

MINUTES
REGULAR SCHEDULED MEETING OF THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
OF EDGECOMBE COUNTY
SEPTEMBER 7, 2021 AT 7:00 P.M.
IN THE CARMON AUDITORIUM
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, Mrs. Viola Harris, Mr. Ralph Webb and Mrs. Evelyn Powell.

MEMBERS ABSENT: Mr. Donald Boswell.

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

2. SAFETY INSTRUCTIONS.

Mrs. Bess provided the safety instructions.

3. PRAYER.

Rev. Hines provided the prayer.

4. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING PRESENTED FOR APPROVAL.

Mrs. Harris moved to approve the minutes of the August 2, 2021 meeting as presented. Rev. Hines seconded the motion, which carried by unanimous vote.

5. SCHEDULED APPOINTMENTS.

A. Recognition of the South Edgecombe Summer Recreation Program.

Mr. Webb came forth recognize the young team that finished 3rd in the State, with an all star record of 7-2. Mr. Webb introduced the coaches. Coach Turner introduced the other coaches and he also introduced the team members.

The Board congratulated the coach and the team.

B. Michelle Etheridge, Interim Health Director, to present COVID-19 update.

Mrs. Etheridge stated that to date, reported to her by the DHHS Edgecombe County has 6488 cases of COVID-19, 121 deaths. 17,000 vaccines administered to date. 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. She 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. Mr. Evans stated that we are trying to encourage people to get vaccinated. Our vaccination rate is relatively low. Mr. Evans called up Mr. Nyreke Peters, Lead for North Carolina Fellows Intern. His task while he is with Edgecombe County is to improve our communication with citizens in regards to COVID vaccine. Mr. Evans stated that Mr. Peters has prepared a video that has been published on the County's YouTube Channel and will be sent out in other ways. He stated that he wanted the Board to see the video at tonight's meeting.

Mr. Nyreke Peters came forth and introduced himself and showed the video.

6. PUBLIC PETITIONS.

None.

7. **OTHER BUSINESS:**

A. Approval of budget amendments.

Mr. Webb moved to approve the budget amendments as presented. Mr. Wooten seconded the motion, which carried by unanimous vote.

Mr. Evans stated that repairs from the WIC grant was bid out and he recommended that the Board approve the contract with Long's Home Improvement for \$56,700.

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

B. Adoption of Parks & Recreation Master Plan.

Mr. Evans stated that in 2019 we convened the Parks and Recreation Tax Force to explore how we can develop and improve access to recreational opportunities for our citizens. The work of this group built upon the County's efforts through the Recreation Mini-Grant program, which we began in 2017. The work of the Task Force has resulted in many forward steps, including the Parks and Recreation Master Plan, which he presented for the Board's consideration. Mr. Evans stated that this plan sets out as a primary goal to create a Parks and Recreation Department, which will ensure the ongoing work of improving the quality of life for our citizens. But also detailed in the plan are the various efforts undertaken by the Task Force which lead to the recommended actions. Yvonne Murphy, Health Matters Associate with Cooperative Extension, and Task Force Chairperson, will present some background on the process. Mr. Evans stated that he will review key components of the plan, including the recommended action steps. He recommended that at the conclusion of the presentation that the Board adopt the Edgecombe County Comprehensive Parks and Recreation Plan as presented.

Ms. Yvonne Murphy, call forth to provide additional information and to answer any questions from the Board.

Mrs. Powell moved to approve the plan as presented. Mr. Webb seconded the motion, which carried by unanimous vote.

C. Approval of Resolution to Support the Safe Routes to School Program.

Mrs. Powell moved to approve the resolution as presented. Rev. Hines seconded the motion, which carried by unanimous vote.

D. Approval of Bad Debt Write-off for the Health Department.

Mr. Evans stated that the Edgecombe County Health Department's Bad Debt Write Off Policy states that a patient's account will be handled as Bad Debt when there has been no activity on the account for more than six months. This does not mean that there will be no further efforts to collect the debt. In fact, if there is any activity on the account, for example the patient presents at the Health Department for services, then the account is reactivated. This action is an accounting method whereas the written off debt no longer shows on our books as a receivable.

Mr. Harris moved to approve the Bad Debt Write-off for the Health Department as recommended by the Human Services Board. Mrs. Powell seconded the motion, which carried by unanimous vote.

E. Approval of the selection of firm to provide redistricting services.

Mr. Evans stated that the Board is required to adopt a resolution containing the revised electoral districts on or before November 17, 2021 resulting from the 2020 Census. Mr. Peters prepared a Request for Proposals which was published on the County's website and the NC Procurement website to solicit responses from qualified firms. We also mailed the RFP directly to firms we believed might be interested in submitting a proposal. We have received only one response as of Friday and as of today we received a second response in which they have not yet had the opportunity to review. Mr. Evans stated that he wanted to revise his recommendation that was in the agenda package and recommended that the Board hold off on approving this contract to allow them to extend the deadline to see if we will received other submissions. He recommended that the Board call for a special meeting on September 15, 2021 at 2:00 p.m. to approve a contract at that time.

Mr. Webb moved to call for a special meeting as recommended. Mrs. Powell seconded the motion, which carried by unanimous vote.

F. Approval of request to increase Edgecombe County Board of Education stipend.

Mr. Evans presented a letter from Dr. Valerie Bridges, Superintendent, requesting the Board to consider approving an increase of the Board of Education's stipend by \$200. If approved effective this month, that will be an additional cost of \$14,000 for current expense funding for the remainder of this fiscal year.

Mr. Wiggins moved to approve the stipend increase. Mrs. Powell seconded the motion, which carried by a vote of 5 to 1. Mr. Wooten opposed.

G. Approval of calling for a public hearing regarding changes to the Animal Services Ordinance.

Mr. Evans stated that the Animal Services Advisory Council is recommending additional changes to the Animal Services Ordinance. The changes they recommend are in Article III Inherently Dangerous Animals. They include: additions to the types of snakes that are prohibited; required documents for registration; and a recommended increase from \$50 to \$500 for civil penalties. In Section 4-34 the Advisory Council recommends additional provisions regarding the adoption of animals. These changes require a public hearing. Mr. Recommended that the Board call for a public hearing for October 4, 2021.

Rev. Hine move to call for a public hearing at the October 4, 2021 Board of Commissioners meeting. Mrs. Harris seconded the motion, which carried by unanimous vote.

H. Approval of request to retire K-9 in Sheriff's Office.

Mr. Evans stated that Sheriff Atkinson is requesting the Board to consider the retirement of K-9 Max for the reasons provided. In addition, he asks that the Board allow Max to be purchased by his handler Sgt. Kenneth Wooten for the sum of \$1.00.

Mr. Webb moved to approve the request as recommended by Mr. Evans. Mrs. Harris seconded the motion, which carried by unanimous vote.

I. Approval of Forestry Services Agreement.

Mrs. Powell moved to approve the agreement as presented. Rev. Hines seconded the motion, which carried by unanimous vote.

J. Approval of Resolution Authorizing Application to Distressed

Community/Viable Utility Reserve Program.

Mr. Evans presented resolution to the Distressed Community/Viable Reserve Program to submit an application through their Asset and Inventory Assessment (AIA) grant program to conduct a water system and rate study. Edgecombe County, along with 99 other Utilities throughout North Carolina were recently deemed a Viable Utility. Current funding is available for Viable Utilities and we expect more funding to become available in the Spring of 2022. While conducting these studies does not particularly increase our chances of being funded, it does put us in a better position to see what issues are more prevalent throughout our water system.

Mrs. Harris moved to approve the resolution a presented. Mrs. Powell seconded the motion, which carried by unanimous vote.

8. APPOINTMENTS.

A. Board of Adjustment.

Mr. Webb moved to re-appoint Eleanor Battle-Sharpe and Maria el Faysal. Rev. Hines seconded the motion, which carried by unanimous vote.

9. PLANNING BOARD REPORT. *Received*****

A. Proposed amendment to the UDO public hearing called for by the Board of Commissioners to be held on November 1, 2021.

B. Minutes of August 9, 2021 meeting.

10. 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.

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

A. Water Services.

B. Financial Summary report.

C. Register of Deeds – E-filing through Simplifile is now available.

12. MANAGER’S REPORT.*Received*****

A. Introduction of Paul Moseley as the new Utilities Director.

Mr. Evans recognized Mr. Moseley.

Mr. Moseley came forth and introduced himself to the Board.

B. Workforce Development indicators.

C. Community Voices Initiative.

D. Sales Tax report.

13. COMMISSIONERS’ REPORT.

A. Commissioner Viola Harris’ appointment to NACo committees.

- Healthy Counties Advisory Board
- Immigration Reform Task Force
- Membership Standing Committee
- Rural Action Caucus

14. ATTORNEY’S REPORT.

None.

15. CLOSED SESSION.

Rev. Hines moved to go into closed session to discuss:

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

B. Personnel Matter. [N.C.G.S. 143-318.11 (a)(3)]

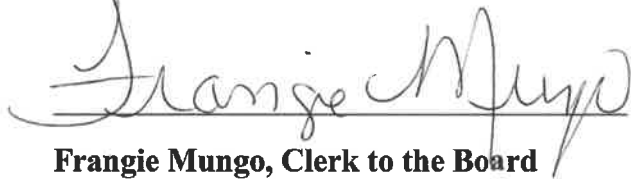
Mrs. Powell seconded the motion, which carried by unanimous vote.

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

Mrs. Harris moved to approve the Sheriff's \$3,000 salary increase retroactive to August 21, 2020. Mrs. Powell seconded the motion, which carried by unanimous vote.

16. REV. HINES MOVED TO ADJOURN THE MEETING UNTIL OCTOBER 4, 2021 AT 7:00 P.M. MRS. HARRIS SECONDED THE MOTION, WHICH CARRIED BY UNANIMOUS VOTE.

Approved October 4, 2021.



Frangie Mungo, Clerk to the Board