

MINUTES
REGULAR SCHEDULED MEETING OF THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
OF EDGECOMBE COUNTY
NOVEMBER 5, 2018 AT 7:00 P.M.
IN THE 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, Mr. Donald Boswell, Mrs. Viola Harris, Mrs. Evelyn Powell, Rev. E. Wayne Hines and Mr. William Wooten.

MEMBERS ABSENT: Mr. Jonathan Felton, Vice-Chairman.

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

2. PRAYER.

Rev. Hines provided the prayer.

3. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING PRESENTED FOR APPROVAL.

Mrs. Harris moved to approve the October 1, 2018 minutes as presented. Mrs. Powell seconded the motion, which carried by unanimous vote.

4. SCHEDULED APPOINTMENTS.

A. Sheriff Cleo Atkinson was present to provide an update.

Sheriff Atkinson introduced Jail Administrator Oliver Washington and Lt. Deborah Stokes who came forth to share accomplishments at the department:

- Seven televisions purchased for inmates
- Tablets to be used by inmates
- Kiosks machines in each pod that allow inmates to access law libraries
- Commissary
- Storage bins in pods
- Basketball goals installed in male recreation area
- Board games and volley ball for female population
- Painted in administration section
- Evaluation of food services costs to help reduce cost of meals
- WRAP programs to help inmates deal with life situations and other programs are provided
- In the process of replacing mattresses
- Major concerns:
 - Maintenance (jail inspector displeased with the maintenance issues)
 - Staffing; currently 10 positions down; difficult in hiring and retaining quality staff due to the low pay and stressful environment

Mr. Wooten asked questions relative to jail capacity, jail monthly income and jail monthly operational costs.

Ms. Stokes and Mr. Watson provided answers and stated that they were currently working on how much it cost to operate the jail monthly.

After further discussion and questions and thanks for all they do from the Board and answers from Mr. Watson and Ms. Stokes, Sheriff Atkinson came forth.

Sheriff Atkinson stated that the Sheriff's Office never closes. They work days, nights and weekends; work holidays and are constantly on call. They have to leave from their homes to assist other deputies in dealing with dangerous situations, arrests and investigations. He stated that they love their county. He stated that pay has become a great detriment to the Sheriff's Office in their ability to hire professional qualified staff. Sheriff Atkinson stated that what he is trying to build in the Edgecombe County Sheriff's Department qualified, professional people and it is hard to do when the salaries are where they are. This has resulted in a huge struggle to continue to provide professional law enforcement to service our citizens. He stated that failing to provide staff with a decent comparable salary has resulted in loss of experienced staff. He stated that he is a training machine across the state. He stated that he is grateful and thankful for industry headed to Edgecombe County but also fearful because when we gain industry he will lose a lot of great employees. He described

the dangerous condition staff encounter daily. Staff has been forced to take second and third jobs. He stated that two of his daily goals is positive impact in Edgecombe County and to enhance the quality of life for all citizens in the County. Sheriff Atkinson stated that he is asking for pay increases for all of his staff so they can make a comparable salary to everybody else in law enforcement. If nothing more get hazard duty pay. He thanked the Board for their continuous support.

Mr. Wooten asked if the Board dictates what amount of the Sheriff's budget goes towards salaries or is it up to the Sheriff's department to figure out what funds are dictated to salaries and how much per position.

Mr. Evans stated that like the budget that the Board approves across the County, the Sheriff's budget has line items that are assigned a value and that is what he is bound by. He has the opportunity to move money from one budget item to another.

Mr. Wiggins stated that if the money is in the budget the Sheriff has the right to make increases to individual slots on the pay classification plan.

Mr. Wooten asked if it was the Sheriff's request to change the pay classification to raise the ranges.

Sheriff Atkinson stated that it would help. He stated that if all of those positions (deputy wise) were filled they will have to come in now with the existing salary of \$30,488.

Mr. Wooten asked the Sheriff what total dollar amount he would like to see an increase in to bring it up to what he wants it to be. He stated that he is asking for an increase but the Board does not know what he is asking for.

Sheriff Atkinson stated that ½ million dollars would help and be a great start. He stated that the issue is he does not have the money to move funds around.

Mr. Wiggins stated that he felt there was no opposition from the Board to what the Sheriff wants to do. He stated that the Board's issue is the same as the Sheriff's, how do we finance. Mr. Wiggins stated that all of the County's employees are underpaid because we lose them across that line. He stated that the Board will do anything to help all of the employees in the County. He stated that the greater responsibility is to make sure that the money is there and if the money is there the Sheriff can have this conversation with the Manager and find the money and then there is nothing that the Board will not do.

Rev. Hines stated that there are some issues that need to be taken care now, and hopefully Sheriff Atkinson will not think that the Board is just sitting here with no concern about the well-being of his staff." He stated that pay has a lot to do with the quality of work that is being done and hoped that the Board can work something out that will make a difference, so the Sheriff did not have to worry about how long he will keep a deputy officer. A trained and experienced law enforcement officer is one of the best gifts that can be used in a county or town.

Sheriff Atkinson stated that he believe in increases for all Edgecombe County employees but he is proud that his staff protect the borders of Edgecombe County.

Mrs. Harris recommended that the Sheriff and his finance person to sit down with the Manager and his finance person.

Mr. Wiggins stated that as the Board looks at the budget and projections on what revenue will be coming in and if the Manager say it can be done, then the Board looks at it favorable.

Mrs. Harris stated that the pay study should also be looked at. We have to stop looking at the lowest grade and find somewhere in the middle.

Mr. Wiggins thanked Sheriff Atkinson for his presentation.

5. PUBLIC PETITIONS.

Mr. Curmilus Dancy, 127 Midway Lane, Tarboro, stated that he understands the Sheriff's presentation and he understands the Board's response, however, some of the things that were said, such as what other counties have done, what you can do, what you cannot do as far as lowing the pay for the in-coming Sheriff because you did not have one at the time, but

it does not make it necessary to have to do it from what he understands. If the money was there for the other sheriff, he did not understand how it is a problem with the in-coming Sheriff. He stated that he has been following the Sheriffs in the County since the late 1980s when he became actively involved in politics. He stated that he felt good about being a part of the Edgecombe County Democratic Party and be a part of the process of appointing, not just this Sheriff, but the past Sheriff. He stated that he is active in the community and he can see what the deputies are doing and what those working in the jail are doing. Mr. Dancy stated that all of the burden should not be on the Sheriff's Office. The Board is over the Sheriff's Department and the County should try to find funding to pay them. He stated that other County departments need to be standing before the Board like the Sheriff is here tonight to speak on his behalf. He stated that it is not fair to even mention what other folks ought to be doing, they ought to be here. The Sheriff does not need to be here advocating for other departments, they need to advocate on their own. Mr. Dancy stated that with their lives being on the line, and their job is not compared to what the other folk are doing, because their lives are not on the line. The Sheriff's Office works 24 hours and he sees them doing good things and he would love to see the Board help them with their pay and they cannot be compared to other departments.

Mr. Milton Bullock, Princeville, who wanted to ask a question during the scheduled appointment was asked if he wanted to speak. He did have a questions particularly for the Sheriff and was advised to contact the Sheriff.

6. **OTHER BUSINESS:**

A. **Approval of budget amendments.**

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

B. **Approval of calling for a public hearing on December 3, 2018 for the closing of College Road.**

Rev. Hines moved to call for a public hearing. Mrs. Harris seconded the motion, which carried by unanimous vote.

C. **Approval of grant agreement for Princeville's 53 acre development.**

Mr. Evans stated that the NC General Assembly appropriated funds for Hurricane Matthew Recovery in the Disaster Recovery Act of 2016 (DRA-16). From that funding, \$2,631,000 is earmarked for the Town of Princeville for the development of the 53-acre tract the Town recently purchased and annexed. The NC Department of Commerce, which is managing those DRA-16 funds, has asked that the County receive those funds and implement the development project for the Town. He stated that both boards (County and Town of Princeville) approved resolutions agreeing to that arrangement at the meeting in September. Mr. Evans presented for the Board's consideration the grant agreement committing those funds for the project and recommended that they accept this grant award and approve the project ordinance and budget amendment.

Mrs. Powell moved to accept the grant award and approve the project ordinance and budget amendment as presented. Rev. Hines seconded the motion, which carried by unanimous vote.

D. **Approval of a resolution related to the Corning Project.**

Mr. Evans stated that the NC Department of Commerce has indicated the possibility of the County receiving a grant through its Industrial Development Fund to support infrastructure improvements for the Corning project. To proceed, we must submit an application and give some assurances how we will administer the grant once received. Mr. Evans stated that the Board approved a similar resolution at the meeting in June. We need to revisit it as NC Commerce has changed the required job creation to only include the 111 permanent full-time jobs and not the 38 contract positions. Mr. Evans recommended that the Board approve the resolution.

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

E. **Approval of awarding recreation mini-grants.**

Mr. Boswell moved to approve the awards for recreation mini-grants as recommended by the Recreation Grant Review Committee. Mrs. Harris seconded the motion.

Rev. Hines asked about the two organizations with the same score and only one received an award.

Mr. Evans stated that one of the organizations received funding last year.

The motion carried by unanimous vote.

F. Approval of authorizing the Fire Marshall's Office to issue the necessary permits to S&W Productions, LLC to have fireworks display on December 29, 2018 for Curtis Beardon, 38 Sir Dillon Lane, Tarboro.

Mrs. Harris moved to authorize the Fire Marshall's Office to issue the permits. Rev. Hines seconded the motion, which carried by unanimous vote.

G. Approval of the 2019 Holiday Schedule.

Rev. Hines moved to approve the 2019 Holiday Schedule as presented. Mr. Wooten seconded the motion, which carried by unanimous vote.

H. Approval of the acceptance of grant award for Princeville's HMGP-Acquisition.

Mrs. Harris moved to accept the grant award as presented. Rev. Hines seconded the motion, which carried by unanimous vote.

I. Approval of Infrastructure Contract Amendment.

Mr. Evans stated that Edgecombe County has a construction project underway for a sewer collection system for the Town of Speed and surrounding vicinity. This project is funded in part by Community Development Block Grant – Infrastructure (CDBG-I) funds. The County received notice that our grant contract needs to be amended per a federal requirement. This amendment poses no issue for us in implementing the project, which is near completion. Mr. Evans recommended that the Board approve the grant contract amendment.

Mr. Boswell moved to approve the grant contract amendment as presented. Mrs. Harris seconded the motion, which carried by unanimous vote.

J. Approval of revised Pay Plan to include amended IT position.

Mr. Evans stated that over the last year, we have implemented strategic improvements in the Information Technology Department to be more efficient and to better protect our network. Part of that includes evaluating the functions of the positions in IT. The IT Director recommends upgrades in both the titles and job descriptions for the three positions in that department to better reflect the work they are already doing. Considering we have an announced retirement in that office, for which we will soon need to post that upcoming vacancy, now is a good time to make this change. Mr. Evans stated that the proposed change includes changing the Information Technology Director to Chief Information Officer; the Systems Administrator to Technical Support Analyst I; and the Network Systems Administrator to Senior Technical Support Analyst. These new titles and descriptions will be more consistent with those currently used across the IT industry. Also, this does not change the pay grade for the positions nor the salaries for the staff in them.

Mrs. Harris moved to approve the revised Pay Plan to include amended IT positions as presented. Mr. Wooten seconded the motion, which carried by unanimous vote.

7. APPOINTMENTS.

A. Planning Board.

Mr. Wooten moved to appoint Ms. Cara Collins Archer. Mrs. Powell seconded the motion, which carried by unanimous vote.

8. AFTERLISTS AND RELEASES FOR REVIEW AND APPROVAL.

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

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

A. Water Services.

B. Financial Summary Report.

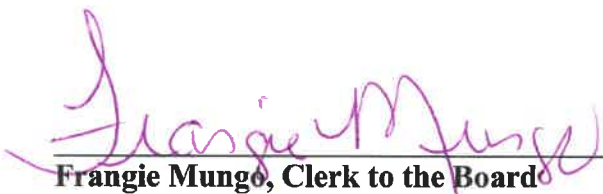
C. Hurricane recovery update.

D. Midlakes Project update.

E. Tourism Development Authority report.

10. **MANAGER'S REPORT.*****Received***
A. Economic and Workforce Indicators.
B. Update on construction of Triangle Tire and Corning facilities.
C. Eastpointe update.
D. Farm City Breakfast, December 6, 2018 at 7:30 a.m.
E. Notice from Suddenlink.
11. **COMMISSIONERS' REPORT.**
A. Designation of Voting Delegate for NCACC Legislative Goals Conference.
Rev. Hines moved to designate Mrs. Harris as voting delegate. Mr. Boswell seconded the motion, which carried by unanimous vote.
12. **ATTORNEY'S REPORT.**
None.
13. **CLOSED SESSION.**
Mr. Wooten moved to go into closed session to discuss economic development and a personnel matter. Rev. Hines seconded the motion, which carried by unanimous vote.
- Mr. Boswell moved to go out of closed session and resume the regular meeting. Mr. Wooten seconded the motion, which carried by unanimous vote.
- Mr. Boswell moved to give the County Manager, Mr. Evans, a one-time 3% bonus. Mrs. Harris seconded the motion, which carried by unanimous vote.
14. **MR. WOOTEN MOVED TO ADJOURN THE MEETING UNTIL MONDAY, DECEMBER 3, 2018 AT 7:00 P.M. REV. HINES SECONDED THE MOTION, WHICH CARRIED BY UNANIMOUS VOTE.**

Approved December 3, 2018.


Frangie Mungo, Clerk to the Board