

MINUTES  
REGULAR SCHEDULED MEETING OF THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS  
OF EDGEcombe COUNTY  
FEBRUARY 3, 2020 AT 7:00 P.M.  
IN THE COMMISSIONERS' ROOM, COUNTY ADMINISTRATIVE BUILDING  
TARBORO, NORTH CAROLINA

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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, Mrs. Evelyn Powell, Mrs. Viola Harris, Mr. Donald Boswell, Mr. Ralph Webb and Mr. William Wooten.

MEMBERS ABSENT: None.

OTHERS PRESENT: Mr. Eric Evans, County Manager, Mr. Michael Peters, County Attorney and Ms. Frankie Mungo, Clerk to the Board.

2. SAFETY INSTRUCTIONS.

Mr. William Johnson, Assistant County Manager, provided safety instructions for all present.

3. PRAYER.

Rev. Hines provided the prayer.

4. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING PRESENTED FOR APPROVAL.

Mr. Wooten moved to approve the minutes of the January 6, 2020 meeting as presented. Mr. Boswell seconded the motion, which carried by unanimous vote.

5. PUBLIC HEARING.

1. Mr. Wiggins called a public hearing to receive citizen comments and questions relative to purposed changes to County Animal Services Ordinance.

Mr. Peters read the public notice as published.

Mr. Evans stated that at the Board's January meeting, they opened a public hearing to consider changes to the County's ordinance pertaining to animal services. The changes proposed by the Animal Welfare Advisory Council include adding in Article II Section. 4-33 for "Adequate Shelter" under the description for what does not constitute adequate shelter the word "metal" to barrels. They also recommend changes to Article III, which are numerous. In summary, the changes include: reference to Inherently Dangerous Animals instead of Wild and Exotic Animals; it defines what Inherently Dangerous Animals are; it bans inherently Dangerous Animals in the County with the noted exceptions; and it leave the responsibility of permitting and enforcement of those exceptions to the appropriate State and Federal agencies. Mr. Evans stated that the Board continued the public hearing in order to give the Animal Welfare Advisory council another opportunity to clarify the definition of Inherently Dangerous Animals. They have done so, and the final draft is presented for consideration. He stated that pending public comments, the recommendation of the Animal Welfare Advisory Council is to approve ordinance changes as presented. Mr. Evans presented the proposed changes.

Mr. Evans stated that Ms. Kathy Williams, Chairman of the Council was presented to answer any questions.

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

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

6. **SCHEDULED APPOINTMENT.**

A. **Sheriff Clee Atkinson to provide an update from the Sheriff's Office.**

Sheriff Atkinson called upon Chief Deputy Gene Harrell to present the State of the Office of the Sheriff 2019.

Mr. Harrell stated that the purpose of the presentation was to give an overview on what is going on in the Sheriff's office and a forecast of issues that need addressing and future needs. A majority of the focus will be on salaries. You will see later that the salaries are continuously hurting them in recruiting and retaining staff members, mainly in the detention center and amongst the deputies.

Mr. Harrell provided a power point presentation highlighting:

- **Fast Facts**
- **Stats and programming**
- **Concealed carry permits**  
In 2019 863 concealed weapon applications were processed. \$35.00 each was supposed to come back to the Sheriff's office. These funds have never reached the Sheriff's office.
- **Detention Center (housing, staffing, salaries, risks)**
- **Patrol (Calls for service)**
- **Traffic Enforcement**
- **Patrol (staffing issues, salaries)**
- **Civil (Child support papers, civil papers, court bailiffs)**
- **Child Support/IV-D**
- **Training**
- **Training Center at Dodge City**
- **D.A.R.E.**
- **Transports**
- **Criminal Investigative Division**
- **Interns**
- **Sex Offenders**
- **Narcotics**
- **Animal Services**
- **ABC/Pretrial Release and Supervision**
- **Telecommunications**
- **Missing 911 funds**
- **Sheriff's Office programs**
- **Food Trucks**
- **Funds needed for projects**
- **Animal Shelter**
- **Body Cameras**
- **Vehicles**
- **Service Weapons**
- **Portable radios**
- **Honor Fallen**
- **Patrol vehicle shot on New Year's Eve**

Sheriff Atkinson stated to the Board and Manager and citizens that he needed their help to protect the citizens of Edgcombe County. He stated that he needed immediate relief to keep well trained people to protect the citizens. He stated that the quicker he trains his staff the quicker they are coming to get them. He stated that salaries have to be higher and will give the deputies and detention staff some

incentives to be even more passionate about their jobs. He stated that he was asking for relief so his deputies would not have to get off from working a 12-hour shift and go work a second job. Sheriff Atkins asked Deputy Silveri to come forth.

Deputy Mark Silveri stated that he retired from the NC State Highway Patrol after 25 years of service and a long-time resident of Edgecombe County. He came forth to speak on the need of higher salaries for the Sheriff's department.

Mr. Wiggins stated that the Board values the Sheriff's office and the officers. He stated that they do understand and will give everything that they have hears consideration and charge the management team to take a serious look at it and bring back to the Board what a budget would say so the Board can make a determination as to where the revenue is coming from.

7. **PUBLIC PETITIONS.**

Curmilus Dancy, II, P O Box 1391, Tarboro, 127 Midway Lane, Tarboro, thanked the Board for allowing him to serve on the Animal Services Committee. The committee did a great job. He stated that he came forth speaking on behalf the Sheriff's office as he has in the past. He expressed his support of the Sheriff and his office stating that they are underpaid. He stated that we are losing good deputies and staff because they are going to other cities and towns to make good money.

Teresa Everette-Horne, 2229 Oak Drive, Tarboro, wife of a detention officer of Edgecombe County, came forth to expressing her concerns about the situations down at the jail. She stated that it is dangerous and the pay is not enough. She pleaded with the Board for help.

Kathy Williams 2208 Robin Drive, Tarboro, came forth to speak about the Sheriff's office and the Animal Shelter and not having enough space for the animals. She provided numbers on the spay and neuter program and rabies vaccine numbers. She stated that when you have people that work for your Sheriff's office that are on public assistance, because they don't make enough money to support their family, there is really something wrong. She asked the Board to please consider their salaries.

Brian Holland, 1736 Pinetops/Crisp Road, stated that on the morning of January 8<sup>th</sup> at approximately 4 a.m. He came out his front door to get in his vehicle and there was a car that wasn't sitting directly like he was turning left or right. He had his lights turned directly at his utility building. He stated that he felt uncomfortable and he called the Sheriff's department and within three minutes an Edgecombe County deputy was in his yard. He stated that since Sheriff Atkinson took office he's noticed a lot of good things in the community. He stated that the money these men and women make protecting us is absolutely ridiculous, with the things they face and deal with. He asked the Board to consider paying them what they deserve.

Oliver Washington, 38 Old Battleboro Road, Detention Center Administrator, stated that he came forth as a citizen of Edgecombe County. He stated that he had an employee come to him saying he was leaving to take a job at the Corning plant. He stated that right then he knew that he had a problem. He stated that he has had sleepless nights since then, trying to figure out how he is going to maintain quality staff and recruit staff to protect the citizens of this County. He talked about the dangerous conditions staff endure. He stated that they are underpaid and overworked. He asked the Board to consider the Sheriff's department.

Ray Hines, 304 Cross Street, Tarboro, Edgecombe County Detention Officer, came forth to talk about love, honor and respect that they have for each other.

Shane Varnell, 4186 Pleasant Hill Road, Rocky Mount, President of Farm Bureau,

stated the knows Sheriff Clee personally and every since he's come here things have changed. He stated that if the County loses him we will be at a great lost. There are times that he has to call on the Sheriff's department. Mr. Varnell stated that the reason he is here is because he came up and spoke in the December meeting about the ban on tobacco use and in the January meeting they found out it was overturned. They thought they had an understanding that there would be specific places designated for smoking and that the Board would give thought that a total ban on all property was not feasible. He stated that it was voted on in one meeting and turned around and voted on something different without a public hearing or any public forum.

Mr. Wiggins stated that he thought the Board had recessed.

Mr. Peters stated that it was two separate hearings.

Mr. Wiggins stated that a public notice of the hearing was done so the requirement was met. He stated that Mr. Varnell was correct that it was something different and asked the Board to speak on it if they would like to, because there were some changes. He stated that as it stands now, the ordinance states no smoking on County owned property, or leased property.

Mr. Varnell state that this has been turned over twice and asked the Board to revisit it.

Mr. Wiggins stated that it is a proper request and asked Mr. Peters about a timeframe for the ordinance.

Mr. Peters stated that for the ordinance to be amended again it would have to be another public hearing.

Mr. Wiggins asked Mr. Peters to get with the Manager and he will put it on the agenda.

Mr. Evans stated that the Board will need to call for a public hearing to consider a change.

Mr. Wooten stated that the Board has already voted on it twice.

Tom Porter, 3930 Meadowbrook Road, former President of Farm Bureau, stated that he was not at the meeting in December. He stated that it troubles him that they came in and talked about this (tobacco ban) and it was voted on and at the next meeting, unbeknownst to any of them, there were people who came in a spoke differently and swayed it the other way. The proper notification was there but it did not get to them. Since then they decided to come back and ask for an explanation. He asked the Board to let them know what is going on and that they all work together to make decisions that don't cause people to be upset.

After discussion on the farmers and the health community coming together to discuss the smoking ban Mr. Wiggins stated that they can come to the Board with something they can recommend.

Otha Woodard, 505 Lincoln Road, Tarboro, member of the Health and Human Services Board, stating the major concern is the health of this community. It is not against tobacco. The need is to improve the health of our citizens in Edgecombe County.

**8. OTHER BUSINESS:**

**A. Approval of budget amendments.**

**Mr. Evans provided explanations on some of the budget amendments. Mr. Evans pointed budget amendment #1, reallocating some funds into the Sheriff's Office Capital Outlay, for year one deployment of new body cameras, about 30 of them. He stated that it's certainly not the total number that they need, he and the Sheriff and staff met with a representative some time back and felt like this is a way to help get some body cameras in the Sheriff's office.**

**Mr. Wooten asked Mr. Evans if we had bought some body cameras five years ago and they are already out of date.**

**Mr. Evans stated that he believes that is what the Sheriff reported and that was with a grant.**

**Mr. Wiggins called on Sheriff Atkinson.**

**Mr. Wooten asked Sheriff Atkinson if we bought body cameras about five years and if their life cycle is five years or less.**

**Sheriff Atkinson stated yes. He stated that they were on the low end and they were not able to see the footage as well and when they would get a request from an attorney or what have you the images were blurred out.**

**After a brief discussion, Mr. Wooten moved to amend the budget amendment from \$13,000 to \$26,000. Mrs. Harris seconded the motion, which carried by unanimous vote.**

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

**B. Approval of resolution from the League of Women Voters.**

**Mr. Evans presented to the Board for consideration a resolution from the League of women Voters Twin Counties. This resolution recognizes the 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the passage of the 19<sup>th</sup> Amendment to the US Constitution which gave women the right to vote.**

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

**Ms. Melanie Goff-Bradley, President League of Women Voters Twin Counties, thanked the Board.**

**C. Approval of Anti-poverty plan from NEED, Inc.**

**Mr. Evans stated that Nash Edgecombe Economic Development, Inc. (NEED, Inc) receives federal funding through the Community Service Block Grant program. A requirement of the program is to submit an Anti-poverty Plan. This plan discusses their strategies for eliminating poverty within their service area. He stated that no action is needed of the Board. NEED, Inc. is required to distribute a copy of the plan to the Board prior to its submission. The Board is given an opportunity to submit comments along with the plan. Ginell Rogers, Executive Director/CEO of NEED, Inc. was present to answer questions from the Board.**

**D Approval of right of way easement from Edgecombe Martin-EMC.**

**Mr. Evans stated that Edgecombe Martin Electric Membership Corporation is in need of a right of way easement on property we own near the intersection of Hwy 64 Alt. and Dunbar Road. This will allow them to construct and maintain a transmission line. We have determined that it will not interfere with development on the property. Mr. Evans recommended that the Board approve the easement**

as presented.

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

**E. Approval of Change Order for S&ME's contract for Princeville's 53 Acre Development.**

Mr. Evans presented for the Board's consideration an amendment to the contract with S&ME, Inc. for professional services related to Princeville's 53 Acre development. The amendment includes the reconciliation of components of the original contract, as well adding services (FEMA Benefit Cost Analysis and an Engineer's Opinion of Probable Construction Costs for the entire development). This change order will result in an addition of \$70,963.75, increasing the total contract price to \$262,663.75. This is an eligible cost under the NC Commerce DRA grant.

Mrs. Harris moved to approve the contract amendment as presented and to authorize the Chairman to execute the same. Mr. Boswell seconded the motion, which carried by unanimous vote.

**F. Approval of change in funding appropriated to Braswell Memorial Library.**

Mr. Evans stated that in June the Board approved an appropriation for Braswell Memorial Library of \$194,962.03. This included a 3% increase from the previous year, and was contingent upon Nash County and the City of Rocky Mount approving the same percentage increase. We have since learned that Rocky Mount did approve additional funds, but 1.344% above the previous year. Therefore, the two counties must consider whether to reduce their appropriation. Nash County has already voted to do so. Mr. Evans stated that to be consistent with our agreement to proportionately share in the cost of library's operations, he recommended that the Board approve a reduction in allocation to Braswell Memorial Library to \$191,829.23.

Rev. Hines moved to approve the reduction in allocation as presented. Mr. Webb seconded the motion, which carried by unanimous vote.

**G. Approval of the appointment of Katina Braswell as the 2020 Census Liaison.**

Mrs. Harris moved to appoint Katina Braswell as the 2020 Census Liaison. Mrs. Powell seconded the motion, which carried by unanimous vote.

**H. Approval of change in mileage reimbursement rate.**

Mr. Boswell moved to approve the new mileage reimbursement rate at 57.5 cents. Rev. Hines seconded the motion, which carried by unanimous vote.

**9. APPOINTMENTS.**

**A. Nursing Home Adult Care Advisory Committee**

Mrs. Harris moved to appoint Stephanie Walker. Rev. Hines seconded the motion, which carried by unanimous vote.

**B. Carolinas Gateway Partnership**

Mrs. Powell moved to appoint Mr. Richard Anderson. Rev. Hines seconded the motion, which carried by unanimous vote.

**C. East Carolina Live Stock Arena Board.**

Rev. Hines moved to appoint Mr. Jeff Lancaster. Mrs. Powell seconded the motion, which carried by unanimous vote.

**10. 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.

11. **CONTRACTS FOR REVIEW/APPROVAL.**

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

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

- A. Water Services.
- B. Financial Summary report.
- C. Hurricane recovery update.
- D. Influenza report.
- E. Tourism Development Board report.
- F. Update on Franchise Agreement for On Demand Transport, LLC.

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

- A. Update on Forestry Management Project
- B. Notice from Suddenlink.
- C. Reminder of 2020 Census.
- D. Workforce Development Indicators.
- E. Update on solid Waste permits provided by William Johnson, Assistant County Manager.
- F. Proposed date for joint meeting with ECPS Board – February 24<sup>th</sup>.
- G. Appointment of Interim Director in cooperative Extension.
- H. Update on Edgecombe County Rescue Squad.

14. **COMMISSIONERS' REPORT.**

Mr. Boswell stated that he has experienced, as well as his wife and a couple people in his district, having a hard time getting people from the County to return their call. I will talk to Mr. Evans about specific departments, but the citizens of the County need to be called back.

Mr. Boswell stated that he thought that part of the snafu the Board is facing with the farmers and the health individuals is partly his fought because when he made the motion, it was to ban smoking on County property and he allowed Mr. Wooten to amend it and change it. However, what ended up happening is what should have happened to start with. It was not handled that well. We allow both sides to come together in this room to discuss the issue. Fortunately, it worked out tonight exactly how he thought it should. Regardless of how the vote ends and regardless of how you vote, or who you vote for. He stated that we need, as Commissioners, as leaders of the County to allow people to get together to discuss things before we try to dictate to them what we want to do after to listening to both sides. He asked Mr. Peters to correct him, if he is wrong. He stated that he made the motion to ban it from the property and allowed Mr. Wooten to say County property everywhere.

Mr. Peters stated generally, He interpreted him withdrawing your motion so that he could make his second motion.

Mr. Boswell stated that this is where the snafu came up at.

Mrs. Harris stated that as a member of the Human Services Board, they have an open meeting. It consists of the DSS Board and the Board of Health together. That meeting is open to the public to come whenever there is a meeting, that they can come to discuss their opinion. She stated that nobody shows up at the meetings, but then it blows up. People need to start taking advantage of the opportunity to attend each and every one of those meetings and give their opinion.

Mr. Webb stated that three months ago he was appointed to the Health Department Board, as a Commissioner representative, but after not receiving a call he found out that he was an unfit candidate, because he didn't also serve on the Health and Human Services Board.

Mr. Johnson stated that it is in the Health and Human Services by-laws that in order to serve on either one of the advisory boards you must be an eligible Human Services Board member. He stated that one of his department heads requested that Mr. Webb serve, but when he went back to the by-laws he realized that he was not eligible.

15. ATTORNEY'S REPORT.

None.

16. CLOSED SESSION.

Mr. Wooten moved to go into closed session to discuss economic development. [N.C.G.S. 143-318.11 (a)(4)] and personnel. [N.C.G.S. 143-318.11 (a)(6)]. Mrs. Powell seconded the motion, which carried by unanimous vote.

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

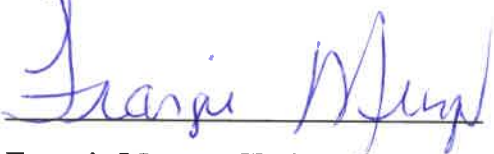
Mrs. Powell moved to approve the agreement With Ossid as presented. Mr. Boswell seconded the motion, which carried by unanimous vote.

Mrs. Harris moved to approve and execute the deed to convey the property. Mr. Boswell seconded the motion, which carried by unanimous vote.

Mr. Webb moved to approve obtaining Attorney Bo Simmons to provide legal representation for a staff member. Mrs. Powell seconded the motion, which carried by unanimous vote.

17. MR. WOOTEN MOVED TO ADJOURN THE MEETING UNTIL MARCH 2, 2020 AT 7:00 P.M. MR. BOSWELL SECONDED THE MOTION, WHICH CARRIED BY UNANIMOUS VOTE.

Approved March 2, 2020.



Frankie Mungo, Clerk to the Board