

Draft

**BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**  
**REGULAR MEETING**      November 7, 2011

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

**PRESENT:**    W. Darrell Robertson, Chairman  
                  Ryan Mayberry, Vice-Chairman  
                  James “Burkie” Jennings  
                  Judy M. Moose  
                  Larry Yoder

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

The Alexander County Board of Commissioners held a regular meeting on Monday, November 7, 2011 at the CVCC / Alexander Center in Room 103, Taylorsville, North Carolina.

**CALL TO ORDER**

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

**INVOCATION & PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

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

**COMMISSIONER’S REPORT**

Commissioner Moose visited the Animal Shelter last week to get rabies shots for her pets. She thanked the staff for doing a great job.

Commissioner Jennings stated that the County had spent a lot of money removing graffiti from Rocky Face in preparation of the new park. He urged citizens to report this activity to the Sheriff’s Department if they saw it occur.

**ADOPTION OF AGENDA**

Chairman Robertson requested the addition of an Adoption Awareness Month Proclamation and the deletion of the CVCC Board of Trustees appointment and he made a motion to adopt the

agenda as amended. Commissioner Jennings seconded the motion. The Board voted unanimously in favor of the motion.

## **PUBLIC COMMENT**

Jason Abernathy from the American Cancer Society explained that 81 cents of every dollar raised for the American Cancer Society went to research, patient services, education, and prevention. In the past year, 62 people in Alexander County that were diagnosed with cancer called the American Cancer Society 800 number and received services. Of those, 13 received gas cards which resulted in 241 trips for treatment.

He presented a banner and certificate to Alexander County who raised \$97,273 in the past year and almost \$500,000 in a 5-year period during the Relay for Life Campaign. He also noted that Alexander County had 100% school participation and he recognized Alexander County DSS who was the top fundraiser in the county, raising \$8,885 in the past year.

Mr. Abernathy urged citizens to contact the American Cancer Society, regardless of whether or not they had health insurance at (828) 303-0292 or 800-ACS-2345. He noted that many free screenings were offered.

## **VETERANS DAY 2011 PROCLAMATION**

Ben Hines, Register of Deeds, presented a proclamation in recognition of Veterans Day 2011. He also discussed an upcoming Veterans Day Event planned for November 11, 2011 at 11:00 AM at the ACHS Auditorium and noted that a meal would be served afterwards for all veterans and their immediate families.

He thanked everyone involved in the event including the schools, veterans groups, and funeral homes in the county.

Commissioner Yoder made a motion to approve the Veterans Day 2011 Proclamation. Commissioner Jennings seconded the motion. The Board voted unanimously in favor of the motion.

## **VETERANS COMMITTEE UPDATE**

Commissioner Jennings felt a Veterans Committee needed to be formed to assist the many veterans organizations in the county and aid in advertising their events such as breakfast fundraisers, sports sponsorships, etc. He felt that the County's PEG channel would be extremely useful in spreading the word to citizens in the county as well as the County Veterans Service Office and Commissioners' Meetings.

## **PROCLAMATION TO RECOGNIZE NOVEMBER 16, 2011 AS NATIONAL GIS DAY IN ALEXANDER COUNTY**

George Brown, GIS Coordinator, presented the proclamation recognizing National GIS Day and he also discussed the 3<sup>rd</sup> annual GIS Day scheduled for November 16, 2011 at the ACHS Auditorium. Some 600 students attend GIS Day but the event is also open to the public from 8:00 AM until 2:30 PM.

He mentioned the map books created by a 15-student GIS mapping class at ACHS, a copy of which was now in the Library of Congress. Mr. Brown noted that if two more books were sold, a total of \$10,000 would be collected.

New features of the GIS system include a new street level view as well as the new 7 county regional GIS site which was developed from meetings with contractors, surveyors, realtors, etc. to determine what type of information was most needed for the new site.

Commissioner Yoder made a motion to approve the Proclamation to Recognize November 16, 2011 as National GIS Day in Alexander County. Commissioner Mayberry seconded the motion. The Board voted unanimously in favor of the motion.

## **ADOPTION AWARENESS MONTH 2011 PROCLAMATION**

Cindy Holman, DSS Director, presented a proclamation declaring November as Adoption Awareness Month. She discussed the children in the custody of DSS that are waiting for adoptive families, noting how important it was for these children to have someone to love and care for them.

Commissioner Yoder discussed the annual Adoptive Parents banquet held last week, noting that it was one of the highlights of his year.

Commissioner Yoder made a motion to approve the Adoption Awareness Month 2011 Proclamation. Commissioner Jennings seconded the motion. The Board voted unanimously in favor of the motion.

## **PRESENTATION OF ENERGY CRISIS INTERVENTION PROGRAM & LOW INCOME ENERGY ASSISTANCE PROGRAM**

Matthew Reese, Food & Nutrition/Adult Medicaid/Emergency Assistance Programs Supervisor, updated the Board on changes made by the state to both the Energy Crisis Intervention Program (CIP) and the Low Income Energy Assistance Program (LIEAP). He began with the CIP program, stating that although the funding received had increased from \$186,240 to \$193,951, the state had changed the eligibility guidelines and counties were no longer able to determine how funding was distributed. The state has also dictated the maximum amount that can be received by families during the year. In years past, Alexander County distributed funding based

on temperature and allowed a maximum of \$375 allotment per year in an effort to conserve money and assist as many families as possible. This year the state has mandated that households must be experiencing a life threatening situation such as no heating or cooling source or a disconnect notice for primary heating source. He also noted that the state changed the maximum allotment to \$600 per household, meaning that fewer families would be helped throughout the year.

The LIEAP program was reduced from \$368,966 to \$43,055. Alexander County's policy has been that eligible families receive an automatic check during the beginning of February; however, the state now requires that payments be made directly to the energy vendor. There will also be no automatic eligibles through the Food & Nutrition Services System as families must now apply for assistance. Applications can be accepted beginning December 1<sup>st</sup> for elderly persons age 60 and above or disabled persons receiving services through the Division of Aging and Adult Services (disabled persons are defined as those receiving supplemental security income, Social Security Administration income, or Veterans Assistance disability). He explained that all members of the household must be age 60 and above or at least one household member must be receiving services through the Division of Aging and Adult Services. All other households can then apply beginning February 1 – March 31, 2012 or until funds are exhausted.

Mr. Reese mentioned the importance of spreading the word to the community, especially to those families that are used to receiving a check in February. He stated that staff would be placing posters in public locations as well as working at congregate meal sites and the Senior Center to set up application meetings and working with the DSS Adult Services Supervisor. He also noted that he had distributed brochures at the Senior Center Health Fair and held an interagency meeting with many different partners in the community. The state also plans to draft a statewide press release to all local media.

The Board asked that Mr. Reese provide a status report later in the year.

## **PERSONNEL POLICY AMENDMENT**

Rick French, County Manager, presented a requested amendment to Section 7 (Limitation on Employment of Relatives) of the Alexander County Personnel Policy. The amendment would allow the employment of immediate family of members of the Board of Commissioners.

Chairman Robertson felt that before this change was made, a Personnel Committee needed to be formed consisting of Commissioners Jennings and Mayberry to review the statutes and policies of other NC counties to determine if this change was feasible.

Chairman Robertson made a motion to table this item until the Personnel Committee has met and come to a conclusion. Commissioner Moose seconded the motion. The Board voted unanimously in favor of the motion.

## **SALES TAX REPORT**

Rick French, County Manager, reported that \$608,611 had been collected so far for the year for Articles 39, 40, and 46. That is \$36,817 more than this time last year or 6.44%. Collections are received 3 months behind.

Chairman Robertson mentioned that the state had changed Article 42 from per capita to point of sale which greatly hurt small, rural counties like Alexander. He stressed the need for that sales tax to revert back to per capita to make it a more fairly distributed tax.

Mr. French pointed out that Alexander County had received \$7 million in sales tax revenues prior to the Medicaid swap and that only \$3,258,200 was budgeted in the 2011-2012 budget.

### **ADOPTION OF 2012 ALEXANDER COUNTY HOLIDAY SCHEDULE**

Chairman Robertson presented the 2012 Alexander County Holiday Schedule as follows:

New Year's Day . . . . .	Monday, January 2, 2012
Martin Luther King Jr.'s Birthday . . . . .	Monday, January 16, 2012
Good Friday . . . . .	Friday, April 6, 2012
Memorial Day . . . . .	Monday, May 28, 2012
Independence Day . . . . .	Wednesday, July 4, 2012
Labor Day . . . . .	Monday, September 3, 2012
Veteran's Day . . . . .	Monday, November 12, 2012
Thanksgiving . . . . .	Thursday & Friday, November 22-23, 2012
Christmas . . . . .	Monday & Tuesday, December 24-25, 2012

Commissioner Yoder made a motion to approve the 2012 Alexander County Holiday Schedule as presented. Commissioner Jennings seconded the motion. The Board voted unanimously in favor of the motion.

### **ADOPTION OF THE 2012 COMMISSIONERS' MEETING SCHEDULE**

Chairman Robertson presented the 2012 Commissioners' Meeting Schedule as follows:

January 9, 2012	July 16, 2012
February 6, 2012	August 6, 2012
March 12, 2012	September 10, 2012
April 2, 2012	October 1, 2012
May 7, 2012	November 13, 2012
June 4, 2012	December 10, 2012
June 18, 2012	

Commissioner Yoder made a motion to approve 2012 Commissioners' Meeting Schedule as presented. Commissioner Jennings seconded the motion. The Board voted unanimously in favor of the motion.

## **BOARD APPOINTMENTS & REAPPOINTMENTS**

Rick French, County Manager, presented the following reappointments:

**Unifour Home Consortium** – Reappoint Rick French for 2 years.

**Building Services Advisory Committee** – Reappoint Clint Canaday, Larry Jenkins, Brent Fox, Mark Foy, Tony Lackey, David Land, Seth Harris, Darrell Robertson, and Ryan Mayberry for one year.

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

Chairman Robertson suggested two committees be formed on which Commissioners Mayberry, Moose, and Jennings would serve including a Land Use and Growth Committee headed up by Commissioner Mayberry and a Minimum Housing Committee headed up by Commissioner Moose. This is in response to comments and needs discussed at the October 24, 2011 work session. He asked that these committees be discussed and considered at the next meeting.

## **BUDGET ORDINANCE AMENDMENTS #16 & #17**

Rick French, County Manager discussed the purpose of Budget Amendments #16 & #17 as follows:

Budget Amendment #16 – To increase the Garage budget due to recently replacing the engines in two ambulances.

Budget Amendment #17 – To budget for the purchase of a 4-wheeler to be given away in the DARE fundraiser raffle.

Commissioner Yoder made a motion to approve Budget Amendments #16 & #17. 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. FEMS will be conducting a nationwide test of the Emergency Alert System on November 9, 2011 at 2:00 PM.
- B. A photo slideshow was presented of progress being made at both the Law Enforcement & Detention Center and the Church Road Water Line Project. Mr. French stated that the projected completion date for the exterior brick at the law enforcement center is November 21<sup>st</sup> and November 28<sup>th</sup> for the roof installation. Electrical work has begun and the slab for the detention center should be poured by January 1, 2012. The projected completion date for the Church Road Water Project is set for November 24<sup>th</sup>. Staff has received approval from the state to complete lines along Sipe and Cornerstore Roads.
- C. Mr. French discussed an Animal Control Weapons Policy for the Board's review. Chairman Robertson made a motion to consider this policy at the November 21<sup>st</sup> meeting. Commissioner Jennings seconded the motion. The Board voted unanimously in favor of the motion.
- D. County employees have met wellness goals for the current year so the County will receive a 5% rate health reduction at renewal, which is equal to about \$95,000.
- E. The water line portion of the Hoyle Keller Loop Project will be bid on December 2<sup>nd</sup>.
- F. The quarry area at Rocky Face Park is being cleared for a picnic shelter, bathrooms, paved parking, and a half-mile handicap accessible trail.
- G. Legislative goals were discussed at the NCACC Tax & Finance Steering Committee meeting on October 18<sup>th</sup>, particularly a bill that would require sales tax reported at zip + 4 which has received widespread support.
- H. Mr. French requested a work session be held immediately following the November 21<sup>st</sup> meeting to discuss projects. The Board agreed.

## **CONSENT AGENDA**

- A. Minutes from the October 17, 2011 Regular Commissioners' Meeting and minutes from the October 24, 2011 work session.
- B. Revisions to Article IX: Workers' Compensation Policy.
- C. Tax Release Requests for October \$4,027.27 and Tax Refunds for October \$1,110.29.

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**

Chairman Robertson made a motion to enter into Closed Session at 7:43 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 Jennings seconded the motion. The Board voted unanimously in favor of the motion.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business, Commissioner Yoder made a motion to adjourn at 8:43 PM. Commissioner Jennings 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