

MINUTES
REGULAR SCHEDULED MEETING OF THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
OF EDGEcombe COUNTY
DECEMBER 7, 2020 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. Donald Boswell, Mr. William Wooten, Mrs. Viola Harris, Mr. Ralph Webb and Mrs. Evelyn Powell.

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.

Mr. Evans introduced the new Deputy County Manager, Mrs. Natalie Bess.

2. SAFETY INSTRUCTIONS.

Mr. Evans provided safety instructions.

3. PRAYER.

Rev. Hines provided the prayer.

4. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING PRESENTED FOR APPROVAL.

Rev. Hines moved to approve the minutes of the November 2, 2020 as presented. Mr. Webb seconded the motion, which carried by unanimous vote.

5. SWEARING IN CEREMONY.

Mrs. Carol Allen White, Clerk of Court, administered the oath of office to re-elected Commissioners: Mrs. Viola Harris, Mrs. Evelyn Powell and Mr. Ralph Webb. Judge Lamont Wiggins administered the oath of office to re-elected Commissioner Mr. Leonard Wiggins.

6. ELECTION OF OFFICERS – 2021

Mr. Wiggins turned the Chair over to Mr. Peters for the purpose of electing officers for 2021.

Mr. Peters opened the floor for nominations.

Board of Commissioners Chairman.

Rev. Hines nominated Mr. Wiggins. There being no other nominations, Rev. Hines moved to approve the nomination of Mr. Wiggins as Chairman of the Board. Mrs. Powell seconded the motion, which carried by unanimous vote.

Mr. Wiggins thanked the Board of Commissioners for their continued support.

Board of Commissioners Vice-Chairman.

Mr. Wiggins nominated Rev. Hines. There being no other nominations, Mr. Wiggins moved to approve the nomination of Rev. Hines as Vice-Chairman of the Board. Mrs. Powell seconded the motion, which carried by unanimous vote.

Rev. Hines thanked the Board of Commissioners for their continued support.

7. PUBLIC HEARING.

1. Mr. Wiggins called a public hearing is to order to receive citizen comments and questions relative to proposed amendments to Chapter 8, Article IV “County Emergency Medical Services Advisory Council” of the Edgecombe County Code

of Ordinances.

Mr. Peters read the public notice as published.

Mr. Evans stated that Chapter 8 Article IV of the County Code of Ordinances created an Emergency Medical Services Advisory Council. In light of the County taking over EMS, he recommended that this Council be reactivated. However, he suggested that revisions be made to the ordinance. The presented the suggested changes to the Board and recommended that the Board approve the changes after the public hearing.

Mr. Wiggins called for public comments.

No one signed up, emailed or mailed any public comments, concerns or questions and the public hearing was adjourned.

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

8. SCHEDULED APPOINTMENT.

A. Chad Meadows, Code Wright Planners, presented an outline of the proposed revisions to the Unified Development Ordinance.

- Project purpose
- Scope and schedule
- Audit
- Annotated outline
- Next steps

9. PUBLIC PETITIONS.

In light of the State of Emergency and in consideration of the recommendations of government and public health officials to limit public gatherings, Edgecombe County's Board of Commissioners meeting was closed to the public and the public was encouraged to submit any public petitions via email to publiccomments@edgecombeco.com or by mail addressed to Eric Evans, County Manager. The public was notified that all public comments submitted would be read at the meeting. The public was also encouraged to listen to the meeting by calling the published number.

The public was previously notified by the Board of Commissioners that they will allow ten people to make public comments in person and to do so, they public must sign up in advance by calling the Clerk to the Board.

Mr. Paul Autry a Residential Contractor, 275 Golf Course Drive, Pinetops, came forth to present information that is hindering him and other builders and homeowners who have tried to get projects done. He specifically talked about his dissatisfaction with two County Departments, Water Department and the long timeline for tapping into the water system and the run around and messages not being returned and the Planning & Inspections department and the lack of a full-time certified inspector, the delays in getting inspections and the \$75.00 re-inspection fee.

Mr. Wiggins stated to Mr. Autry that his issues will be addressed and asked Mr. Evans to comment.

Mr. Evans stated that we have dealt with the issue of inspectors for a while. It has been difficult to get and keep building inspectors. He stated that it has improved and this is the first issue brought to him regarding inspections in a while. Mr.

Evans thanked Mr. Autry for bringing the concerns to his attention and apologized for inconveniences.

Mr. Autry suggested getting rid of the \$75.00 first re-inspection fee. He has never had to pay it in any other counties and he has failed first inspections before but never failed a re-inspection.

Mr. Wiggins stated that the County will certainly look at that and he asked Mr. Evans to provide an update to the Board.

Mr. Evans stated that he had a written comment that was submitted. The comment was from Mr. Leigh Hick, no address provided but phone number 252-217-2179. His statement talked about the it being crucial to have reliable communication infrastructure for community and work and education for remote interactions. NC Department of Information Technology Census Bureau 2013-2017 community survey noted that Edgecombe County households with DSL, Cable or fiber optic subscriptions or other broadband subscriptions rate was 46.21%. Those households with no internet was 37.4%. Edgecombe County households with no computer devices 27.6%. There are too many Edgecombe County residents who will not be kept informed and afforded reliable public safety information. Too many county students will lose education opportunity since learning at a distance is not technically possible through World Wide Web and financially not feasible since internet is not free. It has been reported over 1,000 students struggle to connect to virtual class in Edgecombe. Equity should exist for all. There is technology the County can utilize that most County households, regardless of socio-economic status possessed, that can be employed for remote communication, transfer and reception. His statement talked about technology that can function for public safety information including County meetings that many in the county cannot access optically as well as remote education where there will be no need to exit the house and put health at risk for those in County concern. There have been those in the County who contemplate use of this technology would be good for the poor and those with no internet. This, as instructed by some in county, thus is the request to talk soon with Board or it's delegate how effort with County to enact, expeditiously, operation and use of local facility with manifest for good citizen welfare, specifically those who lack internet remote access to education and other communication and ultimately get commissioners to promptly pursue, with not delay, while some grant funds and potential resources still exist for such telecommunication project. Those with interest can also use. The County is implored to take the lead for this telecommunication for its marginalized, at-risk population so not to be left out of County communications and public safety as well as healthrejoinder awaits.

Mr. Evans stated that he will follow up with Mr. Hick to have further conversation.

10. OTHER BUSINESS:

A. Approval of budget amendments.

Mr. Evans provided explanations on some of the budget amendments.

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

B. Approval of Edgecombe County Public Schools application to NC Education Lottery.

Mr. Evans stated that Edgecombe County Schools plans to replace the roof at Coker-Wimberly Elementary School using funds from the NC Lottery Building Capital Fund. To use these funds for the project, the Board of Commissioners must jointly request the release of these funds along with ECPS. Mr. Evans recommended that the Board approve the application as presented.

C. Approval of the Edgecombe County 2021 Holiday Schedule.

Mrs. Harris moved to approve the 2020 Holiday Schedule as presented. Rev. Hines seconded the motion, which carried by unanimous vote.

D. Approval of Recreation Mini-Grants.

Mr. Evans stated that the Recreation Mini-grant program was created to offer grants of up to \$2,000 each to community-based organizations that provide recreational facilities and/or activities. The review committee the Board appointed met Monday, November 24th to discuss and rank the twelve proposals received. Each proposal was rated based on the project description, timeline, area served, number of individuals served, duration of the program, budget and feasibility, and the capacity of the organization. Mr. Evans presented to the Board the list stating that the committee recommends that all twelve projects be funded in the amounts listed.

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

E. Approval of Arts Commission Interlocal agreement.

Mr. Evans stated that the County in the past jointly funded arts programs and staffing with the Town of Tarboro through Edgecombe County Arts Council. After some consideration, he felt it to be in our best interests to partner with the Town of Tarboro to provide staffing to coordinate and promote arts programs for the County. He recommended that we create an Arts Commission to recommend, promote and coordinate public art and cultural arts education. He recommended that the Board approve an Interlocal Agreement with the Town of Tarboro to create Tarboro-Edgecombe Public Arts Commission.

Mr. Wooten Moved to approve the Interlocal Agreement as presented. Mrs. Harris seconded the motion, which carried by unanimous vote.

11. APPOINTMENTS.

A. Rocky Mount Board of Adjustment.

No recommendation.

B. Upper Coastal Plain Council of Governments Board of Directors.

No recommendation.

C. Turning Point Workforce Development Board.

Mrs. Harris moved to appoint LaShawnda Washington. Mrs. Powell seconded the motion, which carried by unanimous vote.

D. ABC Board.

Rev. Hines moved to re-appoint C. B. Bunting, Evelyn Powell and Charlie Harrell. Mr. Boswell seconded the motion, which carried by unanimous vote.

E. Planning Board.

Mrs. Harris moved to re-appoint Reuben Thompson IV. Rev. Hines seconded the motion, which carried by unanimous vote.

12. PLANNING BOARD REPORT.

Mrs. Katina Braswell gave the Planning Board report.

A. Approved major subdivision located off Cypress Creek Ct. – Robert Bridgers

B. Reappointment of Mr. Thompson to the Planning Board recommendation to Board of Commissioners.

C. Minutes of November 16, 2020 meeting.

13. AFTERLISTS AND RELEASES FOR REVIEW AND APPROVAL.

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

14. CONTRACTS FOR REVIEW/APPROVAL.

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

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

A. **DMV-License Plate agency Performance Bonus Awards.**

Mrs. Tarasa Lewis, Tax Assessor, provided information regarding the DMV-LPA agency receiving the 2019-2020 Performance Bonus Awards.

B. **Water Services.**

C. **Financial Summary report.**

D. **Tourism Development Authority.**

E. **Elections report.**

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

A. **Update on the transition of rescue services.**

B. **COVID-19 update.**

C. **Workforce Development Indicators.**

D. **Sales Tax report.**

17. **COMMISSIONERS' REPORT.**

Mr. Boswell stated that unfortunately Mr. Autry was right about everything he said and he was glad he was allowed to speak. He stated that the Board needs to hire a permanent inspector.

Mr. Wiggins asked Mr. Evans to report back to the Board and instructed Mr. Evans to pursue the hiring of a full-time inspector.

Mr. Wooten moved to approve the County Manager hiring a full time Inspector.

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

18. **ATTORNEY'S REPORT.**

None.

19. **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. [Per N.C.G.S 143-318.11(a)(6)]**

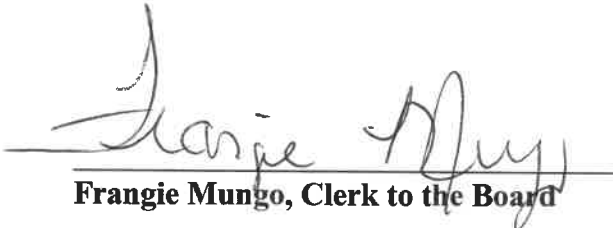
Mrs. Powell seconded the motion, which carried by unanimous vote.

Mr. Wooten moved to go out of closed session and resume the regular meeting.

Rev. Hines seconded the motion, which carried by unanimous vote.

20. **MR. WOOTEN MOVED TO ADJOURN THE MEETING UNTIL MEETING UNTIL JANUARY 4, 2021 AT 7:00 P.M. MR. BOSWELL SECONDED THE MOTION, WHICH CARRIED BY UNANIMOUS VOTE.**

Approved January 4, 2021.



Frankie Mungo, Clerk to the Board