

MINUTES
REGULAR SCHEDULED MEETING OF THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
OF EDGEcombe COUNTY
FEBRUARY 5, 2024 AT 6:00 P.M.
IN THE JONATHAN FELTON COMMISSIONERS ROOM
COUNTY ADMINISTRATIVE BUILDING
TARBORO, NORTH CAROLINA

1. MEETING CALLED TO ORDER BY COMMISSIONER EVELYN POWELL AT 7:00 P.M.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Mrs. Evelyn Powell, Mr. Ralph Webb, Mr. George Throne, and Mr. Donald Boswell. Mrs. Viola Harris, Vice-Chair, was attending via telephone. Mr. Leonard Wiggins, Chair, entered at 6:24 p.m. and Rev. E. Wayne Hines entered at 6:49 p.m.

MEMBERS ABSENT: None.

OTHERS PRESENT: Mr. Eric Evans, County Manager, Mrs. Natalie Bess, Deputy County Manager, Mr. Michael Peters, County Attorney, Mr. Michael Matthews, Assistant County Manager, Mrs. Linda Barfield, CFO, and Ms. Frankie Mungo, Clerk to the Board.

2. SAFETY INSTRUCTIONS.

Safety instructions provided by Mrs. Bess.

3. PRAYER.

Mr. Evans provided the prayer.

4. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING PRESENTED FOR APPROVAL.

Mr. Boswell moved to approve the minutes of the January 2, 2024 meeting as presented. Mr. Webb seconded the motion, which carried by unanimous vote.

5. SCHEDULED APPOINTMENT(S):

A. Graham Palmer, Rural Opportunity, update on initiatives. (Tabled)

B. Dave Peterson, Regional Director – Trillium Health Resources, provided an update on consolidation.

Mr. Peterson stated that it is a big move that the State has made this past 45 days. Eastpointe and Sandhills were also part of that consolidation piece. We were 28 counties, now down to four manage care organizations with 46 counties. He stated that with this consolidation they are putting together consumer and family advisory committees with appointees having healthcare background, DSS background, hospital background, attorney background and a finance background, and looking at getting those boards starting in March. He requested that Edgecombe County appointments be made at next month's meeting. He stated that when he was present in November, he referred to a family that was having problems down in speed and they were present tonight and he introduced them. He asked the County to what they can to help this family.

6. PUBLIC PETITIONS.

Roosevelt Higgs, Speed, He stated that when he addressed the Board in November, he asked that Edgecombe County would consider creating a sign that says "Edgecombe County, home of the oldest town chartered by Blacks in America", and that being Princeville, North Carolina. He stated that it will help with tourism. He stated that he has been talking with the Manager about a group called Foundation Forward and they want to come to Edgecombe County and set up a display which consist of the Declaration of Independence, the Constitution and the Bill of Rights.

Alicia Slaughter, Candidate for District Court Judge covering Nash, Edgecombe and Wilson counties, came forth to introduce herself and asked for support.

Randy Killebrew, 3810 Harts mill Run Road, Tarboro, stated that he heard there will be some increases regarding the revaluation of property taxes. He stated that his concern is where is it going to lead the citizens of the County. Will we stay revenue neutral? His concern is will people be paying their fair share. There are a lot of citizens in this County who don't pay taxes. Property taxes are going uncollected and stands on our books for about ten years and then it rolls off without going into a serious foreclosure mode. He asked the Board what can we do to address these uncollected taxes so that everybody pays a fair share of the increases that are coming forward. Are there plans in place?

Mr. Evans stated that we have a relatively aggressive tax collection. Four units were sold last week for foreclosure. We need to make sure that we collect taxes that are due. He stated that the Tax Administrator works closely with the Attorney and are relatively aggressive compared to some counties around us regarding collecting back taxes.

Curmilus Dancy II, 127 Midway Lane, Tarboro, P O Box 1391, Pinetops, asked the status on the flooded properties.

Mr. Evans stated that after Hurricane Matthew there was a window of time that people that were interested in applying for the buyout FEMA program could apply and the County did a number of buyouts, both out in the County and administered the Town of Princeville's buyout program. That buyout program is pretty much closed out. The State received some additional funds outside of FEMA where they are offering a buyout like program, but they are doing it in concentrated areas called buyout zones. They have identified one just outside of Pinetops, Princeville and other locations. They have been making offers and have closed some and the County agreed to take ownership of those properties once they are demolished. He asked Mr. Dancy to send his address and he will check to see if it is in a buyout zone.

7.

OTHER BUSINESS:

A. Approval of budget amendments.

Mr. Boswell moved to approve budget amendments 1-13 as presented. Mrs. Powell seconded the motion, which carried by unanimous vote.

B. Approval of audit response.

Mr. Evans stated that the Local Government Commission requires that the auditor identifies Financial Performance Indicators of Concern (FPIC). We are required to then respond to those with sixty days of the audit being presented to the Board.

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

C. Approval of hunting leases.

Mr. Evans stated that the Board approved the lease of two separate, county-owned tracts last year for hunting rights. Those were one-year lease agreements. Therefore, we published a request for bids for leasing these tracts again, this time for a three-year lease. We received two bids for the 161.22 acres adjacent to the landfill, and one bid for the 302.62 acres at Kingsboro, just north of Corning. Mr. Evans recommended approval of a lease agreement with New Hope Hunting Club for the landfill tract at \$21 per acre, and a lease agreement with Mr. Billy Wooten for the Kingsboro tract at \$31 per acre.

Mrs. Powell moved to approve the hunting lease agreements as presented. Mr. Thorne seconded the motion, which carried by unanimous vote.

D. Approval of updates to Personnel Policy.

Mr. Evans stated that there are three relatively minor changes to our Personnel Policy presented for the Boards consideration:

- (p. 36) The Board previously approved a resolution that added Juneteenth as a paid holiday. However, we did not update that in our personnel policy.
- (p. 37) The number of hours for vacation leave accrual for 1-5 years of service should be 9.0 to be consistent with the total hours and days per year.
- (p. 64) We previously revised our policy such that an employee out on Workers' Compensation may not use sick or vacation leave to cover the pay difference (WC only pays 2/3s of the salary). The purpose of the change is that allowing use of leave to make up the difference often increases the take-home pay since Worker's Comp is not subject to all the same payroll taxes. This creates a disincentive for returning to work, and not allowing this is a common practice. This section should have been removed at that time but was missed.

Mr. Boswell moved to approve the changes to the Personnel Policy as presented. Mrs. Powell seconded the motion, which carried by unanimous vote.

8. APPOINTMENTS:

A. Parks and Recreation Advisory Board.

Mr. Boswell moved to appoint Dr. Evelyn Powell and Mr. Kendrick Ransome. Mrs. Powell seconded the motion, which carried by unanimous vote.

B. Board of Adjustment.

9. PLANNING BOARD REPORT.

1. UDO text amendment request by C. B. Dauthtridge.

- Mr. Boswell moved to call for a public hearing at the March 4, 2024 meeting. Mrs. Powell seconded the motion, which carried by unanimous vote.
2. Draft minutes of January 22, 2024 meeting.

10.

AFTERLISTS AND RELEASES FOR REVIEW AND APPROVAL.

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

11.

CONTRACTS FOR REVIEW AND/OR APPROVAL.

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

12.

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

- A. Water and Sewer update.
- B. Monthly Financial Summary was presented by Mrs. Barfield.
- C. Home and Community Care Block Grant Program was presented by Mrs. Barfield.

13.

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

- A. Update on Getting Off the Lists initiative.
- B. Major events and updates.
- C. Workforce Development Indicators.
- D. TDA financial report.
- E. Broadband update.
- F. CSX temporary closure of railroad crossings.

14.

COMMISSIONERS' REPORT.

None.

15.

ATTORNEY'S REPORT.

None.

16.

CLOSED SESSION.

Mrs. Powell moved to go into closed session to discuss:

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

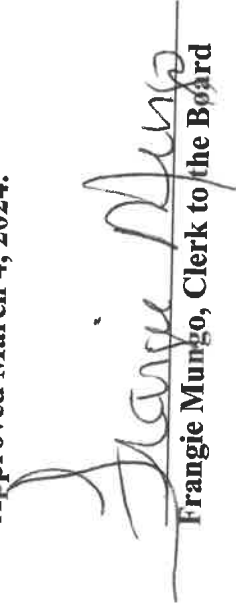
Mr. Thorne seconded the motion, which carried by unanimous vote.

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

17. ADJOURNMENT.

Mr. Boswell moved to adjourn the meeting. Mrs. Powell seconded the motion, which carried by unanimous vote.

Approved March 4, 2024.


Frankie Mungo, Clerk to the Board