

MINUTES
REGULAR SCHEDULED MEETING OF THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
OF EDGEcombe COUNTY
MAY 2, 2022 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. Donald Boswell, Mr. William Wooten, Mrs. Evelyn Powell, Mr. Ralph Webb and Mrs. Viola Harris.

MEMBERS ABSENT: None.

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

2. SAFETY INSTRUCTIONS.

Mrs. Bess provided safety instructions.

3. PRAYER.

Rev. Hines provided prayer.

4. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING PRESENTED FOR APPROVAL.

Mr. Wooten moved to approve the minutes of the April 4, 2022 meeting as presented. Rev. Hines seconded the motion, which carried by unanimous vote.

With consensus of the Board item Number 5, Public Hearing, was heard upon arrival of the presenter.

6. SCHEDULED APPOINTMENTS.

A. Michelle Etheridge, Health Director, presented the COVID-19 update.

- Averaging about two cases per day;
- One COVID death since the last meeting; (140 total)
- Vaccinations:
 - 55 % people vaccinated with one dose
 - 51% people vaccinated with two doses
 - 23% people who have gotten at least one booster
- Health Department still doing vaccinations on Fridays by appointment
- If you are 50 and over you can get a second booster

7. BOARD OF EQUALIZATION AND REVIEW.

REV. HINES MOVED TO RECESS THE REGULAR BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS MEETING AND RECONVENE AS BOARD OF EQUALIZATION AND REVIEW. MR. WOOTEN SECONDED THE MOTION, WHICH CARRIED BY UNANIMOUS VOTE.

A. Mr. Wiggins, Chairman, called the meeting to order.

B. Mrs. Tarasa Lewis, Tax Administrator, that there were no scheduled appointments. She stated that they did receive one final appeal as of Thursday afternoon from newly opened rest home facility belonging to Tarboro PropCo, LLC. She stated that they have not had the opportunity to review their data and make a recommendation to the Board. She asked that the Board to put off the adjournment of the Board of E&R and the approval of the Resolution

Approving Finalizing of Final Values until the June meeting. Mrs. Lewis stated that they still will have the possibility of receiving appeals that are post marked by 5:00 p.m. today. She stated that she would like the Board to consider confirming the Board of E&R for purposes of accepting any new appeals for the 2022 real property values and she recommended that the Board recess until the final appeals are reviewed.

Mrs. Harris moved to approve the recommendation of the Tax Administrator as presented. Mrs. Powell seconded the motion, which carried by unanimous vote.

MR. WOOTEN MOVED TO RECESS AS BOARD OF EQUALIZATION AND REVIEW AND RECONVENE REGULAR BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS MEETING. REV. HINES SECONDED THE MOTION, WHICH CARRIED BY UNANIMOUS VOTE.

8. **PUBLIC PETITIONS.**

Kathy Williams, 2208 Robin Drive, Tarboro, and Officer Lynn. Mrs. Williams showed the Board a sample of the water collected from the animal shelter which was discolored. She announced a big event coming up on May 28th, 6-10 p.m. A national non-profit organization called Jordan's Way will come to the County at the current shelter. She stated that they are looking for the city and county leaders to come and take on some challenges. She stated that the organization raises on average \$8,000-\$12,000 and will be streaming on Facebook live. Officer Lynn stated that the event will have a DJ, games, food trucks, dunking booth, pie throwing, etc. Mrs. Williams stated that all monies raised will go directly to the Animal Shelter fund. Officer Lynn stated that volunteers are needed. Mrs. Williams shared several other fundraisers.

Ms. Kandie Smith, candidate for Senate Seat District 5, which is Edgecombe and Pitt Counties, came forth to introduce herself. She stated talked about the importance of working together with those who make the business decisions.

9. **OTHER BUSINESS:**

A. **Approval of budget amendments.**

Mr. Evans brought to the Board's attention budget amendment number 3 submitted by the Sheriff's Office to *Reallocate funds for capital outlay expenditures, gun permit app interface, salary adjustments and polygraph certification*. He stated that the Sheriff has had a need for additional cars for some time. We are considering what to include in the budget for FY-23. We will be paying off the loan this coming fiscal year. Mr. Evans stated that this budget amendment proposes to move some monies from salaries, insurance and a couple of other line items to the capital outlay to purchase four vehicles that the Sheriff has found and available (\$320,000). One of the challenges now is that finding fleet vehicles. He is also moving some money to purchase a full body scanner at the jail.

Mr. Evans brought to the Board's attention budget amendment #4 from the County Manager's Office: *To appropriate additional funds to cover the costs of consulting services in Finance and County Administration.*

Mr. Boswell asked for clarification regarding budget amendment #3 and the \$320,000 to purchase four cars.

Mr. Evans stated that it includes all of the equipment.

Mr. Boswell stated that is \$80,000 per car.

Mr. Evans stated that it looks like the vehicle is \$36,000 and the upfit is \$21,000 plus, tax and tags.

Mr. Boswell stated that is a \$23,000 difference.

The Board asked that Mr. Evans bring more clarification on this to the budget committee.

Mr. Wooten asked if the Sheriff is telling the Board that he has an extra \$510,000 that was budgeted for the salaries that is going unused. He asked if that is how he is able to move this money that the Board struggled so hard to send over another \$300,000 to pay people more money and find at the end of the year that that there is \$510,000 left.

Mr. Evans stated that yes, it was from lapsed salaries. He stated that when it was budgeted it was expected that all positions to be filled.

After discussion Mr. Boswell moved to approve the budget amendments as presented. Mrs. Powell seconded the motion.

Mr. Wooten asked if budget amendment #3 should be excluded because of the questions about vehicles.

Mr. Evans stated that that was up to the Board.

Mr. Boswell amended his motion to approve the budget amendments as presented, excluding budget amendment #3 until further clarification is received. Mr. Wooten seconded the motion, which carried by unanimous vote.

5. PUBLIC HEARING:

1. Mr. Wiggins called a public hearing to order to receive citizen comments relative to the proposed changes to the Unified Development Ordinance.

Mr. Peters read the public notice as published.

Comments by Mr. Evans introduced Mr. Chad Meadows with Code Wright Planners.

Mr. Meadows provided a power point presentation on:

- Amendment Process, Generally**
- Review of proposed amendments**
- Planning Board review**
- Next Steps**

Mr. Wiggins called for public comments. There being none, the public hearing was adjourned.

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

Mr. Wiggins acknowledged that Sheriff Clee Atkinson was now present and asked him to come up to speak regarding the Board's discussion on his budget amendment.

Sheriff Atkinson stated that several years ago when he stood before the Board he was told that he is the Sheriff and if it is within his budget he can use it. He stated that it is in his budget and public safety is number one on everybody's agenda right now, because nobody feels safe at all.

Mr. Wiggins stated to the Sheriff that the Board needed an understanding on the budget amendment.

Sheriff Atkinson stated that public safety is number one on the Sheriff's agenda. I'm charged with keeping everybody safe in Edgecombe County and he tries to do it better than anybody else in Eastern North Carolina. He stated that as his phone was ringing off the hook a few minutes ago as he was the first one on the scene of the homicide of a female. I didn't know why my phone was buzzing, but it was people across Edgecombe County calling him about this. He stated for the cars, he did not get any capital outlay for 2021. Sheriff Atkinson stated that he bought three vehicles from the outgoing budget from last year. No vehicles in 2021. He stated that as for the price of the vehicles, they are not making any more Dodge Chargers across America. The Highway Patrol is the largest fleet in North Carolina and they are doing away from Dodge Chargers. So, he has to start purchasing some SUVs. They could not find a SUV in North Carolina because he waited too late order, but he begged and now they can get them from a company out of Virginia. Sheriff Atkinson stated that they are in critical stages with their vehicles. He stated to the Board that when it comes to salaries, thank you. The Board has worked with him over the years. He stated that when they got those 22 vehicles in 2018 he knew that when you drive those cars for four years they are no good. They have no resale value, and now are right back into critical stages, because of instead of getting 22 or 25, they really needed 60 to 80 vehicles. He stated that he requested what was in the budget, the lapsed salaries that was in the budget.

Mr. Wooten stated that the taxpayers of Edgecombe County came up with extra money for him to pay his people and now he is asking for \$510,000 to be moved from salaries to buy four vehicles why did he elect not to pay his people more.

Sheriff Atkinson stated that it was doubled and he could afford to pay salaries and vehicles.

Mr. Wooten stated that the Board earmarked \$510,000 extra dollars for him to pay your people. You elected not to and now you are electing to move that for four vehicles.

Mr. Wiggins stated that the question that the Board was addressing was the cost of four vehicles and now understanding that the Sheriff is requesting to use that money now for more than four vehicles.

Mr. Wooten stated that the information they received was that four vehicles was costing \$36,000 a piece and their upfits were \$44,000.

Mr. Wiggins stated that there was intent of the Board to not give it. The Board questioned the cost of four vehicles.

Sheriff Atkinson stated that he is looking to purchase 8 to 10 vehicles.

The Board suggested that this amendment be sent to the budget committee and then brought back to the full Board.

After discussion Mr. Wooten moved to appropriate \$180,000 regarding budget amendment #3 reduce the Salaries regular line by \$180,000 and then moving that to capital outlay. Mr. Boswell seconded the motion.

Mrs. Harris stated that she did not want to jeopardize the Sheriff losing the five cars that he can get after already not being able to find any. She stated that waiting a few more days for further discussion could jeopardize that.

The motion carried by a vote of 6 to 1. Mrs. Harris opposed the motion.

B. 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 new 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. The Human Services Board voted unanimously to recommend this debt be written off.

Mrs. Harris moved to approve the Bad Debt Write Off as recommended by the Human Services Board. Mrs. Powell seconded the motion, which carried by unanimous vote.

C. Approval of Cooperative Agreement with Vocational Rehabilitation.

Mr. Evans stated that annually we enter into an agreement with the NC Division of Vocational Rehabilitation services to assist eligible individuals in gaining employment. These services include counseling, training, education, transportation, job placement, assistive technology and other support services. For those services the County provides matching funds, which for FY-23 will be \$21,204. We also provide office space for their staff.

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

D. Approval of resolution recognizing May 5th as the National Day of Prayer.

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

Mrs. Harris read the resolution.

E. Approval of Memorandum of Understanding with broadband companies.

Mr. Evans stated that the NC Broadband Infrastructure Office is accepting grant applications from service providers to expand high speed internet Service in counties where access is limited or unavailable. Each project can receive up to \$4 million, and up to \$8 million can be awarded in one county. Currently, we have four companies that plan to submit applications for Edgecombe County: CloudWyze (submitting two applications); Lumen (formerly CenturyLink soon to be Brightspeed), AlticeUSA (formerly Suddenlink); and InfinityLink. All four propose projects that would expand broadband in areas not currently served in our County. None of the projects would completely address unserved areas, as the cost to do so would be beyond the available grant funds. However, they all would create the opportunity for future expansion with other funding opportunities. Though up to two grants can be awarded in a county, no two companies could serve the same coverage area. Therefore, being that each of the proposed projects is different, it is possible that two different projects could be approved in Edgecombe County. Each company will make their own investment into the project in addition to the grant award. Having a County contribution to the project allows for additional rating points to be received, which is important since this round of funding will be extremely competitive. Mr. Evans stated that our ARPA funding now gives us the opportunity to invest in broadband expansion. There, he recommended that the Board approve the resolutions supporting each project up to \$50,000 contingent upon Great Grants funds being approved.

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

F. Approval of lease agreement for USDA – Farm Service Agency.

Mr. Evans stated that the County provides space for staff with USDA, Farm Service here in the County Administration. The lease agreement is up for renewal, and our staff have worked with USDA representatives to come to an updated agreement. They are requesting some improvements be made in the office, the cost of which is build into the agreement for reimbursement over the first three years.

Mrs. Powell moved to approve the lease agreement a presented and authorize the Manager to execute the same. Mr. Wooten seconded the motion, which carried by unanimous vote.

G. Approval of fee schedule changes for Emergency Medical Services.

Mr. Evans stated that the Edgecombe County emergency Services office would like to get approval for a rate increase for the 2022 Ambulance Fee Schedule due to Medicare Adjustment reimbursement fees to effective May 2, 2022:

- Mileage \$12.00 per mile;
- BLS-Non \$500.00
- BLS-Emergency \$500.00
- ALS 2 \$900.00

Additionally, the Edgecombe County Emergency Services office would like to get approval to start charging for special events. They are being asked to stand by at events more and more. This is very costly to the County, due to having to pay staff overtime and the cost of fuel going up. They stand by at all of the home football games at Tarboro High School, Southwest Edgecombe High School and North Edgecombe High School, which would be at least 20-football games or more, plus other special events.

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

10. APPOINTMENTS:

A. Municipal Representative for the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board.

Mr. Boswell moved to appoint Mr. Travis Stigge. Rev. Hines seconded the motion, which carried by unanimous vote.

B. Town of Princeville Planning Board for ETJ.

None.

C. Edgecombe County Planning Board.

None.

D. Edgecombe County Board of Adjustment.

None.

11. AFTERLISTS AND RELEASES FOR REVIEW AND APPROVAL.

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

12. APPROVAL AND/OR REVIEW OF CONTRACTS.

Mr. Boswell moved to approve the contracts as presented. Rev. Hines seconded the motion, which carried by unanimous vote.

13. DEPARTMENTAL REPORTS FOR REVIEW. *Received*****

- A. Water and Sewer update.
- B. Monthly Financial Summary.
- C. Sales Tax report.

14. MANAGER'S REPORT.*Received*****

- A. Introduction of new Solid Waste Director.

- Mr. Evans introduced Gloria Moseley.
- B. Workforce Development indicators.
- C. Update on Edgecombe County Animal Shelter.
Firm selected: RL Architects out of Davidson, NC
- D. Reminder of Joint Meeting with Edgecombe School Board:
Thursday, May 5th; dinner at 6 p.m. and meeting at 7 p.m.
Agricultural Center at Kingsboro

15. COMMISSIONERS' REPORT.

Mr. Boswell stated that he has a judiciary responsibility just like the Sheriff has. He stated that we do not spend money without questioning anybody. That is part of the job whether we like it or not. Mr. Boswell stated that he did not think there is a commissioner on this board that does not support the Sheriff 110 percent. We are doing the best with what we have to work with. However, questioning someone that works with the County about where the money is going and what it is being spend for in no way reflects on him or the Board. Mr. Boswell stated that he did not appreciate what the Sheriff said tonight and he would let him know when he sees him.

Mrs. Harris asked if the Veterans Department and Office on Aging still consist of one person in each office.

Mr. Evans stated that in the Aging Office there is a part-time person that is not year-round that works through UCP Senior Employment Program and currently a someone is in the Veterans Office that is on lite duty from another department.

Mrs. Harris stated that there are a lot of needs not being met from those offices because of having only one person in each office and asked that be considered in the near future.

Mr. Webb shared the information about the 37th Annual Peace Officers Ceremony happening tomorrow at the Englewood Baptist Church, Rocky Mount at 10 a.m.

Mr. Webb recommended that signs be place at the Solid Waste sites letting individuals know that they have to show their placards to the workers at each site. He stated that he has been at his site and seen the workers being cursed out when they asked for the placards.

Mr. Wiggins asked Mr. Evans to have that done.

16. ATTORNEY'S REPORT.

None.

17. 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. [N.C.G.S. 143-318.11 (a)(3)].

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

Mrs. Harris moved to go out of closed session and resume the regular meeting.

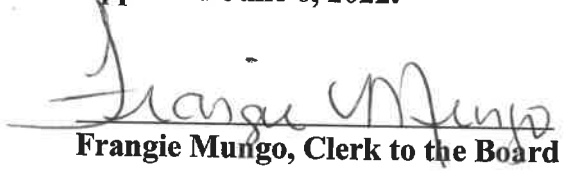
Mrs. Powell seconded the motion, which carried by unanimous vote.

Mr. Evans presented to the Board the Corrective Action Plan to LGC regarding the audit findings.

18. MR. WOOTEN MOVED TO RECESS THE MEETING UNTIL THURSDAY.

**MAY 5, 2022 AT 7:00 A.M. FOR JOINT MEETING WITH EDGECOMBE
COUNTY SCHOOL BOARD. REV. HINES SECONDED THE MOTION,
WHICH CARRIED BY UNANIMOUS VOTE.**

Approved June 6, 2022.


Frankie Mungo, Clerk to the Board