

**MINUTES
REGULAR SCHEDULED MEETING OF THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
OF EDGECOMBE COUNTY
JULY 6, 2020 AT 7:00 P.M.
IN THE CARMON AUDITORIUM
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, Mrs. Viola Harris, Mr. Ralph Webb and Mrs. Evelyn Powell.

MEMBERS ABSENT: Mr. William Wooten and Mr. Donald Boswell.

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

2. SAFETY INSTRUCTIONS.

Mr. William Johnson, Assistant County Manager, provided safety instructions.

3. PRAYER.

Rev. Hines provided the prayer.

4. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS PRESENTED FOR APPROVAL.

Rev. Hines moved to approve the minutes of the June 1, 2020 and June 22, 2020 meetings as presented. Mr. Webb seconded the motion, which carried by unanimous vote.

5. SCHEDULED APPOINTMENT.

A. Cynthia Jones with the City of Rocky Mount presented the FY 2020-2021 Annual Action Plan for the Down East Home Consortium.

Mr. Evans started that this is a public hearing and Mr. Wiggins called it to order.

Mr. Peters read the public notice as published.

Mrs. Jones presented the following information:

- **FY2018-2021 three-year consolidated plan goals summary**
- **Proposed FY2020-2021 Annual Action Plan**
- **Federal funding Sources**
- **FY2020-2021 Down East Home Consortium (DEHC) Home Program funding**
- **DEHC Home fund allocations - \$417,205**

Mr. Wiggins called for public comments.

Mr. Evans stated no public comments were received.

Mrs. Jones answered questions from the Board.

There being no further comments the public hearing was adjourned.

6. PUBLIC PETITIONS.

In light of the State of Emergency and in consideration of the recommendations 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 submitted 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 following public petition was submitted via email and read by Mr. Evans:

Afternoon Mr. Evans,

I wish things were different and our Board of Commissioners meeting was open to the public as I would have loved to attend. I had the opportunity to visit our Sheriff's Office this afternoon and enjoy lunch from Brandy's food truck.

To begin with, I love the outreach into our community and the open invitation our Sheriff's Office extends to every person, to come out and enjoy different lunch options while reducing any negative stigma against our LEOs. Our Edgecombe Deputies are one of a kind.

However; the grounds of their office (mainly the grassy areas) look as though it has NOT been cut in quite some time. It was brought to my attention that the county has a contract with their office to handle grass cutting. I'm unsure of the contract stipulations pertaining to the frequency of their lawn care but the height of the grass is unsightly. It delivers a messy and unkempt appearance of our county's finest men. Our Sheriff's Office is no different than any other county building that represents Edgecombe county.

Let's not negate this building just because it is not downtown with higher foot traffic. They still are a reflection of this entire county and your board.

*Thank you
-Leigh Ann Phillips*

Mr. Evans stated that it is included in the contract along with other buildings. Typically, it is only cut every two to three weeks. He stated that he will follow up on that.

John Walker, 1303 North Main Street, Tarboro, NC, stated that he was present both as a reporter for the Rocky Mount Telegram and as a registered voter. Mr. Walker stated that in the 36 years he has covered municipal government, this is the first time he has ever addressed a body and he felt the need of it. He stated that tonight on the agenda the Board will consider the approval of the Annual Compensation Plan. In that compensation plan, in addition to all the different wage categories, it actually asked the Board to approve two new positions, including one for the Deputy County Manager at up to \$135,256 per year plus benefits. He asked why. We have an Assistant County Manager who makes up to \$96,124 per year and a County Manager at a hire rate than that. Mr. Walker asked what would the new person do that the existing two can't, and if it is, Mr. Johnson, who is the current Assistant County Manager, why not just give him a raise instead of a new \$40,000 salary cap on what he is already making. He stated that we keep hearing that we don't have any funds, we don't have any money, we can't do this, we can't do that but here we are creating a new position and tying up new money. Mr. Walker stated that it needs to be questioned. He had somebody point out to him that it's in the agenda. It's really not. It's in the agenda book. If you read the agenda book and go through each item, you find these new positions. As far as the agenda goes, all it says is consideration of the annual compensation plan. He stated that it is something that the public really does not have access to because those the first three pages is the only thing that is on the website.

7. **OTHER BUSINESS:**

A. With the consensus of the Board, a budget amendment was added to the agenda for the Board's consideration.

Mr. Evans presented a budget amendment for Solid Waste to cover contracts (S&ME) for fiscal year 2021, which was inadvertently left out of the original budget).

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

B. Approval of Home and Community Care Block Grant Funding Plan.

Mr. Evans stated that in accordance with the procedures for funding of the Home and Community Care Block Grant, a recommendation for the allocation of FY-21 funding is presented for the Board's consideration. Edgecombe County is being awarded \$585,820 for FY-21, which is no change from FY-20. The total requests from providers (\$808,110) was \$222,290 more than the funding available to the County. After much valuable discussion, presentations from providers and guidance from the Upper Coastal Plains Council of Governments Area Agency on Aging, the attached plan is being recommended. Mr. Evans stated that this reflects the needs of Edgecombe County's aging population and the best use of the available funding.

Mrs. Powell moved to approve the funding plan for the Home and Community Care Block Grant as presented. Rev. Hines seconded the motion, which carried by unanimous vote.

C. Approval of extension of the vested rights period for the Edgecombe Solar project.

Mr. Evans stated that in September of 2018, the Board approved a Special Use Permit for Edgecombe Solar LLC. The project is located along US 64 Alt West at the intersection of Kingsboro Road on two parcels totaling approximately 1,544 acres, with approximately 600 acres to be used for the solar energy system. Per the Unified Development Ordinance Section 4-15, and consistent with state statutes, the vested right, or right to undertake and complete the development as approved via the Special Use Permit, expires after two years if a building permit application has not been filed with the County. Though progress has been made on various pre-construction elements of the development, it is likely an application for a building permit will not be submitted before their vested rights expire. NC General Statute 153A-344.1(d)(2) allows a county to extend vested rights up to five years. Therefore, representatives of Edgecombe Solar LLC are requesting that the Board consider extending the vested rights period to five years. Mr. Evans stated that based on the progress made on the project and the justification provided for the need for the extension he recommended that the approve the extension as requested.

Ms. Meritt Parrot, Attorney with Parker and Poe representing Edgecombe Solar, was present and the developer representative (Ryan) was present via phone provided an explanation and answered question from the Board.

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

D. Approval of annual Compensation Plan.

Mr. Evans stated that it is his responsibility to annually review the County's Compensation Plan and make recommendations for modifications. His review of the plan involves consideration of maintaining a competitive compensation structure, while being mindful of what our budget can sustain. Mr. Evans recommended two changes for the 2020-2021 Compensation Plan. First is the addition of a Network Security Administrator position at a grade 21. This position will oversee the county's IT network. Adding this position is not only critical due to the ever-present threat of cyber-attacks, but also to address a weakness pointed out in our last audit. The other position is a Deputy County Manager. This position will assist him in a board range of administrative and management

functions. He or she may also act as the County Manager during extended absences when deemed necessary. This position is recommended at a grade 33.

Mr. Powell made a motion to approve the 2020-2021 compensation plan with the two new positions as presented. Mr. Wiggins seconded the motion, which carried by unanimous vote.

E. Approval of the transfer of properties to Southeastern NC Community Development Corporation.

Mr. Evans stated that in June of 2019 the Board approved the transfer of eight (8) lots on Vance Street in Rocky Mount to the Southeastern NC Community Development Corporation. SENCDC is the non-profit development arm of the Rocky Mount Housing Authority and the lots will be used for affordable housing. The required notice of conveyance was not published following the Board's action in June of last year. Therefore, he asked that the Board reconsider this matter so that the appropriate notice may be published.

Rev. Hines moved to approve the conveyance of eight parcels identified by parcel number as 3759-50-2940; 3759-50-2825; 3759-50-2810; 3759-50-1796; 3759-40-9863; 3759-50-1781; 3759-40-9758; and 3759-50-1537 to the southeastern NC CDC. Mrs. Powell seconded the motion, which carried by unanimous vote.

F. Approval of amendment to Health Department Fee Schedule.

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

G. Approval of offers to purchase county-owned properties.
Tabled.

H. Approval of declaring 2009 Chevrolet Impala as surplus and approval to donate to Edgecombe Community College.

Mr. Evans stated that Sheriff Cleo Atkinson proposes that the Board surplus a 2009 Chevrolet Impala that has been in service in his office. The vehicle is in need of repairs and is scheduled to be removed from the fleet. He also recommends that the vehicle be donated to Edgecombe Community College for use in their Basic Law Enforcement Training program.

Mrs. Powell moved that this vehicle be deemed surplus and to authorize the donation of this vehicle to Edgecombe Community College. Rev. Hines seconded the motion, which carried by unanimous vote.

I. Approval of award of service weapon to retiring deputy.

Mr. Evans stated that NC Statute 20.187.2 allows the Board of Commissioners to award a retiring officer his/her service weapon. It specifically states that you may do so at a price determined by you as the governing body. Sheriff Atkinson has requested that consideration be given for retiring Corporal Elwood Whitaker. To show the County's appreciation for his exemplary service, and to provide a memento to that service, Mr. Evans recommended that the Board approve the transfer of his service weapon at a price of \$1 upon the retirement of Corporal Elwood Whitaker.

Mr. Webb moved to approve the award of the service weapon to retiring Corporal Elwood Whitaker. Mrs. Powell seconded the motion, which carried by unanimous vote.

8. APPOINTMENTS.

A. Rocky Mount Planning Board.

Mrs. Powell moved to appoint Ms. Gwendolyn C. Wigen. Rev. Hines seconded

the motion, which carried by unanimous vote.

B. Rocky Mount Board of Adjustment.

No recommendations.

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

A. Major Subdivision – Camps Way

B. Major Subdivision – Daughtridge Farm Subdivision

C. Minutes of June 15, 2020 meeting.

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.

Mrs. Powell moved to approve the contracts as presented. Rev. Hines 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.

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

A. Workforce Development Indicators.

B. COVID-19 update.

C. Revision to Utility Payment Plan.

D. Appointment of the new Cooperative Extension Director.

Mr. Evans recognized Tanya Health as the new Director.

E. Completion of the NC Commerce grant and study on barriers to employment.

F. Designation of Voting Delegate to NCACC Annual Conference.

Mrs. Powell moved to designate Mrs. Harris. Rev. Hines seconded the motion, which carried by unanimous vote.

14. COMMISSIONERS' REPORT.

None.

15. ATTORNEY'S REPORT.

None.

16. CLOSED SESSION.

Rev. Hines moved to enter into closed session to discuss economic development.

[N.C.G.S. 143-318.11 (a)(4)] and a personnel matter [N.C.G.S. 143-318.11 (a)(6)].

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

Upon recommendation by Mr. Peters, Mrs. Harris moved to go out of closed session and go back into open session. Mrs. Powell seconded the motion, which carried by unanimous vote.

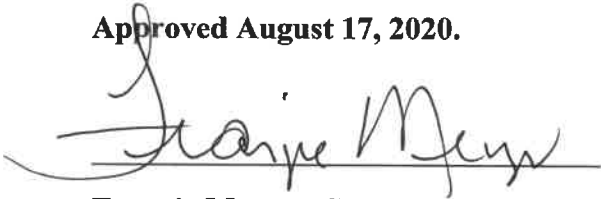
Rev. Hines moved to add legal matter discussion in closed session. Mrs. Powell seconded the motion, which carried by unanimous vote.

Rev. Hines moved to go into closed session to discuss economic development, a legal matter and a personnel matter. Mrs. Harris 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.

17. REV. HINES MOVED TO ADJOURN THE MEETING UNTIL AUGUST 3, 2020 AT 7:00 P.M. MRS. POWELL SECONDED THE MOTION, WHICH CARRIED BY UNANIMOUS VOTE.

Approved August 17, 2020.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Frankie Mungo", written over a horizontal line.

Frankie Mungo, Clerk to the Board