

# **Ashe County**

*150 Government Circle  
Jefferson, NC 28640*



## **Meeting Minutes - Draft**

**Monday, August 15, 2022**

**9:00 AM**

**Commission Meeting Room**

### **County Commission**

*Chairperson Todd McNeill  
Vice Chair William Sands  
Commissioner Chuck Olive  
Commissioner Jerry D. Powers  
Commissioner Jonathan Jordan*

**BUSINESS SESSION**

**Present:** 5 - Commissioner Chuck Olive, Chairperson Todd McNeill, Vice Chairman William Sands, Commissioner Jerry D. Powers and Commissioner Jonathan Jordan

**I. 9:00 AM - Meeting Called to Order at the Ashe County Courthouse**

*Chairman McNeill called the Regular Session of the Ashe County Board of Commissioners to order at 9:00 AM at the Ashe County Courthouse.*

**Present:** 5 - Commissioner Chuck Olive, Chairperson Todd McNeill, Vice Chairman William Sands, Commissioner Jerry D. Powers and Commissioner Jonathan Jordan

**II. Pledge of Allegiance/Opening Prayer**

*Commissioner Olive led the Pledge of Allegiance and Vice Chairman Sands offered the opening prayer.*

**III. Approval of Minutes****[MIN 22-26](#)** 07-18-2022 Regular Session Minutes

**Attachments:** [08-15-22 July 18, 2022 Regular Session Minutes](#)

*Commissioner Olive made the motion to approve the July 18, 2022 minutes as written. Commissioner Powers seconded the motion. The motion passed with unanimous approval.*

**Approved**

**For:** 5 - Commissioner Olive, Chairperson McNeill, Vice Chairman Sands, Commissioner Powers and Commissioner Jordan

**[MIN 22-27](#)** 07-18-2022 Executive Session Minutes

*Commissioner Olive made the motion to approve the July 18, 2022 Executive Session minutes as written. Commissioner Powers seconded the motion. The motion passed with unanimous approval.*

**Approved**

**For:** 5 - Commissioner Olive, Chairperson McNeill, Vice Chairman Sands, Commissioner Powers and Commissioner Jordan

**[MIN 22-28](#)** 07-25-2022 Special Called Meeting Minutes (BOC/BOE)

**Attachments:** [08-15-22 July 25, 2022 Special Meeting Minutes](#)

*Commissioner Olive made the motion to approve the July 25, 2022 Special Called Meeting minutes as written. Commissioner Powers seconded the motion. The motion passed with unanimous approval.*

**Approved**

**For:** 5 - Commissioner Olive, Chairperson McNeill, Vice Chairman Sands, Commissioner Powers and Commissioner Jordan

**[MIN 22-29](#)** 08-01-2022 Regular Session Minutes

Attachments: [08-15-22 August 1, 2022 Regular Session Minutes](#)

*Commissioner Olive made the motion to approve the August 1, 2022 minutes as written. Commissioner Powers seconded the motion. The motion passed with unanimous approval.*

**Approved**

**For:** 5 - Commissioner Olive, Chairperson McNeill, Vice Chairman Sands, Commissioner Powers and Commissioner Jordan

#### IV. Adoption of Agenda

*Commissioner Olive made the motion to adopt the Agenda with the addition of an Executive Session meeting at the end. Vice Chairman Sands seconded the motion. The motion passed with unanimous approval.*

**Adopted**

**For:** 5 - Commissioner Olive, Chairperson McNeill, Vice Chairman Sands, Commissioner Powers and Commissioner Jordan

#### V. Public Comment

*Chairman McNeill opened the floor for public comment. At this time members of the Protect Our Fresh Air Committee came to the podium and began by thanking the Board for their seven years of support in preventing the asphalt plant from polluting their air & water in Glendale Springs. The committee spokesperson went on to say that the "Appalachian Materials" has polluted water in Glendale Springs and still owes of \$50,000 in fines yet to be paid. Other members of the committee also expressed their gratitude to the Board. The committee spokesperson stated that after looking into public records about the company he discovered they had filed for bankruptcy and claimed the large fine as a debt. He then ended his comments.*

*Ms. Ann Peters then stepped up to the podium and stated that she went to the Church of Frescoes and that one of their churches was located in Glendale Springs and she felt that the traffic from those trucks traveling back & forth on those roads would be a detriment to the Last Supper at Holy Trinity Church. She then stepped away. Chairman McNeill thanked her and the others for their comments. No more comments were offered.*

#### VI. Presentations

[PRES](#)  
[22-126](#)

9:05 AM - DSS Director Tracie Downer - Monthly Statistics for June 2022

Attachments: [DSS Statistics June 2022](#)

*DSS Director Tracie Downer presented her monthly statistics report for June 2022. She also stated that Ashe County was 1 of 5 counties in the state that met their goal for child support. She also stated that the CDC has come out with some different Covid guidelines saying that Ashe County is continuing to follow more strict protocols to protect staff. She also said that the administration was going to meet this week to discuss what adjustments need to be made. Then DSS will follow suite and do the same - always mindful of the vulnerability of DSS clients. Some of which are more susceptible. DSS may run more strict to protect staff and clients. She also mentioned that in the fiscal area after the budget estimates were provided to them by the NC Department of Health & Human Services and after the budget was passed by the board, the state informed DSS that they were changing the way reimbursements are done due to Federal demands for*



more detailed data. This is for only medicaid. The DSS Department is working on & training for the change and exactly what the outcome will be is unknown at this time. She stated that she didn't foresee a big impact in Ashe County. She then stated that there was a position opening with DSS in Adult Services and that it had been posted and she hoped to have it filled soon. Vice Chairman Sands asked the DSS Director how many children were up for adoption currently in Ashe County. She stated that she didn't have an exact number but that she would get it for him. He then asked the age range of children awaiting adoption. She replied that the age range was across the board - all ages. Chairman McNeill commended the DSS Department on being ahead of the curve on child support.

**No Action Taken**

**PRES**  
**22-127**

9:10 AM - Emergency Management Coordinator Patty Gambill -  
Warrensville VFRD Request for Property at Middle School

**Attachments:** [08-15-22 Warrensville VFRD Request for Property at Middle School](#)

Emergency Management Coordinator Patty Gambill opened saying that they were there to request the Right-to-Refusal to the 10.6 acres that the Warrensville VFRD has requested for a new fire station at the current middle school as well as the easement for the water point and the easement through the rear access. The Board discussed with members of the WVFRD exact locations on the map provided. Chairman McNeill asked members of the WVFRD if they felt like this suits their needs and they stated that it did. The process that would now ensue was discussed. Emergency Management Coordinator Patty Gambill stated that deeds would have easements & reversion clauses written in and that would all be handled by the school Board and the County Attorney John Kilby. The Board of Commissioners will be voting on relinquishing their rights so that the school Board can give the acreage to the Warrensville VFRD directly. Commissioner Powers made the motion to give up their rights and to approve as presented. Commissioner Olive seconded the motion. The motion passed with unanimous approval.

**Approved**

**For:** 5 - Commissioner Olive, Chairperson McNeill, Vice Chairman Sands, Commissioner Powers and Commissioner Jordan

**PRES**  
**22-128**

9:15 AM - Ashe County Librarian Laura McPherson - Re-Appointments to  
the Ashe County Library Advisory Board

**Attachments:** [08-15-22 Laura McPherson Reappointments](#)

Ashe County Librarian Laura McPherson stated that three Ashe County Library Advisory Board (ACLAB) members will complete their first term of service on August 31, 2022. All are willing to continue for a second term, and we would like to recommend that the Board of Commissioners approve their reappointment to the Board until August 2026. The board members are Kyle Hall, Karen Moll, and Jan Noffsinger. In addition, one of our Appalachian Regional Library Governing Board members, Joann Crawley, finished her term on the ARL Board in July, and the ACLAB would like to recommend Karen Moll to fill her vacated seat. If approved, Karen would serve a four-year term, beginning in September 2022 and ending in August 2026.

Vice Chairman Sands expressed his appreciation for the library volunteers. Commissioner Powers also stated that the library was exceptional. Chairman McNeill also offered his gratitude for the volunteers with the library. Commissioner Powers made the motion to approve the reappointments. Vice Chair Sands seconded the motion. The motion passed with unanimous approval.

**Approved**

For: 5 - Commissioner Olive, Chairperson McNeill, Vice Chairman Sands, Commissioner Powers and Commissioner Jordan

PRES  
22-129

9:20 AM - Nancy Saltz - Need for Veterinarian in Ashe County

*Nancy Saltz and Lisa Graybeal came before the Board to discuss the need for a veterinarian in Ashe County. Stating that there is only one vet in Ashe County and he is no longer accepting new patients. Residents are forced to drive to Boone, Sparta or Wilkes for these services which is not always feasible in the winter months. Stating that even the vets in neighboring counties are overwhelmed. They asked about the possibility of a satellite vet. Lisa Graybeal talked about the diversity in Ashe County now and how you have people that follow the old ways that have a yard dog that never sees a vet, to those that treat their pets like their children. She spoke on the numerous strays in the county and the lack of a leash/teather laws. Stating that the county was very behind in some of these areas. They asked for help in attracting a vet to the area. Maybe give them incentive to come here. Commissioner Powers spoke on the difficulty also of getting a large animal vet. Lisa Graybeal stated that there was a 6 month wait to get in to see some vets in neighboring counties. Commissioner Olive spoke on the Agricultural Center and that there were plans to include a large animal vet in the facility. He stated that they have spoken to NC State and Virginia Tech about upcoming veterinarian graduates and learned that most of them do not want to be large animal vets. It was now an option to be one or the other. Commissioner Powers stated that 75% of veterinarian students were female and cannot always do what is necessary in large animal care. Chairman McNeill suggested that they work with Economic Development Director Cathy Barr that she would be an expert on the available options. The Board expressed their understanding for the need of both a small animal and large animal vet. Nancy Saltz and Lisa Graybeal thanked the Board for listening.*

**No Action Taken**

PRES  
22-130

9:25 AM - Sheriff Phil Howell - Covid-19 Mitigation Grant Funding

Attachments: [08-15-22 Sheriff Phil Howell](#)

*Chief Deputy Danny Houck came before the Board seeking approval for a budget amendment to increase the department of Corrections budget from \$3,019,987 to \$3,069,536. This increased appropriation of \$49,548.81 to come from a COVID-19 Mitigation Grant which was awarded after July1, 2022. Commissioner Powers made the motion to approve the budget amendment. Commissioner Olive seconded the motion. The motion passed with unanimous approval.*

**Approved**

For: 5 - Commissioner Olive, Chairperson McNeill, Vice Chairman Sands, Commissioner Powers and Commissioner Jordan

PRES  
22-131

9:30 AM - Economic Development Director Cathy Barr - Industrial Park Update

*Economic Development Director Cathy Barr gave an update on the Industrial Park stating that Vannoy Construction has moved their equipment out to the site of the new Industrial Park. They were unable to begin moving dirt due to the continued rain & weather conditions. As soon as weather permits they will begin moving dirt. She also stated that a Ground Breaking Ceremony is planned for the week of September 12, 2022. And that notice will be sent out on the exact day & time. She also mentioned working on a new*



website for Economic Development stating that the current website is about 13 years old. The new website will be the main avenue in promoting the new Industrial Park.

**No Action Taken**

PRES  
22-132

9:35 AM - Planning Director Matthew Levi - Flood Ordinance Update

Planning Director Matthew Levi presented the Board with some information in regard to the Community Rating System and Flood Ordinances. The Community Rating System (CRS) is a voluntary incentive program that recognizes and encourages community floodplain management practices that exceed the minimum requirements of the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP). In CRS communities, flood insurance premium rates are discounted to reflect the reduced flood risk resulting from the community's efforts that address the three goals of the program: Reduce and avoid flood damage to insurable property, Strengthen and support the insurance aspects of the National Flood Insurance Program, Foster comprehensive floodplain management. Over 1,500 communities participate nationwide, 102 of those participating are in North Carolina. Matthew also stated that there were 20,000+ addresses in Ashe County and that his department would have to go out and map each address in order to participate in the program.

Commissioner Powers commented that he felt like it was not economically feasible for the county to meet all the requirements to participate in the program, considering that only approximately 145 Ashe County homes are required to carry flood insurance out of the 20,000 + county addresses. Commissioner Powers stated that the cost to the county would be astronomical and for very little gain. Representatives for NFIP/CRS stated to Planning Director Matthew Levi that Ashe County's 4' (ft) Freeboard was the gold standard and it would help with the county's flood rating if it chooses to participate in the program. Planning Director Matthew Levi also stated that Code of Ordinance Chapter 151: Flood Damage Prevention will be on the Agenda in September 2022 for consideration for adoption. Chairman McNeill thanked Planning Director Matthew Levi for his update.

**No Action Taken**

PRES  
22-133

9:40 AM - County Manager Adam Stumb - Agricultural Center Update

Agricultural Center Committee Chairman Dr. Richard Calhoun and Judy Bare came before the Board to give an update on the Agricultural Center saying that it had been a dream for a very long time in Ashe County originally discussed in 1993. Dr. Calhoun commended the Board for their insight to create the Agricultural Center Committee. He stated that they have seven (7) members and that they meet regularly twice a month. Dr. Calhoun also stated that all members are continually actively participating. He said that over a period of time land & property has been looked at. The committee has met several times with grant people and they have several ongoing grants. The committee has also adopted bylaws. Dr. Calhoun said that their immediate needs are to meet with engineers & architects so that they may proceed once site selection is approved by the Board. Commissioner Olive asked when their next meeting was going to be held and said he wished to attend. Judy Bare spoke also on the issue of the need for a large animal vet and the plans to include/provide a space/office in the new AG-Center for a large animal vet in hopes of attracting one. The committee also has spoken with the NC State Vet and Virginia Tech and they are offering incentives to graduating vets to practice in areas such as Ashe. Chairman McNeill offered his gratitude to the committee for all their hard work.

**No Action Taken**

[PRES](#)  
[22-134](#)

9:40 AM - County Manager Adam Stumb - Trash Sticker Update

Attachments: [08-15-22 Trash Stickers](#)

County Manager Adam Stumb discussed the circulation of information on the Trash Stickers including pamphlets that went out with tax bills, a press release and posters at convenience centers which included an email and phone number to allow people to submit questions. He stated that numerous phone calls and emails had been received. And that they basically all had similar questions that we will be answering. More information will be going out. Concerns were raised about out of county residents dumping trash. And that too will be addressed. County Manager Adam Stumb stated that we are moving into the answer phase of Trash Stickers and that he feels comfortable moving forward as planned and that most of these issues will be addressed moving forward.

No Action Taken

**GENERAL SESSION****VII. Commissioner Comments****VIII. Announcements****IX. Executive Session****ES 22-14** G.S. 143-318.11 (a) (3) - Legal Issues - Review of Confidential Records/Documents

Commissioner Powers made a motion to enter into Executive Session to discuss Legal Issues - Review of Confidential Records and/or Documents as provided for under G.S. 143-318-11 (a) (3). Vice Chairman Sands seconded the motion. The motion passed with unanimous approval. Chairman McNeill declared the Board in Executive Session at 10:40 am and out of Executive Session at 11:39 am with NO ACTION TAKEN.

Approved

For: 5 - Commissioner Olive, Chairperson McNeill, Vice Chairman Sands, Commissioner Powers and Commissioner Jordan

**X. Adjournment**

Commissioner Powers made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 11:40 am. Vice Chairman Sands seconded the motion. The motion passed with unanimous approval.

Approved

For: 5 - Commissioner Olive, Chairperson McNeill, Vice Chairman Sands, Commissioner Powers and Commissioner Jordan

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