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**BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**  
**REGULAR MEETING** August 3, 2009

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

- PRESENT:** W. Darrell Robertson, Chairman  
Ryan Mayberry  
Harold M. Odom  
Larry G. Yoder
- ABSENT:** Wes Bolick, Vice-Chairman
- 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, August 3, 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**

Kim Stine, Human Resources Benefits Specialist, gave the invocation and also led the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

Ms. Stine stated that she had been employed with Alexander County for 11 years, 9 years as and Accounting Specialist in the Finance Department and 2 years as Benefits Specialist in the Human Resources Department. She explained that her responsibilities included administering benefits for County employees and researching new benefits, as well as implementing and overseeing the Wellness Program which began in September 2007. She reported that one year's participation in the Wellness Program resulted in a \$54,000 reduction in medical insurance costs. Other activities and programs organized or administered by Ms. Stine include free YMCA memberships for employees, lunch and learns, the Biggest Loser Support Group, the Wellness & Benefits Fair, and the monthly "The County Times" newsletter.

## COMMISSIONER'S REPORT

Chairman Robertson announced that Commissioner Bolick was on vacation and would not be attending the meeting.

## ADOPTION OF AGENDA

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

## PUBLIC COMMENT

Russell Greene, Emergency Services Director, reported that at approximately 4:45 PM, a utility contractor cut the main water line on Highway 16 South. He stated that citizens from the Ellendale tank to the west end of town and the Sugar Loaf area would experience a reduction of pressure until approximately 9:00 PM while crews repaired the problem.

Mr. Greene also discussed a Hazardous Materials Emergency Planning Exercise that occurred on Saturday, August 1, 2009 made possible by an NCDOT grant from the NC Emergency Management. The simulated accident involved a bus with passengers and a tractor trailer hauling chemicals which resulted in an unknown vapor cloud and multiple injuries. Mr. Greene thanked all agencies involved with the exercise as well as volunteers and churches who participated. He stated that an After Action Report would be provided so that areas of improvement or equipment and training needs could be identified.

## PUBLIC HEARING: WESTERN PIEDMONT REGIONAL TRANSIT AUTHORITY 2009-2010 ROAP APPLICATION

Patti Foster, WPRTA Safety Manager, presented the 2009-2010 Rural Operating Assistance Program (ROAP) grant application for the Board's consideration. She explained that these grant funds would provide additional transportation beyond other funding sources and levels of service for the Elderly & Disabled Transportation Assistance Program (EDTAP), the Rural General Public (RGP), and the Work First/Employment Program. She also noted that county governments were the only eligible applicants for these funds.

Ms. Foster stated that the 2009-2010 grant application totaled \$162,214 which would be broken down as follows:

EDTAP Formula - \$45,768	RGP Formula - \$41,745
EDTAP Supplemental - \$26,201	RGP Supplemental - \$36,711
EDTAP Total - \$71,969	RGP Total - \$78,456
Employment Formula - \$5,261	

Employment Supplemental - \$6,528  
Employment Total - \$11,789

She recommended that the Board designate the Western Piedmont Regional Transit Authority as the recipient of the EDTAP and RGP funds and Alexander County DSS as the recipient for the Employment funds.

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

Commissioner Odom made a motion to approve the 2009-2010 ROAP grant application as presented and designate WPRTA and Alexander DSS as recipients as recommended. Commissioner Mayberry seconded the motion. The Board voted unanimously in favor of the motion.

Ms. Foster also informed the Board that staff hoped to receive approximately \$2 million in stimulus funding that would be used to purchase a hybrid bus, a light transit vehicle, and a biodiesel vehicle to make the fleet greener.

#### **UPDATE ON TOWN OF TAYLORSVILLE BUS SERVICE**

Patti Foster, WPRTA Safety Manager, stated that funding was now available through a Federal Transit Administration Grant to provide a bus route in the Town of Taylorsville. Staff is negotiating a service agreement with the Town to allow this service to be implemented.

She explained that the bus would run Monday through Friday from 8:00 AM until 3:00 PM except on major holidays. Approximately 50 stops are included in the route with a stop every ¼ mile in more populated areas. She reported that the downtown area, major shopping centers, County buildings, and various medical complexes were included in the route. Proposed fares are as follows:

Adult - \$1.25  
Elderly or Disabled - 60 cents  
Children under 5 - free  
Transfers - free  
Single Ride Ticket - \$1.25  
One Day Pass - \$3.00  
Seven Day Pass - \$12.00  
Thirty Day Pass - \$45.00

Ms. Foster informed the Board that several steps needed to be completed before the bus service could begin such as approval of the service agreement as well as the contract and hold harmless

agreements for bus stop placement. If all goes as planned, the new service will launch on Monday, August 17, 2009.

## **SPAY & NEUTER PROGRAM UPDATE**

Mark Sharpe, Animal Control Director, reported that the Alexander County Animal Care and Adoption Center was partnering with local veterinarians in the county to provide the Spay & Neuter Initiative Partnership. He explained that a citizen can register and pay for a spaying or neutering at the Animal Shelter and then select a vet (Alexander County Veterinary Services, Bethlehem Animal Hospital, or Stony Point Animal Clinic). Animal Control then schedules an appointment with that office and provides the citizen a voucher for the procedure. The standard price is \$55; however, an additional \$30 is charged for animals over 80 pounds or if the animal is pregnant, in estrus, or lactating.

He explained that this allowed residents to establish a relationship with an area vet and kept tax dollars inside the county. He also stated that if the <sup>staff</sup>county would enact mandatory spay/neuter rules for dogs and cats, similar to laws in the Northeastern area of the country, it would reduce the euthanasia rate at the Animal Shelter by 80%.

Mr. Sharpe also discussed the new Animal Welfare Law that was scheduled to be enforced January 1, 2011 but was approved and enacted August 1, 2009. He stated that staff was working hard to comply with the new law.

## **NORTHEAST AREA WATER PROJECT**

Rod Watts, EnergyUnited Water Corp General Manager, stated that crews were putting the last portion of the Northeast Area Water Project into service this week and hoped to finish Hopewell Church Road soon.

Benjie Thomas, West & Associates, provided a map of water lines that showed lines already in the ground and in service as well as planned lines. He mentioned that Daniels Lumber Road and King Sprinkle Road would begin in September or October and that Vashti Road would go out to bid in December.

It was noted that over 30 miles of water line had been installed with this project so far.

Mr. Watts also pointed out that EnergyUnited staff had recently installed water lines along Goble Road and would soon begin on Berea Quincy Road and Old Charlotte Road. Funding was also received for the Love Valley area, of which 1 ½ miles is located in Alexander County, in the form of half grant money and half through a loan.

The Board thanked EnergyUnited and West Consultants for their contributions to the project. They also thanked former commissioner Norris Keever who played a key role in getting this project organized.

## **TOBACCO USE IN COUNTY BUILDINGS & VEHICLES ORDINANCE AMENDMENT**

Rick French, County Manager, presented a proposed amendment to the Tobacco Use in County Buildings & Vehicles Ordinance to include tobacco substitute or tobacco-like products and requested the Board's approval.

Chairman Robertson pointed out that "tobacco free" signs were posted on all County building but asked how tobacco use in vehicles was handled.

Mr. French replied that all current employees had been informed of the no tobacco policy and that new employees were briefed during New Employee Orientations.

## **BUDGET ORDINANCE AMENDMENT #2 - #4**

Rick French, County Manager, discussed the purpose of Budget Amendments #2 - #4, which included the following information:

Budget Amendment #2 – To increase the Health Department budget for additional WIC program funds from the state. To increase the Cooperative Extension budget for donations received in 2008-2009 from outside sponsors.

Budget Amendment #3 – To increase the Bethlehem Fire Department budget for professional services related to the new fire department building project. To increase the Fire Department budgets for annual support on fire reporting software.

Budget Amendment #4 – To budget \$39,294 for a Recovery Act JAG Formula Program Grant.

Commissioner Odom made a motion to approve Budget Amendments #2 - #4. Commissioner Mayberry 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 Rocky Face Park Committee had another planning meeting on July 23, 2009 at CVCC where preliminary cost estimates were discussed as well as trail development, picnic shelters, bathrooms, and parking. The park property will be used as the match for PARTF grant funds and no County funding will be used in phase one.

- B. It appears that HB1452 (Ethics Bill) is going to be approved and signed by Governor Perdue. This bill will require counties to adopt a code of ethics and obtain ethics training.
- C. HB524 requiring a referendum for annexation passed the House.
- D. Staff has received many calls from citizens needing water or having problems with wells. Calls have been received from the following individuals:
  - Sherry Barnes – Hoyle Keller Loop
  - Dana Weaver – Mountain Creek Lane
  - Kirk Pennell – Oakwood Baptist Church / Blankenship Road
  - Dennis Spivey – Houke Mountain Road
  - Kim Hullfish – Linsey Bebbler Road
  - Bill Beard – B&T Lane
- E. The County will be participating in the Workforce Investment Act, a program made possible through stimulus funding, to help reduce overtime.
- F. Sales tax revenues are down 15.8% from this time last year.

#### **CONSENT AGENDA**

- A. Tax Release Requests for June \$1,549.80 and Tax Refund Requests for June \$1,106.10.
- B. Minutes from the March 30, 2009 Work Session and July 20, 2009 Regular Commissioners' Meeting.
- C. Amendment to the Northeastern Area Water Project Engineering Agreement.
- D. Consideration to forgive an EMS bill for a volunteer emergency services worker.

Commissioner Yoder made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda. Commissioner Mayberry 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**

Commissioner Mayberry made a motion to enter into Closed Session at 7:56 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 Yoder 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 8:15 PM. Commissioner Yoder 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