

Draft

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
REGULAR MEETING January 10, 2022

ALEXANDER COUNTY
STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA

PRESENT: Ronnie Reese, Chairman
 Marty Pennell, Vice-Chairman
 Kent Herman
 Josh Lail
 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, January 10, 2022 via Zoom in Taylorsville, North Carolina.

CALL TO ORDER

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

INVOCATION & PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Commissioner Yoder gave the invocation and Vice-Chairman Pennell led the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

COMMISSIONER'S REPORT

Vice-Chairman Pennell mentioned visiting Courthouse Park recently, which he felt was coming along nicely.

ADOPTION OF AGENDA

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

PUBLIC COMMENT

No one spoke during the Public Comment Period.

UNITED WAY COMMUNITY NEEDS SURVEY ANALYSIS REPORT

Dr. Dianne Little, Alexander County United Way President, gave a slide show presentation with the results of United Way's community needs survey that included the following information:

- A total of 152 surveys were collected (136 online and 16 paper).
- Countywide rankings (from most to least critical) – #1 education, #2 food insecurity, #3 health care, #4 broadband, #5 homelessness, #6 housing, and #7 transportation.
- Top community rankings – food insecurity in Bethlehem and Stony Point, health care in Ellendale, broadband in Sugar Loaf, and education in Hiddenite, Taylorsville, and Wittenburg.

In response to a question by Vice-Chairman Pennell related to the low number of surveys completed by citizens, Dr. Little felt the pandemic may have played a role in the response or that these issues were possibly not of great importance to many. She mentioned that United Way may sponsor another survey in the future when more in-person promotion options were possible.

2021 ARP WATER EXTENSION PROJECT ENGINEERING AGREEMENT

Rick French, County Manager, presented an agreement with McGill Associates, P.A. to provide engineering and design services for the 2021 ARP Water Line Extension Project. He explained that funding received from the American Rescue Plan Act would be used to install approx. 42,500 linear feet of water lines in the following proposed areas – Stan De La Lane, Bowman Court, Caldwell Pond Road, Jenkins Moose Road, McAlpin Lane, Advent Church Road, Shepherd Court, Hefner Lane, Kirby Lackey Road, Shook Lane, Jimmy Shook Lane, Hickory Hollow Lane, and Laurel Ridge Lane.

Commissioner Yoder made a motion to approve the engineering agreement with McGill Associates for the 2021 ARP Water Line Extension Project. Commissioner Herman seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

NEW COURTHOUSE ARCHITECTURAL SERVICES RFQ

Rick French, County Manager, requested permission to advertise for an architectural services Request for Qualifications for a new Alexander County Courthouse with a submission deadline of February 11, 2022. Once received, staff will score the respondents, conduct interviews, and select a firm who will then work with the recently appointed Courthouse Committee to begin the design process.

Commissioner Yoder made a motion to grant permission to advertise for an architectural services RFQ for the new Alexander County Courthouse. Vice-Chairman Pennell seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

BUDGET ORDINANCE AMENDMENTS #44 - #55 & PROJECT BUDGET ORDINANCES #P-1, #P-2, & #P-3

Rick French, County Manager, reviewed the purpose of Budget Amendments #44 - #55 as well as Project Budget Ordinances #P-1, #P-2, & #P-3 as follows:

Budget Amendment #44 – To increase the Governing Body budget for estimated architectural fees for a new courthouse.

Budget Amendment #45 – To increase the Planning Department budget to add one more day per week to the FY 2022 contract with the WPCOG for technical planning assistance.

Budget Amendment #46 – To increase the Register of Deeds budget for required fees that must be remitted to the State based on revenues collected.

Budget Amendment #47 – To increase the Sheriff's Office budget for use of State funds from Unauthorized Substance Tax distributions to purchase equipment for a K-9 patrol vehicle and to update equipment on an older vehicle.

Budget Amendment #48 – To decrease the JCPC budget for refunds to the NC Department of Juvenile Justice calculated by the FY 2021 JCPC final accounting reports.

Budget Amendment #49 – To budget for FEMA Public Assistance grant funds received requiring an increase in the 1) Fire / Emergency Services budget to reimburse the Town of Taylorsville for damage to Taylorsville Cemetery Road and Matheson Park during Hurricane Eta, and 2) the Public Buildings budget to reimburse the County for damage at Rocky Face Park during Hurricane Eta.

Budget Amendment #50 – To increase the DSS budget for 1) Consolidated Appropriations Act funds to be used for the new LIHWAP Program to provide emergency water assistance and cover partial funding for DSS employees' time executing the program, 2) Families First grant funds passed through Vaya Health to provide children being served through Child Welfare with support services and supplies, and 3) for LIEAP American Rescue Plan Act funds from the State known as Pandemic LIEAP funds.

Budget Amendment #51 – To increase the Library budget for American Library Association grant funds received in May 2021 that was unspent by the end of FY 2021 and carried forward to FY 2022.

Budget Amendment #52 – To adjust the budget for transfers to the School Capital Improvements Fund based on the amount of FY 2021 school sales tax revenue in excess of school debt service payments.

Budget Amendment #53 – To reimburse the Emergency Telephone System Fund for FY 2021 expenditures that were reclassified to the General Fund.

Budget Amendment #54 – To budget for a true-up adjustment of FY 2021 tax revenues compared to disbursements to fire districts.

Budget Amendment #55 – To increase Health Department COVID-19 budget for additional Federal grant funds known as Immunization & Vaccines for Children Grant Amendment Supplement Action.

Project Budget Ordinance #P-1 – To establish a budget for the 2021 ARP Water Line Extension Project using ARPA funds in the amount of \$7,283,353.

Project Budget Ordinance #P-2 – To budget for the 2021 ARP Water Line Extension Project.

Project Budget Ordinance #P-3 – To budget for a NC Department of Commerce Building Reuse Program grant for Paul Robert Chair, Inc.

Commissioner Yoder made a motion to approve Budget Amendments #44 - #55 as well as Project Budget Ordinances #P-1, #P-2, & #P-3. Commissioner Lail seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

AMENDMENT TO WPCOG CONTRACT FOR TECHNICAL PLANNING ASSISTANCE

Rick French, County Manager, discussed an amendment to the current technical planning assistance contract with the WPCOG to add an extra office day each week for an additional \$12,163, bringing the contract total through June 30, 2022 to \$60,815.

Commissioner Herman made a motion to approve the WPCOG contract amendment. Commissioner Yoder seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

PAID TIME OFF FOR EMPLOYEE BIRTHDAYS PROPOSAL

Rick French, County Manager, provided a proposal from the Human Resources Department to reward all full and part-time with benefits employees with paid time off for their birthday, noting that the amount of hours given would be equal to the employee's regular work schedule. For example, general employees will receive 8 hours (or less if part-time with benefits), Sheriff's Office / Detention / 911 will receive 12 hours, and EMS will receive 24 hours.

Vice-Chairman Pennell made a motion to approve the employee birthday paid time off proposal. Commissioner Herman seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

BOARD APPOINTMENTS & REAPPOINTMENTS

Rick French, County Manager, requested the following appointments:

Juvenile Crime Prevention Council – appoint Eugene Smith for two years.

ABC Permit Official – appoint Sheriff Chris Bowman.

Commissioner Lail made a motion to approve the appointments. Commissioner Yoder seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

Commissioner Herman made a motion to approve the resolution appointing the Alexander County Sheriff as the official to sign off on ABC permit applications. Commissioner Yoder seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

OTHER BUSINESS

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

- A. The dedication for Courthouse Park and the splash pad is being planned for May 15, 2022.
- B. Our IT Director for the past 22 years, Greg Cronk, will be retiring effective April 1, 2022.
- C. Chairman Reese made a motion to continue the public hearing for Nuisance Case #14726 (David Elder on Jimmy Duncan Lane) until the February Commissioners' Meeting. Commissioner Herman seconded the motion, which passed 4 in favor (Commissioners Herman, Lail, Reese, and Yoder) and one abstention (Commissioner Pennell due to a real estate connection).

CONSENT AGENDA

- A. Tax Release Requests (\$4,332.03) and Tax Refunds (\$24,891.50) for November 19 – December 31, 2021.
- B. Minutes from the December 6, 2021 Regular Meeting.
- C. Application for I-CARE CSBG funding for Iredell and Alexander Counties for 2022-2023.
- D. Amendment to the Rules of Procedure for the Alexander County Board of Commissioners.

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

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

Chairman Reese made a motion to enter into Closed Session at 6:37 PM for the purpose of 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). Commissioner Herman seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, Commissioner Yoder made a motion to adjourn at 7:30 PM. Vice-Chairman Pennell seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

Ronnie L. Reese, Chairman

Jamie M. Starnes, Clerk to the Board