

Draft

**BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**  
**REGULAR MEETING**     July 22, 2019

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

**PRESENT:**    Dr. Jeff Peal, Chairman  
                  Ronnie Reese, Vice-Chairman  
                  Larry Yoder  
                  Ryan Mayberry (arrived at 6:14 PM)  
                  Marty Pennell

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

The Alexander County Board of Commissioners held a regular meeting on Monday, July 22, 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**

Vice-Chairman Reese gave the invocation and Chairman Peal led the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

**ADOPTION OF AGENDA**

Chairman Peal requested that the Board of Commissioners' Closed Session be held after the Consolidated Human Services Board Meeting instead of before as scheduled.

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

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

Jim Young, resident of Waterside Drive on Lake Hickory, requested the Board enact an ordinance or policy to address the use of firearms in residential areas of the county. He explained that a neighbor across the cove frequently and repeatedly shoots handguns and individuals have also

been seen on the property using weapons with large clips. These incidences have so far occurred on Easter, Memorial Day, the weekend before and on Independence Day and several visits from the Sheriff's Office have not deterred the activity. Mr. Young advised that he served in Vietnam and was a supporter of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Amendment; however, he was concerned for the safety of his neighbors as well as his grandchildren. According to Sheriff Bowman, 30-40 calls related to the firing of weapons are received each month.

## **PUBLIC HEARING: APPROVAL OF ROAD NAMES**

Rick French, County Manager, submitted the following road names for approval:

<u>Road No.</u>	<u>Road Name</u>	<u>Location</u>
3726MB	B and L Lane	Off Liberty Lane
3748MM	Grapes Grove Lane	Off Church Road

In addition, a petition has been submitted to rename Jack Shook Lane to Hill Acres Lane. All names have met required regulations and have been checked for duplication and sound indexing.

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. There being none, Commissioner Yoder made a motion to close the public hearing. Commissioner Pennell seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

Commissioner Yoder made a motion to approve the road names as presented. Commissioner Pennell seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

## **AMERICAN HEART ASSOCIATION AWARD FOR EMS**

Doug Gillispie, EMS Director, announced the Alexander County EMS had received the American Heart Association's Mission: Lifeline Silver Plus Award for its excellence in the treatment of patients who experience severe heart attacks. He stated that the Silver Plus Award was the highest level available to Alexander County since this was the first award year for the agency.

Kevin Richards, EMS Training Officer, explained that the Mission: Lifeline EMS recognition program began in 2014 in an effort to connect EMS providers and hospitals to reduce the heart attack mortality rate. The program measures performance of paramedics who must be knowledgeable and quick when dealing with heart attack patients. He advised that a maximum of 90 minutes between the first contact by EMS and heart surgery at a medical center is crucial, noting that Alexander County's median time was 69 minutes including travel.

Mr. Richards thanked Medical Directors Dr. Joel Inman and Dr. Jonathan Goodnight as well as the Board of Commissioners for support of the EMS Department.

## **COMMISSIONER'S REPORT**

Chairman Peal advised that he had mistakenly skipped over Commissioner's Report earlier in the meeting and asked for any comments.

Vice-Chairman Reese and his family attended the Independence Day Celebration, which he felt was well attended.

Chairman Peal reported that the Finance Committee met with representatives from the School System and CVCC earlier in June to discuss current and future needs of Alexander Early College and the Applied Technologies Center. He also conveyed his appreciation to the Sheriff's Office and all emergency response personnel who have assisted with several tragic events recently, noting that those individuals have lasting memories of those scenes and needed our prayers.

## **NC HIGHWAY 127 WIDENING PROJECT SIDEWALK / MULTI-USE PATH OPTIONS**

Brian Horton, WPCOG Transportation Planning Manager, was present to discuss several pedestrian path options for Highway 127 in conjunction with the NCDOT widening project and to get early stage feedback regarding the Board's wishes. He advised that NCDOT planned to spend approximately \$30 million to create a median-divided 4-lane highway from Cloninger Mill Road in Catawba County to Richey Road in Alexander County. In addition, a new bridge will be constructed parallel to the current one and there is consideration to realign the roadway at Bethlehem Elementary School.

Options included sidewalks on the east side of Highway 127, in-road bike lanes, and a multi-use path for pedestrians and bikes on the west side to the shopping center at the intersection with Rink Dam Road. He advised that members of the Bethlehem Planning Committee as well as citizen attendees agreed that pedestrian paths were needed to help beautify Bethlehem as it grows and better link Alexander with Catawba over the bridge.

Michael Poe, NCDOT Division 12 Project Development Engineer, informed the Board that NCDOT was willing to pay 70% of the option chosen by Alexander County who will be responsible for the remaining 30%. He also mentioned that a change in policy regarding cost shares was in the works that could positively affect the share required by municipalities.

Commissioner Yoder asked what type of payment schedule would be required for Alexander County's share. Mr. Poe replied that some municipalities paid up front and others paid incrementally throughout project construction.

Commissioner Yoder made a motion to move forward with non-binding approval to allow WPCOG and NCDOT staff to design pedestrian path options and return with a strategic plan and costs. Commissioner Mayberry seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

A citizen in the audience asked how the widening would affect the new Bethlehem Baptist Church, currently under construction. Mr. Poe responded that the project was now in the design phase so

nothing had been finalized but he indicated that preliminary plans followed similar alignment by the church. He encouraged citizens to attend a public meeting this fall to review options and provide input on the design.

## **WATER SYSTEM EXTENSION PROJECT BID AWARD & RESOLUTION**

Rick French, County Manager, advised that a bid opening for the Water System Extension Project was held on July 11<sup>th</sup> where 4 bids were received. Buckeye Bridge, LLC was the lowest responsive, responsible bidder with a total bid of \$4,699,248. Mr. French suggested that a contingency of \$117,481 be established and he recommended approval of a resolution of tentative award.

Commissioner Yoder made a motion to award the Water System Extension Project contract to Buckeye Bridge, LLC for \$4,699,248 contingent upon approval by the NCDEQ Division of Water Infrastructure and to establish a contingency of \$117,481. Vice-Chairman Reese seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

Commissioner Yoder also made a motion to approve the Resolution of Tentative Award to Buckeye Bridge, LLC. Vice-Chairman Reese seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

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

Vice-Chairman Reese made a motion to designate Commissioner Yoder to serve as Voting Delegate at the NCACC Annual Conference scheduled for August 22-24, 2019 in Guilford County. Commissioner Mayberry seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

## **BOARD APPOINTMENTS & REAPPOINTMENTS**

Rick French, County Manager, requested the following appointments and reappointments:

Juvenile Crime Prevention Council – Appoint Abby DeJarnette and reappoint Krista Hiatt, Ronnie Reese, Leanne Whisnant, Kristen Icard, and Chris Bowman (Tod Jones as designee), all for two years.

Library Board of Trustees – Appoint Colby Cockrell for 3 years.

Commissioner Yoder made a motion to approve the appointments and reappointments. Commissioner Mayberry seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

## **BUDGET ORDINANCE AMENDMENTS #1 - #5**

Rick French, County Manager, reviewed the purpose of Budget Amendments #1 - #5 as follows:

Budget Amendment #1 – To increase the Sheriff’s Office budget to use Federal Equitable Share Funds for two rifles ordered in FY 2019 that will be delivered in FY 2020.

Budget Amendment #2 – To increase the Sheriff’s Office budget to purchase specialized equipment with Federal grant funds passed through the NC Department of Public Safety, Governor’s Crime Commission.

Budget Amendment #3 – To increase the Sheriff’s Office budget for the use of Unauthorized Substance Tax State funds.

Budget Amendment #4 – To adjust the Water System Extension Project budget for revised costs estimates from the July 11<sup>th</sup> bid opening.

Budget Amendment #5 – To increase the County Water & Sewer Fund local match for the Water System Extension project.

Commissioner Yoder made a motion to approve Budget Amendments #1 - #5. Commissioner Mayberry seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

## **OTHER BUSINESS**

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

- A. Alisha Stamey, Rocky Face Park Ranger, and Mr. French met with WPCOG staff to discuss an Alexander County Parks Plan and the Dusty Ridge Master Plan. A Parks Committee will be appointed at the August 5<sup>th</sup> Commissioners’ Meeting.
- B. Jack Simms, Carolina Land & Lakes RC&D Board Member, and a CLL staff member will provide an update on activities at the August 5<sup>th</sup> Meeting.
- C. Staff is reviewing noise ordinances from a number of other counties in response to several noise complaints including firearm use.

## **CONSENT AGENDA**

- A. Minutes from the June 17, 2019 Regular Meeting.
- B. Tax Release Requests (\$2,002.95) and Tax Refunds (\$3,663.11) for June 8– July 12, 2019.
- C. Request from Sheriff Chris Bowman to surplus a Glock Model 45, Serial #BLAS659 along with 4 magazines, case, and badge to Detective Robert Benfield upon his retirement on September 1, 2019.

- D. Request from Sheriff Chris Bowman to surplus a Glock Model 45, Serial #BLAS654 along with 4 magazines, case, and badge to Chief Deputy Tod Jones upon his retirement in December 2019.
- E. Request from Sheriff Chris Bowman to surplus the following – Remington Model 700P rifle, Serial #G6468446 with Sightron scope and night vision mount (to be traded for newer equipment at Lyndon’s Riverview Sports).

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

## **CONSOLIDATED HUMAN SERVICES BOARD ACTIVITIES**

At 6:51 PM, the Board transitioned into the Consolidated Human Services Board Meeting and proceeded as follows:

- Welcome – Chairman Peal welcomed everyone to what he felt was the dawning of a new era. He stated that the Board had given lots of thought and consideration to the creation of a Consolidated Human Services Agency in an effort to better serve the citizens of Alexander County. Leeanne Whisnant, Consolidated Human Services Director, provided updated organizational charts for DSS, the Health Department, and the Senior Center.
- Public Comment – there was no one signed up to speak.
- Orientation to DSS – Patricia Baker, DSS Director, explained that social services departments were directed under the supervision of the State of NC and the General Assembly, noting that the NCDHHS requires each DSS agency to sign and comply with an MOU pursuant to N.C.G.S. 108A-74. She reviewed programs offered (mandated and un-mandated) as well as the number of individuals assisted and/or benefits paid for child day care, food/nutrition, Medicaid, Work First, CIP/LIEAP energy programs, child support, child protection services including foster/adopt, adult protective services, adult care home services, and guardianship. Other items discussed included assistance with Affordable Care Act applications for people meeting certain criteria each year in November – January, Medicaid Managed Care effective February 2020 that will affect 5,000 of Alexander County’s 7,800 on Medicaid, and quality assurance practices to ensure timelines are met and no payback to the State is required.
- Orientation to the Health Department – Ms. Whisnant reviewed the Health Department’s history along with core functions (pursuant to N.C.G.S. 130A), and programs / services offered. She discussed the accreditation process, required every 4 years, that included 41 benchmarks and 147 activities as well as grants received that have made expanded services possible such as the dental clinic and upgrades to the Health Department (4 more exam rooms, expanded lobby, sliding front door, new pavement). In addition, a behavioral health social worker will be available in the near future.

- Orientation to the Senior Center – Christine Gates, Senior Center Director, provided the Senior Center mission statement, noting that the organization offered Medicare casework for seniors and the disabled as well as exercise classes, social / recreational classes, hobby exploration, and various seminars on topics of interest. After reviewing participation at all 3 branches, she advised that additional space was needed at the main branch as well as a dedicated space in Bethlehem due to growing interest (currently only open two days a week at Mt. Pisgah Lutheran Church which requires daily set-up/tear down for classes). Ms. Gates also reported that staff assisted 421 seniors in saving a total of \$1,110,906 in Medicare costs in 2018 and she gave an overview of funding streams.
- Confidentiality Policy – Ms. Whisnant explained that, since assuming the duties and powers of the DSS Board, the Board of Commissioners/CHSB could possibly be privy to high-level confidential information; therefore, adoption of a policy was needed. She mentioned that the policy outlined how information would be accessed and handled, requiring confidentiality by all members of the CHSB and support team.

Commissioner Yoder made a motion to approve the Confidentiality Policy as discussed. Commissioner Mayberry seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

- Next Meeting Date – Ms. Whisnant stated that the next scheduled CHSB Meeting would be held on September 9, 2019.

Commissioner Mayberry added that the Board truly felt consolidated would help the mission of each of these 3 departments since many of their clients overlapped.

**CLOSED SESSION – N.C.G.S. 143-318.11(a)(3, 4, 5, & 6) ATTORNEY/CLIENT PRIVILEGE, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, CONTRACTUAL, & PERSONNEL**

Upon adjournment of the Consolidated Human Services Board Meeting at 8:09 PM, Commissioner Mayberry made a motion to enter into Closed Session to exercise the attorney/client privilege and to discuss economic development, contractual matters, and personnel issues pursuant to N.C.G.S. 143-318.11(a)(3, 4, 5, & 6). Vice-Chairman Reese seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

**ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business, Commissioner Mayberry made a motion to adjourn at 9:27 PM. Commissioner Yoder seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

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Jeffrey P. Peal, Chairman

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Jamie M. Starnes, Clerk to the Board