

MINUTES  
REGULAR SCHEDULED MEETING OF THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS  
OF EDGECOMBE COUNTY  
AUGUST 2, 2021 AT 7:00 P.M.  
IN THE JONATHAN FELTON COMMISSIONERS' ROOM  
COUNTY ADMINISTRATIVE BUILDING  
TARBORO, NORTH CAROLINA

\*\*\*\*\*

1. MEETING CALLED TO ORDER BY CHAIRMAN LEONARD WIGGINS AT 7:00 P.M.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Mr. Leonard Wiggins, Chairman, Rev. E. Wayne Hines, Vice-Chairman, Mr. William Wooten, Mr. Donald Boswell, Mrs. Viola Harris, Mr. Ralph Webb and Mrs. Evelyn Powell.

MEMBERS ABSENT: None.

OTHERS PRESENT: Mrs. Natalie Bess, Deputy County Manager, Mr. Michael Peters, County Attorney and Ms. Frangie Mungo, Clerk to the Board.

ABSENT: Mr. Eric Evans, County Manager.

2. SAFETY INSTRUCTIONS.

Mrs. Bess provided safety instructions.

3. PRAYER.

Rev. Hines provided prayer.

4. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS PRESENTED FOR APPROVAL.

Rev. Hines moved to approve the minutes of the July 6, 2021 meeting as presented. Mr. Wooten seconded the motion, which carried by unanimous vote.

5. SCHEDULED APPOINTMENTS.

A. Mike Causey, NC Commissioner of Insurance, presented a volunteer award and grant presentations to local fire departments.

Mr. Mike Causey came forth to present Mr. Will Wooten a special award. Mr. Causey stated that Mr. Wooten was going to raise \$2800 for turnout gear for the Heartsease Volunteer Fire Department for his Eagle Scout Project by selling donuts and by doing other things. He was so successful that he did not stop at the \$2800, he raised \$25,000. Mr. Causey stated that on behalf of the State of North Carolina, he presented to Mr. Wooten from the North Carolina Department of Commissioners Award in sincere appreciation for all he has done for the citizens of North Carolina.

Mr. Will Wooten thanked everyone who made this possible.

Mr. Will Wooten is the son of Margaret Anne and Commissioner William (Billy) Wooten.

In addition, Commissioner Causey presented ceremonial grant checks totaling more than \$175,000 to eight volunteer fire departments. They are the Conetoe, Heartsease, Leggett, Lewis Community, Pinetops, Princeville, Speed and West Edgecombe volunteer fire departments.

B. Karen Lachapelle, Health Director, to present COVID-19 update.

Mrs. Lachapelle stated that as of July 26, 2021, reported to her by the DHHS Edgecombe County has 5,818 cases of COVID-19, six new cases per day average last month. We still have Optum Serve testing at Heritage Park in Princeville and at Pinetops behind Town Hall. You can still be tested at Freedom Hill, Vidant Multispecialty Clinic and OIC.

Mrs. Lachapelle provided COVID-19 case information relative to total cases, age groups, gender, race, hospitalizations, deaths (age, gender); number of vaccines given, sites participating in vaccination clinics. She stated that we have a decline in the number of vaccines they are giving daily at the Health Department. They have reduced the number of COVID Vaccine Clinics to Thursdays and Fridays, 9 am to 4 pm in both offices. They are getting ready to start their community outreach.

Mrs. Lachapelle answered questions from the Board.

Mrs. Bess stated that Mr. Evans estimates that the vaccination rate of our active employees to be around 42%. To incentivize more employees to get vaccinated, he suggests that we have a drawing. Every employee who provides proof of vaccination would be entered into the drawing for the following prizes. If the Board approves he will determine the details and timing of the redrawing.

- 5-8 hours administrative leave
- 10-\$25 gift cards
- 5-\$50 gift cards
- 2-\$100 gift cards
- 1-\$500 gift card

Mr. Wooten moved to approve the vaccine incentive for employees as presented. Mrs. Powell seconded the motion, which carried by unanimous vote.

Mrs. Lachapelle announced that tonight's meeting will be her last. Her retirement date is September 1, 2021. She introduced Mrs. Michelle Etheridge as interim Director.

The Board thanked Mrs. Lachapelle for her service.

C. Tarasa Lewis, Tax Administrator, presented the 2020 Annual Settlement, discuss revaluation schedule and a refund request.

Mrs. Bess stated that in addition to the Annual Tax Collectors Settlement, Tarasa Lewis will discuss the notification received from the State recommending we advance our schedule for revaluation, as well as a request for refund from a tax payer due to an error on the tax record.

Mrs. Lewis stated that tax collections rate was 96.24%, an increase of 1.74

Mrs. Harris moved to approve the Tax Collector's Settlement as of June 30, 2021 and recharge the Tax Collector with collecting taxes for years 2011 through 2021. Mr. Boswell seconded the motion, which carried by unanimous vote.

Mr. Boswell moved to approve the recommendation to conduct the countywide revaluation project effective January 2024. Mrs. Powell seconded the motion, which carried by unanimous vote.

Mrs. Lewis provided information on a letter received by taxpayer Mr. Derius Swinton regarding a request for refund due to an error on the tax record and her recommendation of no refund. After discussion on this matter, the Board accepted the recommendation of Mrs. Lewis.

6. PUBLIC PETITIONS.

None.

7. OTHER BUSINESS:

A. Consideration of approval of budget amendments.

**Rev. Hines moved to approve the budget amendments as presented. Mrs. Harris seconded the motion.**

**Mr. Wooten stated that he added the totals and it came up to \$1,172,000 from various accounts appropriated out of fund balance and the Budget Committee has not had the opportunity to look at it.**

**Mrs. Katherine Lancaster, Finance Director, came forth to provide an explanation.**

**Rev. Hines withdrew his motion and Mrs. Harris withdrew her second.**

**After Board discussion the budget amendments were acted on individually.**

**Budget Amendment #1:**

**Mr. Wooten moved to approve. Mr. Boswell seconded the motion, which carried by unanimous vote.**

**Budget Amendment #2:**

**Mr. Wooten moved to approve. Mrs. Harris seconded the motion, which carried by unanimous vote.**

**Budget Amendment #3:**

**Mr. Wooten moved to approve. Mr. Webb seconded the motion, which carried by unanimous vote.**

**Budget Amendment #4:**

**Mr. Wooten moved to approve. Rev. Hines seconded the motion, which carried by unanimous vote.**

**Budget Amendment #5:**

**Mr. Wooten moved to approve. Mrs. Powell seconded the motion, which carried by unanimous vote.**

**Budget Amendment #6:**

**Mr. Wooten moved to approve. Mrs. Harris seconded the motion, which carried by unanimous vote.**

**Budget amendment #7: To appropriate funds from fund balance to cover total BIO TECH lease payments for FY 2022; Inadvertently calculated wrong in the original approved FY 2022 budget.**

**Tabled.**

**Budget amendment #8: To appropriate funds from fund balance to cover funding approved for the Forestry Service; Inadvertently left out of the original FY 2022 budget.**

**Tabled**

**Budget amendment #9: To appropriate funds from fund balance to cover expenses for EMS equipment and vehicles; This includes expenses incurred last fiscal year (Unused balance from FY 2021), but not paid for due to delays resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic in addition to a maintenance agreement contract on Stryker new and used power stretchers and power load system on trucks.**

**Tabled**

**Budget amendment #10:**

Mr. Wooten moved to approve. Mr. Boswell seconded the motion, which carried by unanimous vote.

**Budget amendment #11:**

Mr. Wooten moved to approve. Mrs. Powell seconded the motion, which carried by unanimous vote.

**B. Approval of Paramedic Field Training Officer position.**

Mrs. Bess stated that since transitioning Emergency Medical Services in-house, we have realized the need to add a Field Training Officer position. This is a paramedic level position that includes duties of assisting and training EMS staff, especially newly hired staff. This will help to ensure quality of emergency medical services provide. This position will be a grade 16 on the salary scale and if approved we will transition four positions already budgeted to the FTO.

Mr. Boswell moved to approve adding the field Training Officer position as recommended. Mr. Wooten seconded the motion, which carried by unanimous vote.

**C. Approval of Revision of Capital Improvement Plan for FY-21.**

Mr. Boswell moved to table this item. Mrs. Powell seconded the motion, which carried by unanimous vote.

**D. Approval of NC Highway Safety Grant for the Sheriff's Office.**

Mrs. Bess stated that Sheriff Atkinson has been approved to receive a Traffic Safety Grant from the NC Governor's Highway safety Program. This \$109,796 will allow for the addition of a deputy in the Sheriff's Office who will focus on traffic safety and awareness. The grant requires a 15% match, which will be provided through personnel funds already budgeted to the Sheriff's Office. This is a three-year grant, and the local match will increase for 15% to 30% and then to 50%.

Mrs. Powell moved to approve the grant agreement as presented and authorize a budget amendment in the appropriate lines for this grant. Mr. Webb seconded the motion, which carried by unanimous vote.

**E. Approval of request to amend timeline for Corning Inducement Agreement.**

Mrs. Bess stated that we have received a request from officials with Corning, Inc. to amend the Development and Incentive Agreement. Being that the land transferred to Corning later than expected when the agreement was approved, the timeline for construction and completion of the facility was moved back. At the previously agreed upon incentive schedule, Corning will only receive nine years of annual inducement payments. Being that it was our intent, and their understanding, to incentivize the location of Corning's new facility here in Edgecombe County with ten years of inducement payments, it is recommended that the Board approve the revision to the inducement schedule.

Mr. Boswell moved to approve the request as presented. Mr. Wiggins seconded the motion, which carried by unanimous vote.

**F. Approval of offer to purchase County-owned lot on NC 42 East.**

Mrs. Bess stated that an offer to purchase was received from Darius Smith to purchase property the County owns at NC 42 East in Tarboro. This property was acquired through tax foreclosure. The offer is for \$1,000. If the offer to purchase is accepted by the board, a minimum 10-day public notice must then be given for upset bid.

**Property information**

**Address: NC 42 East**

**Tax ID#: 4734-17-1144**

**Acreage: <1 acre (192' x 204')**

**Tax Value: \$12,000.00 (land only)**

**Cost to County (Back taxes and legal fees): \$4,457.21**

**In order to remove this liability from the County's ownership, to recoup the costs the County has in the property, and to return it to taxable status, it is recommended that the Board of Commissioners accept this offer to purchase and direct staff to publish the aforementioned public notice.**

**Mr. Boswell moved to approve the offer to purchase as presented and authorize staff to publish the required public notice. Mrs. Powell seconded the motion, which carried by unanimous vote.**

**G. Approval of Home & Community Care Block Grant Funding.**

**Mrs. Bess stated that in accordance with the procedures for funding of the Home and Community Care Block Grant, a recommendation for the allocation of FY-22 funding is presented for Board consideration. Edgecombe County is being awarded \$571,363 for FY-22, which is an increase of .03% from the \$571,211 awarded in FY-21. The total request from providers is (\$640,150) was \$68,687 more than the funding available to the County. After much valuable discussion, presentations from providers and guidance from the Upper Coastal Plains Council of Governments Area Agency on Aging, the attached plan is being recommended. We believe this reflects the needs of Edgecombe County's aging population and the best use of the available funding.**

**Mr. Harris moved to approve the funding plan for the home and Community Care Block Grant as presented. Mrs. Powell seconded the motion, which carried by unanimous vote.**

**8. APPOINTMENTS.**

**A. Tarboro-Edgecombe Arts Commission.**

**Mr. Wooten moved to appoint Ms. Tonja Musick. Mr. Boswell seconded the motion, which carried by unanimous vote.**

**9. AFTERLISTS AND RELEASES FOR REVIEW AND APPROVAL.**

**Mr. Wooten moved to approve the afterlists and releases as presented. Mrs. Powell seconded the motion, which carried by unanimous vote.**

**10. CONTRACTS FOR REVIEW AND/OR APPROVAL.**

**Mrs. Powell moved to approve the contracts as presented. Mrs. Harris seconded the motion, which carried by unanimous vote.**

**11. DEPARTMENTAL REPORTS FOR REVIEW. \*\*\*Received\*\*\***

**A. Water Services.**

**B. Financial Summary report.**

**C. Elections- Candidate filings and redistricting.**

**12. MANAGER'S REPORT.\*\*\*Received\*\*\***

**A. Workforce Development indicators.**

**B. Update on Opioid Settlement.**

**C. Proposed date for Final Work Session on the Unified Development Ordinance Update – August 19, 2021 at 10 a.m.**

**13. COMMISSIONERS' REPORT.**

**None.**

14. **ATTORNEY'S REPORT.**

None.

15. **CLOSED SESSION.**

Mr. Wooten moved to go into closed session to discuss:

A. Economic Development. [N.C.G.S. 143-318.11 (a)(4)]

B. Legal Matter. [N.C.G.S. 143-318-11 (a)(3)]

Mr. Boswell seconded the motion, which carried by unanimous vote.

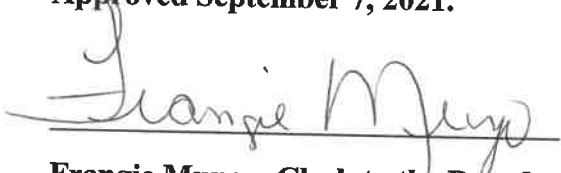
Rev. Hines moved to go out of closed session and resume the regular meeting. Mr. Boswell seconded the motion, which carried by unanimous vote.

Mr. Boswell moved to put back on the table the consideration to approve the contract with Ainsley Construction for the roof repair for Rocky Mount DSS. Mr. Webb seconded the motion, which carried by unanimous vote.

Mr. Boswell moved to approve the contract with Ainsley Construction. Mr. Wooten seconded the motion, which carried by a vote of 6 for and 3 against. Mr. Wiggins and Mrs. Powell voted against the motion.

16. **MR. BOSWELL MOVED TO RECESS THE MEETING UNTIL THURSDAY, AUGUST 19, 2021 AT 10:00 A.M. MR. WOOTEN SECONDED THE MOTION, WHICH CARRIED BY UNANIMOUS VOTE.**

Approved September 7, 2021.



Frankie Mungo, Clerk to the Board