

Ashe County

*150 Government Circle
Jefferson, NC 28640*



Meeting Minutes - Draft

Tuesday, January 17, 2017

9:00 AM

Commission Meeting Room

County Commission

*Chairman William Sands
Vice Chair Paula Perry
Commissioner Jeff Rose
Commissioner Gary Roark
Commissioner Larry Rhodes*

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

Chairman Sands called the meeting of the Ashe County Board of Commissioners to order at 9:00 a.m. at the Ashe County Courthouse.

Present: 5 - Commissioner Jeff Rose, Commissioner Larry Rhodes, Commissioner William Sands, Commissioner Gary Roark and Commissioner Paula Perry

II. Pledge of Allegiance/Opening Prayer

Commissioner Rhodes led the Pledge of Allegiance and Vice Chairman Perry offered the opening prayer.

III. Approval of Minutes**MIN 17-2** January 3, 2017 Regular Session Minutes

Attachments: [01-17-17 January 3, 2017 Regular Session Minutes](#)

Commissioner Roark made a motion to approve the January 3, 2017 Regular Session minutes as written. Commissioner Rhodes seconded the motion. The motion passed with unanimous approval.

Approved

For: 5 - Commissioner Rose, Commissioner Rhodes, Commissioner Sands, Commissioner Roark and Commissioner Perry

MIN 17-3 December 19, 2016 Executive Session Minutes

Commissioner Rhodes made a motion to approve the December 19, 2016 Executive Session minutes as written. Commissioner Roark seconded the motion. The motion passed with unanimous approval.

Approved

For: 5 - Commissioner Rose, Commissioner Rhodes, Commissioner Sands, Commissioner Roark and Commissioner Perry

IV. Adoption of Agenda

Commissioner Rhodes made a motion to adopt the agenda as written. Vice Chairman Perry seconded the motion. The motion passed with unanimous approval.

Adopted

For: 5 - Commissioner Rose, Commissioner Rhodes, Commissioner Sands, Commissioner Roark and Commissioner Perry

V. Presentations

PRES 17-4 Megan Wagoner, Community Services Block Grant Director**Attachments:** [01-17-17 BROC-Community Service Block Grant Appv.](#)

Megan Wagoner, Community Services Block Grant Director with the Blue Ridge Opportunity Commission (BROC), presented the FY2017/18 BROC Community Service Block Grant for approval by the Board. She told the Board that a budget amendment is included that will add carry-over funds in the amount of \$320,196 from the FY2015/16 Emergency Assistance Program. Ms. Wagoner explained that the poverty rate in Ashe County is 20.9%. She further described plan resources along with objectives and activities planned for the next fiscal year. With no further comment from Ms. Wagoner, Commissioner Rhodes made a motion to approve the BROC Community Service Block Grant for FY2017/18. Vice Chairman Perry seconded the motion. The motion passed with unanimous approval.

Approved

For: 5 - Commissioner Rose, Commissioner Rhodes, Commissioner Sands, Commissioner Roark and Commissioner Perry

PRES 17-5 Keith Little, Tax Administrator - Monthly Tax Report for December**Attachments:** [01-17-17 Monthly Tax Report-December 2016](#)

Tax Administrator Keith Little submitted the monthly tax releases and refunds for December 2016. Also presented were the Regular Billing Collection Report and the Motor Vehicles Collection Report through December 2016. Commissioner Rhodes made a motion to approve the December 2016 Release/Refund reports. Commissioner Rose seconded the motion. The motion passed with unanimous approval.

Approved

For: 5 - Commissioner Rose, Commissioner Rhodes, Commissioner Sands, Commissioner Roark and Commissioner Perry

PRES 17-6 Priscilla Norris, CPA - County of Ashe 2016 Audit**Attachments:** [01-17-17 2016 Audit Report](#)

Priscilla Norris, CPA, reviewed the 2016 Audit Report for the year ending June 30, 2016. She also highlighted audit findings in the report being presented to the commissioners.

PRES 17-7 Patricia Calloway, Executive Director Ashe Services for Aging - Senior Tarheel Legislator Delegate & Alternate Delegate Reappointments - Charles and Louise Caudill**Attachments:** [01-17-17 Senior Tarheel Delegates Appts](#)

Patricia Calloway, executive director of Ashe Services for Aging, introduced Senior Tarheel Legislator Delegate Charles Caudill and Alternate Delegate Louise Caudill for appointment by the Board. Commissioner Roark made a motion to appoint Charles Caudill as Senior Tarheel Legislator Delegate and Louise Caudill as Alternate Delegate. Commissioner Rose seconded the motion. The motion passed with unanimous approval. Charles Caudill addressed the commissioners and spoke regarding priorities and projects that will be presented to legislators.

Approved

For: 5 - Commissioner Rose, Commissioner Rhodes, Commissioner Sands, Commissioner Roark and Commissioner Perry

VI. Public Comment

Chairman Sands opened the floor for Public Comment.

Tony Blevins, an officer with the Ashe County Sheriff's Office, spoke regarding the decision the commissioners will make on who will be selected to serve as sheriff until the election in 2018. Mr. Blevins stated that Major Deputy Sheriff Bucky Absher has spent his working career serving Ashe County citizens and is the only rightful and deserving person to serve as sheriff.

Aaron Reed, a sargent with the Ashe County Sheriff's Office, stated agreement with statements made by Officer Blevins. Sargent Reed has worked in law enforcement for over 11 years and has been afforded every opportunity by former Sheriff James Williams and Major Absher. The opportunities have been based on merit and not political affiliation. He asked the Board to do the same for Major Absher, making a decision based on his merit and not on political affiliation. Mr. Reed added that he believes it will be a disservice to the voters of the county if anyone else is appointed as sheriff.

Chris Eldreth with the Ashe County Sheriff's Office, told the Board that he has worked there for 12 years. He stated that a person is needed for sheriff that can be trusted and that can lead the Sheriff's Office. He believes there is no one more experienced than Major Absher.

Former Sheriff James Hartley complimented the Board for allowing people to apply for the sheriff's position. He asked the Board to compare the pros and cons of all three applicants. He stated that being sheriff is a very hard job. He believes that Major Absher has done a great job for the County and is the best candidate for the job. He asked the Board to make a list of who is best qualified and not to consider party affiliation.

No further comments were offered.

GENERAL SESSION

VII. Commissioner Comments

VIII. Announcements

IX. Executive Session

ES 17-1

GS.143-318.11(a)(6) Personnel - Interviews for Sheriff's Position

Commissioner Rhodes made a motion for the Board to enter into Executive Session under G.S. 143-318.11 (a) (6) Personnel to conduct interviews for the position of sheriff. Commissioner Rose seconded the motion. The motion passed with unanimous approval. Chairman Sands declared the Board into Executive Session at 9:45 a.m. and out of Executive Session at 12:00 p.m. Commissioner Rose made a motion to appoint Terry Buchanan as sheriff beginning immediately and to be paid at the beginning salary for the sheriff position. Vice Chairman Perry seconded the motion. The motion passed 3-2, with Commissioners Sands and Rhodes voting in opposition.

Approved

For: 3 - Commissioner Rose, Commissioner Roark and Commissioner Perry

Against: 2 - Commissioner Rhodes and Commissioner Sands

X. Adjournment

Commissioner Rhodes made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 12:03 p.m. Commissioner Rose seconded the motion. The motion passed with unanimous approval.

Approved

For: 5 - Commissioner Rose, Commissioner Rhodes, Commissioner Sands, Commissioner Roark and Commissioner Perry

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William Sands, Chairman

Ann J. Clark, MMC, NCCCC
Clerk to the Board