

Draft

**BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**  
**REGULAR MEETING**     July 18, 2016

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

**PRESENT:** Ryan Mayberry, Chairman  
Milton H. Campbell, Vice-Chairman  
Josh Lail  
Ronnie Reese  
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, July 18, 2016 at the CVCC / Alexander Center in Room 103, Taylorsville, North Carolina.

**CALL TO ORDER**

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

**INVOCATION & PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

Commissioner Reese gave the invocation and Commissioner Yoder led the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

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

Commissioner Yoder presented a Key to the County to Mary Wike in recognition of over 62 years of service with Schneider Mills. Ms. Wike began her employment with Schneider Mills on February 18, 1953 and but resigned on November 16, 1955 to move to Michigan for a brief period. She returned on September 10, 1956 and will celebrate 60 years of consecutive service this year.

Vice-Chairman Campbell presented a plaque to EnergyUnited Water Corporation in appreciation of their contribution to the citizens of Alexander County as well as the excellent working relationship with the Board of Commissioners and County staff. The plaque was accepted by Rod Watts, General Manager, and Jerry Durmire, President.

## **ADOPTION OF AGENDA**

Vice-Chairman Campbell made a motion to adopt the agenda as presented. Commissioner Reese seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

## **PUBLIC COMMENT**

The following comments were heard:

Glenn Mays thanked the Board for its continued support of the Independence Day Celebration which was held on July 9, 2016 for the third year. He also conveyed his appreciation to more than 50 businesses and individuals that made financial or in-kind contributions and all vendors who attended, Event Chairperson Donna Perkins and the entire Planning Committee consisting of Leigh Ann Perkins, Matt Cooksey, Russell Greene, Matt Schrum, David Odom, and Rick French, as well as Ben Hines for the state flag display, Rocky Lynne who provided entertainment, the Taylorsville Police Department, Alexander County Sheriff's Department, NC Highway Patrol, and all fire/rescue/EMS personnel that assisted with safety and emergency services, Robin Earp who managed the field games, ACHS and the Board of Education for use of their site and facilities, the media for publicizing the event, and pyro technician Eddie Jolly. He advised that all profits after expenses were paid would benefit Habitat for Humanity.

Melissa "Miss Mel" Hager, Children's Librarian, announced that over 600 Alexander County youth ages birth to 18 have enrolled in the Summer Reading Program and over 4,000 reading hours have been reported so far. Other activities mentioned included a recent Outlandish Exercise Costume Contest, Abby the Therapy Dog on Wednesdays from 2:00-3:00 PM, Preschool Story Time on Tuesdays at 10:00 AM, Big Me Little Me workout program at Reformation Lutheran Church's fellowship hall on Thursdays at 10:00 AM, Game Day Central scheduled for Friday, July 22<sup>nd</sup> at 10:00 AM, and the 6<sup>th</sup> Annual National Teen Lock-In on July 29<sup>th</sup> beginning at 5:30 PM.

Kathy Riddle promoted the Read to Me Program, a partnership between the Alexander County Library, Friends of the Library, and Partnership for Children that began 4 years ago with 7 childcare centers and has grown to 18 centers in every section of the county. She explained that the goal was to promote language skills and a lifelong love of reading to 3-year olds, noting that the program could be expanded to more facilities with the recruitment of additional volunteers.

Connie Killian with the Bethlehem Community Development Association urged the public to attend the 6<sup>th</sup> Annual Bethlehem Day scheduled for Saturday, September 17, 2016 from 10:00 AM until 4:00 PM in the Bethlehem Branch Library parking lot. Activities will include two picking tents, food/arts/crafts vendors, children's activities, and a cruise-in at Shiloh Lutheran Church. A baking challenge will also be held this year.

Rev. Jeff Chapman, Little River Baptist Church and President of Alexander Citizens for Faith & Family Values, felt the intentions to consider yet another alcohol referendum at tonight's meeting was the Board catering to a particular group instead of representing the county as a whole which voted 52.5% in opposition to the March 19, 2013 ABC Referendum. He disagreed that the county's economy was the issue, pointing out that citizens residing in Bethlehem could drive only 5.59 miles (from Taylorsville Savings Bank branch to Taylorsville ABC store) into Taylorsville where alcohol was readily available instead of driving into neighboring counties. He asked the Board if they preferred Alexander County to be a great place to raise children or a place that catered to bars and facilitated alcohol use, a drug that destroyed families and lives. He felt this decision could be costly to the Commissioners' political careers, noting that every dollar raised in tax revenue from alcohol sales would be offset with \$21.42 in public services including welfare, law enforcement, and health care expenditures.

Richard Dickey stated that the question of alcohol and/or an alcohol referendum was not a church issue but a freedom issue and he felt the public had a right to make decisions for themselves rather than be controlled by opinions. He asked for a show of hands of attendees in support of the alcohol referendum.

### **CVCC / ALEXANDER FURNITURE ACADEMY ANNOUNCEMENT**

Linda Graham, CVCC / Alexander Center Executive Director, announced that the first CVCC / Alexander Furniture Academy began on July 11, 2016 with 26 participants who will be trained as sewer operators or upholstery craftsmen. After 24 weeks of instruction, students will graduate with a career readiness certification and a Furniture Academy Certificate. Ms. Graham thanked the Board of Commissioners for their vision for the project as well as the Alexander County Economic Development Corporation, Alexander County Schools, and CVCC.

Dr. Garrett Hinshaw, CVCC President, felt the Furniture Academy was the tip of the iceberg in regards to workforce training in Alexander County. He thanked several individuals including members of the Board of Commissioners, Darrell Robertson, and Rick French as well as founding sponsors Craftmaster Furniture (Roy Calcagne, Roy Beardon, and Kevin Mann), Kincaid Furniture (Steven Little), and Mitchell Gold + Bob Williams (Dan Guthreaux). Also mentioned were scholarship sponsors American Home Furnishings, Craftmaster Furniture, Hancock & Moore, Huntington House, Kincaid / La-Z-Boy, Mitchell Gold + Bob Williams, Paladin Industries, and Taylor King Furniture that raised over \$13,000 for the first Furniture Academy class.

Roy Beardon, Craftmaster Senior Vice President of Manufacturing, also thanked the Board of Commissioners as well as Linda Graham, Darrell Robertson, and all subcontractors. He reported that students would complete 3 weeks of classroom time prior to 21 weeks of hands-on training.

Members of the Board also thanked individuals present everyone involved to make this project a reality.

## **DISCUSSION OF BROADBAND COMMITTEE**

Chairman Mayberry reviewed recent meetings and conference calls with representatives from the NC Department of Commerce, utilities engineers, and fiber optic providers regarding a broadband engineering study for Alexander County. He discussed the need for quality internet service to remote areas of the county as well as for schools and businesses, noting that the installation of fiber optic cable was necessary to begin the process.

Vice-Chairman Campbell mentioned that many areas of Alexander County had no internet service or very slow speeds which were detrimental to home businesses as well as students. He hoped the end result would be broader coverage, higher speeds, and creation of a competitive environment that would prompt better service and rates from current providers.

Chairman Mayberry stated that a Broadband Committee would be formed and he urged citizens with experience in this field to contact the Clerk to the Board with interest in serving on the committee.

## **DISCUSSION OF PROPOSED ABC REFERENDUM**

Chairman Mayberry presented a resolution calling for a countywide alcoholic beverage referendum to be held in conjunction with the November 8, 2016 General Election.

Vice-Chairman Campbell advised the he would make the motion to approve the resolution because he felt the voice of a broader group of voters would be heard, noting that the average voter participation for a Presidential election was 72% compared to the 43% voter turnout for the March 19, 2013 ABC Referendum. He also stated that there would be no added costs (approx. \$25,000 for a special election) by holding the referendum at the same time as the General Election.

Commissioner Reese stated that he respected both sides of this issue as well each person's opinion; however, he felt there were other things the Board should be investing their time and the taxpayers' money on. He added that there were 5 reasons he would be voting in opposition to the resolution, which were his grandchildren.

Commissioner Yoder reported that he would also be voting in opposition tonight based on a statement he made when the Board voted to hold the March 19, 2013 ABC Referendum that he would not vote to hold another ABC referendum unless a petition signed by 35% of registered voters was submitted.

Vice-Chairman Campbell made a motion to approve the resolution calling for a countywide alcoholic beverage referendum to be held in conjunction with the November 8, 2016 General Election. Commissioner Lail seconded the motion, which passed 3 in favor (Commissioners Campbell, Lail, and Mayberry,) and two against (Commissioners Reese and Yoder).

## **DESIGNATION OF VOTING DELEGATE FOR NCACC ANNUAL CONFERENCE**

Vice-Chairman Campbell made a motion to designate Commissioner Yoder to serve as Voting Delegate at the NCACC Annual Conference scheduled for August 11-13, 2016. Commissioner Lail seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

## **NO-COST LEASE AGREEMENT FOR PROBATION & PAROLE**

Rick French, County Manager, presented a 3-year renewal for the no-cost lease agreement with the NC Department of Public Safety for County-provided space to house Probation & Parole. The current lease expires on August 31, 2016. He explained that the County also provided utilities with the exception of telephone as well janitorial and maintenance services, a State-mandate that took effect several years ago, and he noted that sales tax distributions would be withheld from counties who refused to approve the lease.

Vice-Chairman Campbell made a motion to approve the lease agreement renewal for Probation & Parole. Commissioner Reese seconded the motion, which passed 4 in favor (Commissioners Campbell, Lail, Mayberry, and Reese) and one against (Commissioner Yoder).

## **SALES TAX & FINANCIAL REPORT**

Rick French, County Manager, reported that a total of \$3,767,606.71 had been collected in sales tax revenue through July 2016. This amount is 96.83% of the \$3,891,000 budgeted with 91.6% of the budget year expired and an increase over last year of 6.74%.

In addition, he mentioned that revenues for the 2015-2016 budget were at 94% compared to expenses at 88%.

## **OTHER BUSINESS**

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

- A. A bid opening was held on July 14<sup>th</sup> for Rocky Face Park Phase 2. Only one bid was received and it was extremely high; therefore, the project will need to be rebid.
- B. After receipt of several concerns from citizens regarding the Animal Control Ordinance, County Attorney Larissa Erkman, Animal Control Director Jennifer Sigmon, and County Manager Rick French met and identified several areas of needed improvement. Mr. French presented an updated version of the ordinance with provisions added to address required food/water/shelter/veterinarian care, chaining and tethering, unsanitary conditions, leaving animals in closed vehicles, etc. and he recommended approval with an effective date of August 1, 2016.

Commissioner Yoder made a motion to approve the updated Animal Control Ordinance as requested. Vice-Chairman Campbell seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

## **CONSENT AGENDA**

- A. Tax Release Requests (\$1,267.52) and Tax Refunds (\$1,556.62) for June 11 – July 8, 2016.
- B. Minutes from the June 20, 2016 Regular Meeting.
- C. Surplus of the following items:
  - 1999 Chevy Tahoe, VIN #1GNEK13R1XJ527296 with 198,874 miles.
  - 1996 Jeep Cherokee, VIN #1J4FJ27S5TL298617 with 141,483 miles.
  - 2008 Ford Crown Victoria, VIN #2FAFP71V38X172132 with 193,926 miles.
  - 2005 Ford Crown Victoria, VIN #2FAFP71WX5X116435 with 206,377 miles.
  - Seven 30-yard rolls of glass recycling bins.
  - Voting booth with curtains.

Commissioner Reese made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda. Chairman Mayberry seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

## **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 Mayberry made a motion to enter into Closed Session at 7:21 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). Vice-Chairman Campbell seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business, Vice-Chairman Campbell made a motion to adjourn at 8:22 PM. Commissioner Yoder seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

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Ryan N. Mayberry, Chairman

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Jamie M. Starnes, Clerk to the Board