

Draft

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
REGULAR MEETING March 11, 2019

ALEXANDER COUNTY
STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA

PRESENT: Dr. Jeff Peal, Chairman
 Ronnie Reese, Vice-Chairman
 Ryan Mayberry (arrived at 6:03 PM)
 Marty Pennell
 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, March 11, 2019 in Room 103 of the CVCC / Alexander Center in Taylorsville, North Carolina.

CALL TO ORDER

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

INVOCATION & PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

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

*****SPECIAL RECOGNITIONS*****

The following recognitions took place:

- Russell Greene, Emergency Services Director, introduced the new Alexander County Forest Ranger, Mr. David Huffman who is a Hiddenite resident, co-owner of Carmen's Greenhouse, and member of the Hiddenite Volunteer Fire Department and Alexander Wildland Fire Strike Team.
- Vice-Chairman Reese presented a Key to the County to Teresa Smith in recognition of over 20 years of dedicated service with Alexander County DSS. The Board congratulated Ms. Smith on her retirement.

- Commissioner Pennell presented a Key to the County to Cheryl Millsaps in recognition of 32 years of dedicated service with Alexander County DSS. The Board congratulated Ms. Millsaps on her retirement.

COMMISSIONER'S REPORT

Commissioner Pennell reported record-breaking attendance at the Senior Center in January. In addition, he passed along a need for a moveable partition to be placed in the large meeting room at the Senior Center.

Chairman Peal mentioned the following items:

- The Bethlehem Friends of the Library will sponsor their 9th annual book sale on March 22nd from 9:00 AM – 6:00 PM and on March 23rd from 9:00 AM – 2:00 PM at Bethlehem Community Fire and Rescue. A preview sale for Friends of the Library members is set for March 21st from 9:00 AM – 12:00 PM and memberships will also be available at the door.
- Several upcoming Veterans Committee sponsored events include the annual golf tournament on Saturday, March 16th at Brushy Mountain Golf Club, the American Legion Baseball/Softball Team dinner fundraiser event on May 10th, and the Memorial Day Service on May 26th at 3:00 PM on the courthouse lawn.
- He along with Commissioners Pennell, Reese, and Yoder and County Manager Rick French attended the NACo Legislative Conference in Washington D.C. last week where they met with key officials to discuss disaster recovery, the opioid epidemic, broadband, and infrastructure.
- According to the Health Department, there have been two flu-related deaths in Alexander County.

Vice-Chairman Reese also commented on the NACo Conference and participation in a wreath laying ceremony at the Tomb of the Unknown at Arlington Cemetery.

ADOPTION OF AGENDA

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

PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no one present to speak during the Public Comment Period.

FAIR HOUSING CHOICE COMPONENTS ANALYSIS FOR STONY POINT ELEMENTARY SCHOOL CDBG-I PROJECT

Paul Teague, WPCOG Community & Economic Project Developer, presented an Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing Choice Components for Alexander County developed in response to a requirement of the Stony Point Elementary School CDBG-I Sewer Project to engage with the public regarding the Fair Housing Act. Data sources used to complete the analysis included HUD's AFFH, US Census, and American Community Survey info in addition to public outreach efforts by Alexander County in the form of:

- press releases to print and social media outlets
- placement of printed Fair Housing surveys at several County departments and distribution to civic and veterans organizations
- promotion through the local radio station
- maintaining Fair Housing posters in public areas of County offices

Mr. Teague advised that impediments to Fair Housing identified for Alexander County included concentrations of substandard housing and high rates of housing burdens (due to age of housing units and lack of private investment in new neighborhoods since the 2008 Recession) and lack of knowledge of the Fair Housing law. Therefore, the County intends to take part in outreach activities over the course of the CDBG-I grant to address the lack of Fair Housing law knowledge (approximately 3 years).

Commissioner Mayberry made a motion to approve the Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing Choice Components for Alexander County. Vice-Chairman Reese seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

CAROLINA LAND & LAKES PRESENTATION

Melissa Patton, Carolina Land & Lakes RC&D Executive Director, explained that CLL is a 501(c)3 non-profit agency that serves as a bridge between communities, farmers, small business owners, and local/federal/state agencies in the counties of Alexander, Burke, Caldwell, Catawba, Gaston, Iredell, and Lincoln. She gave a slide show presentation of several recent projects and services provided by CLL that included:

- Shuford Dam Removal – partnered with American Rivers and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Services to remove Shuford Dam in Catawba County on the Henry Fork River that was over 100 years old.
- Rocky Face Park – worked closely with Alexander County to create the park and was later awarded a grant to assist with storm water runoff issues to create a wetland habitat for aquatic species.

- Renewable energy and efficiency upgrades – assists farmers and small business owners applying for USDA grants to upgrade energy sources.
- Pellets for Profit Program – working with poultry and vegetable farmers to replace propane heat with wood pellets. Wood pellets are more cost effective and have lower ammonia, carbon dioxide, and humidity. Added benefits for poultry farmers include healthier paws, higher bird weight, and lower mortality rates.
- Mountain Island Educational State Forest – secured \$3.16 million in funding to open the forest to the public along with a welcome center, picnic shelters, walking trails, outdoor classrooms, etc.
- Other programs include STEM projects that teach students the benefits of alternative energy and Firewise USA to educate communities about the risk of wildfire.

Commissioner Mayberry inquired about the incinerating litter on-site at poultry farms. Ms. Patton stated that, although there was some interest in incinerating/pelletizing of litter, research showed it is currently more economical for farmers to use litter as fertilizer.

RESOLUTION CALLING FOR PUBLIC HEARING ON PROPOSED FINANCING OF ALEXANDER COUNTY SERVICES CENTER

Rick French, County Manager, discussed a resolution calling for a public hearing on April 1, 2019 to consider financing approximately \$2 million to reimburse the County for expenditures previously made from Fund Balance for the Alexander County Services Center (formerly known as the Community One Bank Office Building Project) and to cover any remaining costs.

Commissioner Mayberry made a motion to approve the resolution calling for the public hearing on April 1st. Commissioner Pennell seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

HISTORIC PRESERVATION ORDINANCE

Rick French, County Manager, requested consideration of a Historic Preservation Ordinance with the purpose of safeguarding historic landmarks and districts located within Alexander County. Benefits of having a Historic Preservation Ordinance include eligibility for grant funding and tax credits for citizens on qualifying properties.

Once the ordinance is adopted, other actions will be needed such as reactivation of the 5-member volunteer Historic Committee tasked with implementing a countywide preservation program, identification and inventory of historic sites in the county, and submittal of an application to State Historic Preservation Office to become a Certified Local Government following one year of activity.

Vice-Chairman Reese made a motion to approve the Historic Preservation Ordinance. Commissioner Mayberry seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

BUDGET ORDINANCE AMENDMENTS #30 - #33

Rick French, County Manager, reviewed the purpose of Budget Amendments #30 - #33 as follows:

Budget Amendment #30 – To increase the Governing Body budget to contribute \$2,500 towards the \$5,000 cost of the Independence Day Celebration fireworks display.

Budget Amendment #31 – To increase the Sheriff’s Office budget for estimated towing fees for the remainder of the 2018-2019 budget year.

Budget Amendment #32 – To budget for receipt of a non-cash grant in the form of a Multiple Event Response Trailer through Homeland Security to serve the Domestic Preparedness Region 8 of NC and related costs of title and tag.

Budget Amendment #33 – To increase the DSS budget for additional state funds.

Commissioner Mayberry made a motion to approve Budget Amendments #30 - #33. Vice-Chairman Reese seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

SALES TAX REPORT

Rick French, County Manager, reported that a total of \$2,353,371.27 has been collected in sales tax revenue through February 2019 (\$761,136.54 is new sales tax for economic development, public education, and community colleges). This amount is 50.09% of the \$4,698,000 budgeted with 50% of the budget year expired and an increase over last year of 4.01%.

OTHER BUSINESS

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

- A. Due to plans by NCDOT to realign the intersection of County Home Road and Highway 16 South, a portion of force main (installed with a 1998 CDBG grant to Taylor King Furniture) will need to be relocated. Staff recommends transferring ownership of this sewer line to the Town of Taylorsville who has operated and maintained it since its completion.

Commissioner Mayberry made a motion to transfer ownership of the Taylor King sewer line on County Home Road to the Town of Taylorsville as requested. Commissioner Yoder seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

- B. A Community Vision Forum sponsored by the Taylorsville Business Association, Alexander County EDC, and Duke Energy will be held on March 21st at 5:30 PM at McLindon's.
- C. NCACC County Assembly Day is scheduled for May 1st and offers a great opportunity to meet with State representatives.
- D. Commissioner Yoder urged the Board to attend the WPCOG Policy Board Meeting set for March 26th at Brushy Mountain Golf Club.

CONSENT AGENDA

- A. Minutes from the February 4, 2019 Regular Meeting.
- B. Tax Release Requests (\$2,662.47) and Tax Refunds (\$1,634.93) for January 25 – February 28, 2019.
- C. FY 2019 Audit Contract.
- D. Revision to Alexander County Retiree Health Benefits Policy.
- E. NC Community Care Networks, Inc. Participation Agreement.
- F. Surplus a 2010 Dodge Charger Police Unit, VIN #2B3AA4CT8AH303699 and 2012 Dodge Charger Police Unit, VIN #2C3CDXAT7CH316230 (both deemed total loss by insurance provider).

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

CLOSED SESSION – N.C.G.S. 143-318.11(a)(5 & 6) CONTRACTUAL & PERSONNEL

Commissioner Mayberry made a motion to enter into Closed Session at 6:58 PM to discuss contractual matters and personnel issues pursuant to N.C.G.S. 143-318.11(a)(5 & 6). Vice-Chairman Reese seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, Vice-Chairman Reese made a motion to adjourn at 7:58 PM. Commissioner Mayberry seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

Jeffrey P. Peal, Chairman

Jamie M. Starnes, Clerk to the Board