

Draft

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
REGULAR MEETING June 17, 2019

ALEXANDER COUNTY
STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA

PRESENT: Dr. Jeff Peal, Chairman
 Ronnie Reese, Vice-Chairman
 Ryan Mayberry
 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, June 17, 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 Commissioner Mayberry led the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

*****SPECIAL RECOGNITION*****

Anna Beth Harris, 2018-2019 South Central District 4-H President, discussed her 12-year history with 4-H that included many clubs and leadership positions. She informed the Board that she was one of two candidates for the 2019-2020 State Secretary/Treasurer position and that she will represent Alexander County at the Youth Summit in Greensboro in August, part of the NC Association of County Commissioners Annual Conference.

COMMISSIONER'S REPORT

Vice-Chairman Reese attended the grand opening ceremonies of Nickle Pickle's Sweet Treats Bakery on Saturday, June 8th and Bethlehem Direct Care on Wednesday, June 12th, both of which were well attended.

Chairman Peal thanked all law enforcement, emergency response staff, and volunteers for their assistance during the recent flooding and other events where loss of life was a factor.

ADOPTION OF AGENDA

Commissioner Yoder made a motion to adopt the agenda as presented. Commissioner Mayberry seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

PUBLIC HEARING: REZONING CASE 19-4 – ABSHER

John Pilkenton, Director of Planning & Development, presented Rezoning Case 19-4 submitted by Jason Absher who requested rezoning of property located off of Highway 16 South from RA-20 (Residential-Agricultural) to H-C (Highway Commercial) to allow for a vehicle storage lot. The size of the property tract is 3.08 acres. Zoning districts and land uses within 100 feet include RA-20 on all sides along with H-C to the north, south, and west.

After reviewing staff comments related to the size of the tract, compatibility of the disputed zoning action with an existing comprehensive plan, benefits and detriments resulting from the zoning action for the petitioning property owner / neighbors / and surrounding community, and the relationship between the uses envisioned under the new zoning and the current uses of adjacent land, Mr. Pilkenton reported that the rezoning was consistent with the adopted goals and policies of the 2008 Comprehensive Plan which identifies this area as being designated for commercial use. Long-term patterns also suggest that Highway 16 South will develop into a commercial corridor. In addition to a natural vegetative buffer on 3 sides of the property, Mr. Pilkenton pointed out the applicant intends to place a fence with an opaque screening around the lot for security and aesthetic purposes.

Letters were sent by first class mail to property owners within 100 feet of the parcel boundary, a sign was posted on the property, and a notice was placed in *The Taylorsville Times*.

In addition to staff's recommendation for approval, the Planning & Zoning Commission held a public hearing on June 6, 2019 to review the request and voted unanimously to recommend approval based on the following:

1. The rezoning request is consistent with the future land use map in the 2008 Comprehensive Plan and its adopted goals and policies.
2. The request will not negatively impact the surrounding properties with regards to commercial development.

Mr. Pilkenton advised that based on the information provided, the Board must determine whether the rezoning request meets the guidelines set forth and is reasonable in regards to public interest

considering all uses within the requested zoning district, not merely the use that the applicant proposes.

After a motion by Commissioner Yoder, second by Vice-Chairman Reese, and unanimous vote, Chairman Peal called the public hearing to order and requested any comments.

Public Comment

Jason Absher explained that the lot would serve as temporary storage for his towing business, noting that some vehicles towed for law enforcement had a 30-day process for abandonment. He added that the lot would not be a junk yard or an eye sore.

There being no further comments, Commissioner Yoder made a motion to close the public hearing. Commissioner Mayberry seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

Commissioner Yoder made a motion to approve Rezoning Case 19-4 based on recommendations from staff and the Planning & Zoning Commission that the rezoning request is consistent with the future land use map, adopted goals, and policies in the 2008 Comprehensive Plan and would not negatively affect the surrounding properties in regards to commercial development. Vice-Chairman Reese seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

SETTLEMENT OF PARCELS SPLIT BY ALEXANDER & IREDELL COUNTY LINES

Guy Kerley, Tax Administrator, and Tax Assessor Doug Fox were present to discuss the recent settlement of split parcels with Iredell County. Mr. Fox explained that in 1992, Iredell County initiated the accurate defining of their county line with all adjoining counties, noting that prior to completion of the survey, parcels split by the assumed Alexander / Iredell County line were taxed by the county with the highest percentage of land. Since the most recent survey of their county line, Iredell County has been pressing for split parcels to be taxed by both counties by percentage, which has previously been settled when these properties are transferred from one owner to another. He advised that during the past year, Iredell County has requested that all remaining split parcels be settled with an effective date of 2020.

Mr. Fox stated that issues arising from this process include the loss and gain of taxable values for 60 parcels, which he added was about a wash, as well as changes in school and voting districts for the 6 parcels that include residences on the Iredell County side. Current split parcels with deeds recorded in Alexander County are not required to make any changes unless the property is sold in the future. It will then require deeds in both counties.

JUNE 2018 STORM DAMAGE REPORT

Russell Greene, Emergency Services Director, provided a photo slide show of significant damage sustained from the heavy rain and flooding that occurred Friday, June 7th through Sunday, June 9th that resulted in damage to 80 private properties (mostly driveways and culverts) and 4 commercial properties (including two schools). The worst damage occurred on Lake Hickory in Bethlehem to

a home that had 48 inches of water inside the structure. He stated that several bridges had been washed away and 6 or 7 roads were still closed.

Several rescues took place during the weekend due to citizens driving through floodwaters and one citizen needed help leaving her property after Duke Energy opened dam gates that caused water to surround her home. A State of Emergency was issued on Sunday morning and a Code Red message was distributed asking the public to stay home to avoid danger.

Mr. Greene explained that in order to receive state or federal financial assistance, 25 un/underinsured properties must have substantial damage; therefore, he urged citizens to contact the Emergency Services Office to report damage. Although he did not expect Alexander County to meet the threshold, he felt citizens may be eligible for Small Business Administration loans if Catawba County meets their threshold. Cooperative Extension is conducting an investigation of damage to farms and riverbanks and NRCS staff has requested funding from the Emergency Watershed Program to aid in stream repair, debris removal, and bank restoration. If funded, a grant match will be required from Alexander County. In addition, Samaritan's Purse plans to be here tomorrow to determine if they can help.

A 211 call system has been set up for citizens to register their damage. Volunteer organizations will have access to the database and will contact citizens they intend to help. Mr. Greene advised that there was no guarantee assistance would be provided.

Mr. Greene thanked all staff, volunteers, and the many rescue organizations that assisted during the storm. NC Forestry Service Bridge Crew build footbridges to allow citizens access to their homes and Sipe Lumber provided materials at a discounted rate.

ADOPTION OF 2019-2020 ALEXANDER COUNTY BUDGET ORDINANCE

Rick French, County Manager, presented the 2019-2020 Alexander County Budget Ordinance that totaled \$41,983,958.

Commissioner Yoder pointed out that there was no property tax increase, only a small fire tax increase to help provide the necessary tools and equipment our volunteer fire departments need to serve the citizens. He also mentioned that these departments worked hard to maintain or lower their ISO ratings, which also affected homeowner's insurance premiums.

Chairman Peal thanked all department heads and staff involved in preparing the 2019-2020 budget, noting that the current budget was stretched to the max, leaving little room for additional expenses. He stated that the Board tried to be good stewards with taxpayer money; therefore, not every request was funded.

Vice-Chairman Reese added that the Finance Committee as well as the entire Board had met several times to review and discuss the budget, noting that he also appreciated the time and effort put forth by staff. He mentioned that the budget included several projects that would eventually create revenue for the County.

There being no further discussion, Vice-Chairman Reese made a motion to approve the 2019-2020 Budget Ordinance. Commissioner Mayberry seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

2020 CENSUS PARTNERSHIP RESOLUTION

Commissioner Yoder made a motion to approve the 2020 Census Partnership Resolution. Commissioner Mayberry seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

RESOLUTION TO CREATE THE 2020 ALEXANDER COUNTY COMPLETE COUNT COMMITTEE

Commissioner Yoder made a motion to approve the resolution creating the 2020 Alexander County Complete Count Committee. Commissioner Mayberry seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

BOARD APPOINTMENTS & REAPPOINTMENTS

Rick French, County Manager, requested the following appointments:

Consolidated Human Services Advisory Committee – appoint Lora Taraban, Phillip Sprinkle, Dr. Steve McKinnon, and Mollie Lail for 4 years.

2020 Census Complete Count Committee – appoint Chris Meade.

Region E Aging Advisory Committee – Appoint Billie Walker for two years.

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

BUDGET ORDINANCE AMENDMENTS #56 & #57

Rick French, County Manager, reviewed the purpose of Budget Amendments #56 & #57 as follows:

Budget Amendment #56 – To transfer County matching funds for the Broadband ARC Grant Project to the Economic Development Corporation.

Budget Amendment #57 – To adjust the Detention budget for medical invoices for April-June 2019 for an inmate being held in the Central Prison Healthcare System due to issues that exceed the County's ability to accommodate.

Commissioner Yoder made a motion to approve Budget Amendments #56 & #57. Commissioner Pennell seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

OTHER BUSINESS

Rick French, County Manager, advised that the bid opening for the Water System Extension Project was scheduled for Tuesday, June 25th. Four contractors attended the pre-bid meeting on June 11th so staff hopes for at least 3 bids; however, they are expected to be high.

CONSENT AGENDA

- A. Minutes from the May 30, 2019 Work Session and June 3, 2019 Regular Meeting.
- B. Tax Release Requests (\$823.62) and Tax Refunds (\$567.60) for May 25 – June 7, 2019.
- C. NC DHHS FY 2019-2020 MOU for Social Services Programs.
- D. Home and Community Care Block Grant SFY 2019-2020 and Agreement for the Provision of County-Based Aging Services.

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

CLOSED SESSION – N.C.G.S. 143-318.11(a)(4, 5, & 6) ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, CONTRACTUAL, & PERSONNEL

Commissioner Yoder made a motion to enter into Closed Session at 6:57 PM to discuss economic development, contractual matters, and personnel issues pursuant to N.C.G.S. 143-318.11(a)(4, 5, & 6). Vice-Chairman Reese seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, Commissioner Yoder made a motion to adjourn at 7:44 PM. Commissioner Pennell seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

Jeffrey P. Peal, Chairman

Jamie M. Starnes, Clerk to the Board