

Ashe County

*150 Government Circle
Jefferson, NC 28640*



Meeting Minutes - Draft

Monday, July 20, 2020

9:00 AM

Commission Meeting Room

County Commission

*Chairperson Todd McNeill
Vice Chair Larry Rhodes
Commissioner William Sands
Commissioner Paula Perry
Commissioner Larry Dix*

BUSINESS SESSION

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 a.m. at the Ashe County Courthouse.

Present: 5 - Commissioner Todd McNeill, Commissioner William Sands, Commissioner Larry Rhodes, Commissioner Paula Perry and Commissioner Larry Dix

II. Pledge of Allegiance/Opening Prayer

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

III. Approval of Minutes

[MIN 20-21](#) July 6, 2020 Regular Session Minutes

Attachments: [07-20-20 July 6, 2020 Regular Session Minutes](#)

Commissioner Sands made a motion to approve the July 6, 2020 Regular Session Minutes as written. Commissioner Perry seconded the motion. The motion passed with unanimous approval.

Approved

For: 5 - Commissioner McNeill, Commissioner Sands, Commissioner Rhodes, Commissioner Perry and Commissioner Dix

[MIN 20-22](#) July 6, 2020 Executive Session Minutes

Commissioner Sands made a motion to approve the July 6, 2020 Executive Session Minutes as written. Commissioner Perry seconded the motion. The motion passed with unanimous approval.

Approved

For: 5 - Commissioner McNeill, Commissioner Sands, Commissioner Rhodes, Commissioner Perry and Commissioner Dix

IV. Adoption of Agenda

Commissioner Dix made a motion to adopt the agenda with the following additions: introduction of the new school superintendent, and addition of personnel issues and legal issues to the scheduled Executive Session. Commissioner Sands seconded the motion. The motion passed with unanimous approval.

V. Public Comment

Chairman McNeill opened the floor for public comment.

Robert Brown, chair of the Candlelight Park homeowners' association, told the Board that a homeowner in the development has built a structure without a building permit. He has received no cooperation with enforcement of the County building codes. Mr. Brown is asking the Board to apply pressure to the Building Inspections Department.

No further comment was offered.

VI. Presentations

PRES 9:05 AM - Introduction of the New School Superintendent
20-117

The new school superintendent for Ashe County, Dr. Eisa Cox, introduced herself to the Board.

PRES 9:05 AM - DSS Director Tracie Downer - Monthly Departmental Update &
20-109 Consideration of Traverse Software Purchase

Attachments: [07-20-20 DSS Monthly Departmental Update](#)
[07-20-20 Ashe County DSS Traverse Quote \(1\)](#)
[07-20-20 Data Sheet - Traverse Capture for iPhone](#)
[07-20-20 Traverse for NC](#)

The first item presented by DSS Director Tracie Downer was the Energy Programs Outreach Plan for approval by the Board. Vice Chairman Rhodes made a motion to approve the Plan as presented. Commissioner Dix seconded the motion. The motion passed with unanimous approval.

Department of Social Services Director Tracie Downer presented the monthly departmental update. She told the Board that the number of children needing foster care and the number of adult wards in Ashe County continues to remain high.

Next, DSS Director Tracie Downer presented information regarding Traverse software for use by the Department of Social Services. She explained that electronic files would replace paper files allowing workers in the field the opportunity to see cases live. Supervisors would be more effective because of the ability to collaborate in real time with social workers. Due to the availability of COVID-19 funding, DSS now has the opportunity to purchase the software. Chris Mease with Traverse utilized a PowerPoint presentation to highlight how the software works and how it could benefit Ashe County. He explained how the program reads through a case file and surfaces all pertinent information about a case for the social worker. In addition, all case file information is available through a mobile device. The software allows for less interaction with the public and allows for working from remote locations. DSS Director Tracie Downer told the Board that COVID-19 funding will pay for implementation costs and the yearly annual fee for this year. The County will need to budget costs of the software into next year's budget which will be approximately \$37,000. Discussions have been held regarding the capability of transferring current Laser Fiche file storage licenses used in DSS to the Human Resources Department.

The Board will need to have a copy of the contract to consider before taking action on this request. This item will be added to the August 3, 2020 agenda for consideration.

PRES 9:15 AM - Tax Administrator Chris Lambert - Monthly Tax Report-Final
20-110 Report for FY2019-20

Attachments: [07-20-20 Monthly Tax Report \(Final Report for FY2019-20\)](#)

Tax Administrator Chris Lambert utilized a PowerPoint presentation to provide information

on the Tax Collector Settlement Report for 2019 which is required by N.C.G.S. 105-373. Commissioner Dix made a motion to approve the 2019 Settlement Report as presented. Commissioner Perry seconded the motion. The motion passed with unanimous approval.
Approved

For: 5 - Commissioner McNeill, Commissioner Sands, Commissioner Rhodes, Commissioner Perry and Commissioner Dix

PRES
20-111

9:20 AM - Tax Administrator Chris Lambert - Tax Administrator Charge with Collections of 2020 Taxes

Attachments: [07-20-20 Tax Administrator Charge for 2020 Tax Collections](#)

Tax Administrator Chris Lambert provided information through a PowerPoint presentation regarding the tax administrator charge to collect 2020 taxes. He explained that N.C.G.S. 105-321 mandates that the Board of Commissioners charge the tax administrator with the collection of 2020 real and personal property taxes. Vice Chairman Rhodes made a motion to charge Tax Administrator Chris Lambert with collections of 2020 property taxes. Commissioner Dix seconded the motion. The motion passed with unanimous approval.
Approved

For: 5 - Commissioner McNeill, Commissioner Sands, Commissioner Rhodes, Commissioner Perry and Commissioner Dix

PRES
20-112

9:25 AM - Bruce Huester - Airport Hangar Lease Extension Request for Bob Clifton

Attachments: [07-20-20 Airport Hangar Lease Extension-Bob Clifton](#)

Bruce Huester who is representing Bob Clifton due to mobility issues, made a request for a ten-year extension on Mr. Clifton's hangar lease at the Ashe County Airport. He explained that Mr. Clifton built the hangar in 2004 and has a goal to celebrate his 100th birthday at the hangar. The current lease runs through October 2026. The Board would like to hear a recommendation from the Airport Advisory Board before a vote is taken on the request. This item will be considered at a later date following a recommendation from the Airport Advisory Board.

PRES
20-113

9:30 AM - Sheriff Howell - COPS Grant Approval Request

Attachments: [07-20-20 COPS Grant Approval](#)

Sheriff Phil Howell made a request for commissioner approval of the COPS Grant that will fund the hiring of four additional law enforcement officers. Sheriff Howell explained that there are only 15 days left for acceptance and approval of the grant. He explained the large increase in calls for patrol officers over the past few years, therefore the need for the additional officers that the grant would pay for. Executive Assistant Jessica Vogler told the Board that there is a 25% funding match required from the County to the \$483,000 federal grant. She explained details of grant requirements. Commissioner Dix requested that Sheriff Howell report back to the Board on a quarterly basis on the grant. Commissioner Sands made a motion to approve the COPS Grant as submitted. Commissioner Dix seconded the motion. The motion passed with unanimous approval.
Approved

For: 5 - Commissioner McNeill, Commissioner Sands, Commissioner Rhodes, Commissioner Perry and Commissioner Dix

[PRES](#)
[20-114](#)

9:40 AM - County Manager Adam Stumb - Information Regarding Community Development Block Grant Funding for the Ashe County Neighborhood Revitalization Project

Attachments: [07-20-20 CDBG-Neighborhood Revitalization Project Grant](#)

County Manager Adam Stumb told the Board that the second of two required public hearings will be held on Monday, July 27, 2020 at 9:00 a.m. to gain public input on submission of an application for Community Development Block Grant funding for the Neighborhood Revitalization Project. No action is needed today.

[PRES](#)
[20-115](#)

9:45 AM - County Manager Adam Stumb - Land Purchase & Upset Bid Process Consideration

Attachments: [07-20-20 Land Purchase & Upset Bid Consideration](#)

County Manager Adam Stumb told the Board that Peter and Wanda Okrepky are interested in purchasing three lots totaling .327 acres from the County that are adjacent to the Ashe County Landfill. If the Board approves the request, the County is required to sell the property through the upset bid process. Commissioner Dix made a motion to begin the upset bid process on the three lots adjacent to the landfill. Vice Chairman Rhodes seconded the motion. The motion passed with unanimous approval.
Approved

For: 5 - Commissioner McNeill, Commissioner Sands, Commissioner Rhodes, Commissioner Perry and Commissioner Dix

[PRES](#)
[20-116](#)

9:50 AM - Rich Smith, DPS Area Consultant - Juvenile Crime Prevention Council Programs in Ashe County

Attachments: [07-20-20 JCPC Programs in Ashe County](#)

Rich Smith, Juvenile Crime Prevention Council (JCPC) Consultant to Ashe County, updated the Board on programs offered in Ashe County. Recent legislation allows 16-17 year old juvenile offenders to be served through the JCPC program. The FY2020-21 legislative allocation for Ashe County is \$107,165 with a required 20% County funding match. Commissioner Dix made a motion to approve the FY2020-21 JCPC Plan for Ashe County. Vice Chairman Rhodes seconded the motion. The motion passed with unanimous approval.
Approved

For: 5 - Commissioner McNeill, Commissioner Sands, Commissioner Rhodes, Commissioner Perry and Commissioner Dix

GENERAL SESSION

Appointments

[APP 20-7](#)

Planning Board Appointments

Attachments: [07-20-20 Planning Board Appointments](#)

Vice Chairman Rhodes made a motion to appoint Derek Calhoun, William Carter, and David Phipps, Jr. to the Ashe County Planning Board. Commissioner Sands seconded the motion. The motion passed with unanimous approval.

Appointment(s) Approved

For: 5 - Commissioner McNeill, Commissioner Sands, Commissioner Rhodes, Commissioner Perry and Commissioner Dix

APP 20-8 Airport Advisory Board Appointment

Attachments: [07-20-20 Airport Advisory Board Appointment](#)

Vice Chairman Rhodes made a motion to appoint Ronnie Taylor to the Airport Advisory Board. Commissioner Sands seconded the motion. The motion passed with unanimous approval.

Appointment(s) Approved

For: 5 - Commissioner McNeill, Commissioner Sands, Commissioner Rhodes, Commissioner Perry and Commissioner Dix

Other Items for Consideration

MISC 20-3 North Carolina Association of County Commissioners Annual Conference Voting Delegate

Attachments: [07-20-20 NCACC Annual Conference Voting Delegate](#)

Vice Chairman Rhodes made a motion to appoint Chairman McNeill as Voting Delegate to the North Carolina Association of County Commissioners Annual Conference. Commissioner Dix seconded the motion. The motion passed with unanimous approval.
Approved

For: 5 - Commissioner McNeill, Commissioner Sands, Commissioner Rhodes, Commissioner Perry and Commissioner Dix

VII. Commissioner Comments

VIII. Announcements

IX. Executive Session

ES 20-7 G.S. 143-318.11 (a) (5) - Economic Development Issues

Commissioner Sands made a motion to enter into Executive Session to discuss personnel issues as provided for under G.S. 143-318.11 (a) (6), to discuss legal issues as provided for under G.S. 143-318.11 (a) (1), and to discuss economic development issues as provided for under G.S. 143-318.11 (a) (5). Vice Chairman Rhodes seconded the motion. The motion passed with unanimous approval. Chairman McNeill declared the Board into Executive Session at 10:30 a.m. and out of Executive Session at 11:18 a.m. with no action being taken.

Approved

For: 5 - Commissioner McNeill, Commissioner Sands, Commissioner Rhodes, Commissioner Perry and Commissioner Dix

X. Adjournment

Commissioner Sands made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 11:19 a.m.

Commissioner Dix seconded the motion. The motion passed with unanimous approval.

Approved

For: 5 - Commissioner McNeill, Commissioner Sands, Commissioner Rhodes,
Commissioner Perry and Commissioner Dix

Citizens with disabilities requiring special needs to access the services or public meetings of Ashe County Government should contact the County Manager's Office three days prior to the meeting by calling (336) 846-5501.