

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
REGULAR MEETING August 5, 2024

ALEXANDER COUNTY
STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA

PRESENT: Josh Lail, Chairman
Ronnie Reese, Vice-Chairman
Kent Herman
Marty Pennell
Larry Yoder

STAFF: Ben Faulkenberry, County Attorney / Interim County Manager
Jamie Starnes, Clerk to the Board

The Alexander County Board of Commissioners held a regular meeting on Monday, August 5, 2024 in Room 103 of the CVCC / Alexander Center in Taylorsville, North Carolina.

CALL TO ORDER

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

INVOCATION & PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

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

COMMISSIONER'S REPORT

Commissioner Pennell encouraged citizens to pay attention to weather forecasts this week and be mindful of flooding during the expected heavy rain from Tropical Storm Debby, especially in low-lying areas and on bridges.

ADOPTION OF AGENDA

After requesting the addition of comments by Dr. Bill Griffin, Alexander County Schools Superintendent, Chairman Lail made a motion to adopt the agenda as amended. Commissioner Yoder seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Alvin Woody spoke in opposition to the Alexander County Senior Center being utilized as an early voting site for the 2024 General Election, noting that the center offered essential services to a growing population. He pointed out that the facilities recently offered to temporarily host Senior Center activities could just as easily be used for early voting to avoid a 3-week displacement of the seniors.

Judy Woodward presented the Chairman with a petition to hold early voting at an alternate location due to the negative impact to seniors who use the Senior Center. She felt the elderly citizens in Alexander County were being discriminated against and hoped the issue would be resolved prior to a scheduled interview with a television station.

BUDGET ORDINANCE AMENDMENTS #5 - #11

Ben Faulkenberry, County Attorney / Interim County Manager, reviewed the purpose of Budget Amendments #5 - #11 as follows:

Budget Amendment #5 – To increase the Health Department budget for the addition of 1) Special Supplemental Nutrition Program grant funds for WIC, 2) Communicable Disease Pandemic Recovery grant funds, and 3) state grant funds from the ARPA Temporary Savings Fund for essential public health services.

Budget Amendment #6 – To increase the Health Department budget for dental grant funds carried forward from FY 2022 and recorded as revenue in FY 2023 and also for Maternal Health and Care Management for High-Risk Pregnancy carry forward revenues.

Budget Amendment #7 – To increase the IT budget for federal Homeland Security grant funds passed through the NC Department of Public Safety for the State and Local Cybersecurity Program and to adjust the 911 Communications budget to reduce estimated revenue for a EMPG grant and budget for a NCDPS Capacity Building Competitive grant reimbursement.

Budget Amendment #8 – To increase the 16 West Main Avenue Downtown Revitalization Project Fund (formerly known as Housing our Teachers) budget for receipt of a Rural Downtown Economic Development grant.

Budget Amendment #9 – To adjust the multi-year grant project budget for the American Rescue Plan Special Revenue Fund to reimburse the General Fund for eligible FY 2022 salaries and benefits with ARPA funds originally allotted for the ARPA Water Extension Project.

Budget Amendment #10 – To adjust the ARPA Water Extension Project multi-year budget to use remaining ARPA funds to reimburse certain General Fund FY 2022 salaries and benefits.

Budget Amendment #11 – To increase the General Fund to allow transfers of monies between the ARPA Water Extension Project budget and ARPA Special Revenue Fund to meet grant deadlines.

Mr. Faulkenberry clarified that Budget Amendments #9, #10, and #11 simply allowed for funds to be moved within the County budget to meet ARPA grant deadlines and continue progress on the ARPA Water Extension Project without interruption.

Commissioner Yoder made a motion to approve Budget Amendments #5 - #11. Commissioner Herman seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

CONSENT AGENDA

- A. Tax Abatements & Adjustments (\$5,915.63) and Tax Refunds (\$1,268.03) for July 8-28, 2024.
- B. Minutes from the July 15, 2024 Regular Meeting.
- C. Line-Item Transfer Report for July 9-19, 2024.
- D. Board / Committee Appointments – Alexander County ABC Board.
- E. Agreement with the WPCOG for assistance with a NC Rural Downtown Economic Development Grant for the 16 West Main Avenue Downtown Revitalization (formerly known as Housing our Teachers) Project.
- F. Request from Sheriff Chad Pennell to surplus two Glock 43x 9mm pistols (Serial #BVLT651 and #BLLN581).
- G. Request from Sheriff Chad Pennell to surplus a Glock 45 9mm pistol with Holosun red dot sight (Serial #CBHM873) to be presented to Major Jason Moore at his retirement.
- H. Contract to purchase 0.02 acres (90ft x 100ft) in the Bethlehem Township for a future booster pump station.

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

COUNTY MANAGER'S REPORT

Ben Faulkenberry, County Attorney / Interim County Manager, reviewed the following:

- The fire classification for the Bethlehem Fire District has been improved to a Class 4/9E, up from a Class 6/9E. Class 4 applies to commercial properties with a flow of 3,500 gallons per minute or less within 5 miles of a fire department. Class 9E applies to all other properties within the fire district outside of the 5-mile radius, but no more than 6 miles.
- Condolences were given to the family of Luther Stocks, former Alexander County Tax Administrator, who passed away on July 27, 2024.

SPECIAL COMMENTS

Dr. Bill Griffin, Alexander County Schools Superintendent, thanked the Board for their service and spoke briefly about working together and strengthening communication between the County and School System.

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

Vice-Chairman Reese made a motion to enter into Closed Session at 6:26 PM to discuss economic development, contractual matters, and personnel issues pursuant to N.C.G.S. 143-318.11(a)(4, 5, & 6). Commissioner Yoder seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

ADJOURNMENT

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

Joshua D. Lail, Chairman

Jamie M. Starnes, Clerk to the Board