his appreciation for the example that had been set by Hiddenite Fire Department. Commissioner Bolick thanked all the departments for their contribution of fire fighting gear and equipment to his friend in Honduras several years ago.

## **COMMISSIONER'S REPORT**

Commissioner Yoder commended the ACHS Chorus for their production of "The Sound of Music" at the auditorium this past weekend.

## **ADOPTION OF AGENDA**

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

## **PUBLIC HEARING: REZONING CASE 09-2 – MCCALED**

Sylvia Turnmire, Director of Planning & Development, presented Rezoning Case 09-2 submitted by Jerry and Gret McCaleb. The applicant requested rezoning of property located at 231 Richey Road from L-I (Light Industrial) to RA-20 (Residential Agricultural) to allow for residential expansion. The size of the property tract is 17.775 acres and the current land use is single-family residential and a telecommunications tower. Ms. Turnmire stated that zoning within 100 feet of the property was RA-20 to the north, south, and east as well as L-I to the south and east and R-20 to the west. Land uses within 100 feet of the property includes single-family site-built to the north and south along with vacant property to the south, a church, cemetery, and industrial to the east, and residential to the west.

Ms. Turnmire stated that the subject property was obtained by the current owner in 2006 and the home was constructed on the property in 1910. The previous owners operated an upholstery shop in an accessory building located in the rear of the property.

She reported that Section 154.180 of the Alexander County Zoning Ordinance states that “the L-I Light Industrial District is intended to provide for the development of areas devoted to light manufacturing, processing and assembly uses, warehousing, distribution and servicing enterprises, and limited office activities.” Section 154.140 of the Zoning Ordinance states that “the RA-20 District is established as a district in which the principal use of the land is for low-density residential and agricultural purposes including single-family dwellings, two-family dwellings, individual manufactured homes, and related uses.”

Ms. Turnmire also pointed out that the 2008 Alexander County Comprehensive Plan showed this area as being primarily residential in nature; however, it is located directly adjacent to properties having the services necessary to support future commercial development including sewer access, public water, and proximity to a major thoroughfare. The 1995 Alexander County Thoroughfare Plan does not list improvements to Richey Road.

She stated that letters were sent by first class mail to the property owners within 100 feet of the parcel boundary, a sign was posted on the property, and an advertisement was placed in *The Taylorsville Times*. She noted that several adjoining property owners called to ask for information but no one spoke in opposition or in favor to the request at the Planning & Zoning Commission’s public hearing.

Ms. Turnmire informed the Board that Planning & Development staff recommended approval of the request due to the following:

1. Proximity of similar zoning districts.
2. Existing residential use of the property.

She also stated that the Planning & Zoning Commission held a public hearing on May 7, 2009 to consider the request, where the Commission unanimously voted to approve the rezoning request based on the following findings:

1. Proximity of similar zoning districts.
2. Existing residential use of the property.

Ms. Turnmire stated that based on the information provided, the Board must determine whether the rezoning request meets the guidelines set forth above. She also noted that Section 154.351(B) of the Alexander County Zoning Ordinance required the Board to state whether the request was consistent with adopted plans.

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

Commissioner Odom made a motion to approve Rezoning Case 09-2.

Commissioner Yoder requested the addition of a statement of consistency with adopted plans including proximity of similar zoning districts and existing residential use of the property to Commissioner Odom's motion. Commissioner Odom accepted the amendment.

Commissioner Bolick seconded the motion. The Board voted unanimously in favor of the motion.

## **REPORT ON H1N1 – SWINE FLU**

Lecanne Whisnant, Health Director, gave an update on H1N1 (swine flu), stating that there were 12 confirmed cases in North Carolina but no deaths. She stated that H1N1 could not be contracted by eating pork, only from person to person.

She explained that, even though any type of influenza strain should cause concern, this type was not extremely fatal as being reported and she noted that this strain mainly affected the very young, elderly, and those with lowered immune systems, as with any other strain of flu. Approximately 36,000 people die each year from the flu and recent studies have shown that 8 deaths have occurred from the H1N1 strain this year.

Ms. Whisnant informed the Board that this strain responded well to antivirals, which were readily available.

Russell Greene, Emergency Services Director, mentioned that the County's Strategic National Stock Pile Plan was recently utilized after Raleigh sent 25% of its antivirals to the counties in response to the H1N1 outbreak, as well as some masks and gowns, which were delivered to Shurtape in Stony Point, the County's local receiving site. The antivirals were then shipped to the Health Department the next morning. Mr. Greene stated that the plan worked well and he thanked Billie Walker who wrote the plan.

## **EMS WEEK PROCLAMATION**

Chairman Robertson presented a proclamation declaring the week of May 17-23, 2009 as EMS Week in Alexander County. He recommended approval of the resolution and encouraged the public to observe the week with appropriate programs and activities.

Assistant Supervisor Jonathan Goodnight and Paramedics Terry Williams and Chris Hyatt were present at the meeting to represent Alexander County EMS.

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

**RESOLUTION TO RESCIND THE MAY 7, 2002 RESOLUTION TO ADVANCE THE REAPPRAISAL SCHEDULE FROM JANUARY 1, 2010 TO JANUARY 1, 2007 TO PERFORM REAPPRAISALS EVERY 4 YEARS**

Rick French, County Manager, stated that in May 2002, the board serving at that time approved a resolution to advance the reappraisal schedule from January 1, 2010 to January 1, 2007 and every four years thereafter. He explained that, given the economy and the unemployment rate, the current Board now wished to rescind that resolution and delay the next scheduled reappraisal until January 1, 2013.

Chairman Robertson also added that the reappraisal process cost the County in excess of \$600,000 to perform, an expenditure that could be delayed during this time of economic distress. He noted that the schedule would remain on a four year cycle, only that the County would eliminate one cycle.

Commissioner Bolick made a motion to approve the resolution. Commissioner Mayberry seconded the motion. The Board voted unanimously in favor of the motion.

**RESOLUTION REQUIRING THE REGISTER OF DEEDS TO NOT ACCEPT DEEDS TRANSFERRING REAL PROPERTY FOR REGISTRATION WHERE PROPERTY IS SUBJECT TO DELINQUENT TAXES**

Chairman Robertson presented a resolution that would require the Register of Deeds to not accept deeds which transferred real property for registration if the taxes on the property had not been paid.

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

**BOARD APPOINTMENTS & REAPPOINTMENTS**

Rick French, County Manager, requested the reappointment of David Icenhour to the Workforce Development Board for 2 years.

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

**BUDGET ORDINANCE AMENDMENTS #48 - #52**

Rick French, County Manager, discussed the purpose of Budget Amendments #48 - #52, which included the following information:

Budget Amendment #48 – To budget for 2.5% cost-of-living adjustment for 2008-2009 (effective with the 8/15/08 payroll).

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Budget Amendment #50 – To budget for personnel costs reclassified from the General Fund to the County Water & Sewer fund.

Budget Amendment #51 – To increase the Sheriff's Department budget for an alarm system at the new investigations office and new evidence building. To increase the Human Resources budget for the first month's payment for the employee wellness agreement with the YMCA. To increase the Recreation budget for estimated costs of \$5,100 to repair a grill and hood system at Dusty Ridge Park (using net profits from the Matheson Tournament).

Budget Amendment #52 – To adjust budgets for engineering costs associated with the proposed water project for the Bethlehem Water District.

Commissioner Odom questioned the budget amendments for the 2.5% cost-of-living adjustments. Mr. French explained that these were the COLA's approved for the 2008-2009 budget year and not the one upcoming.

Commissioner Mayberry made a motion to approve Budget Amendments #48 - #52. Commissioner Bolick 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. He requested the scheduling of a budget work session on either Wednesday, May 27, 2009 or Friday, May 29, 2009 at 6:00 PM in the County Administration Conference Room.

Several commissioners noted conflicts on Friday May 29th; therefore, Commissioner Yoder made a motion to hold the budget work session on Wednesday, May 27, 2009. Commissioner Bolick seconded the motion. The Board voted unanimously in favor of the motion.

- B. Tentative dates for budget review and adoption are June 15, 2009 for the public hearing and June 24<sup>th</sup> or 29<sup>th</sup> for adoption.

- C. The Alexander County Employee's Benefit and Wellness Fair is scheduled for Thursday, May 21, 2009 from 8:00 AM until 12:00 Noon. All County employees are invited to attend.
- D. The June 4, 2009 Planning & Zoning Commission Meeting has been canceled.
- E. Mr. French requested the Board to declare a 1984 dump truck purchased in January 1996 as surplus.

Commissioner Yoder made a motion to declare the dump truck as surplus. Commissioner Mayberry seconded the motion. The Board voted unanimously in favor of the motion.

- F. A budget memo was sent to all department heads requesting the following steps be taken for the remainder of the 2008-2009 budget year:
  - Freeze all vacant positions and no advertising of new positions.
  - Prior approval needed from the County Manager before any purchase of supplies or postage, repair or leasing of equipment, travel outside of the county, or capital outlay or improvements.
  - Minimize overtime.
  - No budget amendments.
- G. Staff is working with the Sheriff on a 2009 Justice Assistance Grant of \$39,287.60 in stimulus funding for part-time staff court security and mental commitments as well as a new VHF repeater, ballistic helmets, new handguns for full-time officers, and other supplies. This is a 100% grant and requires no match.

## **CONSENT AGENDA**

- A. Minutes from the May 4, 2009 Regular Commissioners' Meeting.
- B. Declare 1984 International Truck surplus Vin #1HTAA17B8EHA13155.

Commissioner Mayberry noted a change in the May 4, 2009 minutes in a comment he made during the discussion of the Senate Tax Plan.

Commissioner Odom made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda. Commissioner Yoder 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 7:16 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 Mayberry seconded the motion. The Board voted unanimously in favor of the motion.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business, Commissioner Odom made a motion to adjourn at 8:43 PM. Commissioner Mayberry seconded the motion. The Board voted unanimously in favor of the motion.

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W. Darrell Robertson, Chairman

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Jamie M. Starnes, Clerk to the Board