

Ashe County

*150 Government Circle
Jefferson, NC 28640*



Meeting Minutes - Final

Monday, February 20, 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. in the commissioners' meeting room 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 17-6](#)** February 6, 2017 Regular Session Minutes

Attachments: [02-20-17 February 6, 2017 Regular Session Minutes](#)

Commissioner Rose made a motion to approve the February 6, 2017 Regular Session Minutes as written. 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

[MIN 17-9](#) February 6, 2017 Special Meeting Minutes

Attachments: [02-20-17 February 6, 2017 Special Meeting Minutes](#)

Commissioner Rose made a motion to approve the February 6, 2017 Special Meeting Minutes as written. 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

[MIN 17-7](#) February 9, 2017 Special Meeting Minutes

Attachments: [02-20-17 February 9, 2017 Special Meeting Minutes](#)

Commissioner Rose made a motion to approve the February 9, 2017 Special Meeting Minutes as written. 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

MIN 17-8 February 9, 2017 Executive Session Minutes

Commissioner Rose made a motion to approve the February 9, 2017 Executive Session Minutes as written. 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

IV. Adoption of Agenda

Commissioner Rhodes made a motion to adopt the agenda as presented. Commissioner Rose 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 17-9** Carolyn Shepherd, County Extension Director - 2017 Plan of Work

Attachments: [02-20-17 County Plan of Work 2017](#)

County Extension Director Carolyn Shepherd presented the Ashe County Plan of Work for 2017 and the 2016 Program Impact Report for the NC Cooperative Extension Ashe County Center. A copy of the presentation is attached.

PRES 17-10 Tax Administrator Keith Little - Monthly Tax Report

Attachments: [02-20-17 Monthly Tax Report](#)

Tax Administrator Keith Little submitted the monthly tax releases and refunds for January 2017. Also presented were the Regular Billing Collection Report and the Motor Vehicles Collection Report through January 2017. Commissioner Rhodes made a motion to approve the January 2017 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 17-11 Tax Administrator Keith Little - Request to Set Dates for Board of Equalization & Review

Tax Administrator Keith Little made a request for the commissioners to schedule the dates to convene and adjourn the Board of Equalization and Review (Board of E&R). General Statutes dictate the beginning date for the Board of E&R and the ending date to accept new appeals, and for the schedule to be advertised no later than mid-March each year. Commissioner Rhodes made a motion to schedule the first meeting of the Board of E&R on April 3, 2017 at 1:00 p.m. and the last meeting on April 17, 2017 at 4:00 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

PRES 17-12 Tax Administrator Keith Little - Approval for Advertisement of Tax Liens on Real Property

Tax Administrator Keith Little made a request for the Board to approve the advertisement of tax liens on real property in the County. Commissioner Rhodes made a motion to approve the tax administrator to advertise tax liens on real property during the first week of May. 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

VI. Public Comment

Chairman Sands opened the floor for Public Comment. Paul Potter told the Board that he appreciates the job they do for the citizens of Ashe County. He spoke to the Board regarding the need to honor and respect people that serve in higher positions. No further comment was offered.

GENERAL SESSION

Other Items for Consideration

MISC 17-2 Amendment to Board of Commissioners' Agenda - Move Public Comment to follow Adoption of Agenda

Commissioner Roark made a motion to move the Public Comment period to follow the Adoption of Agenda on the commissioners' meeting agenda. Commissioner Rhodes seconded the motion. The motion passed with unanimous approval.

Approved as Amended

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

MISC 17-5 Amendment to Board of Commissioners' Agenda - Add Work Session to First Monthly Meeting (To be held in Commissioners' Meeting Room at 8:30 a.m. - Work Session not to be televised)

Attachments: [02-20-17 Resolution Changing Time of Regular Meetings](#)

Commissioner Perry made a motion to amend the Board of Commissioners' agenda to add a Work Session to the first meeting of each month; the meeting to be held in the Commissioners' Meeting Room beginning at 8:30 a.m. and for the Work Session to not be televised. Commissioner Rhodes seconded the motion. The motion passed 4 - 1, with Commissioner Rose voting in opposition.

Approved

For: 4 - Commissioner Rhodes, Commissioner Sands, Commissioner Roark and Commissioner Perry

Against: 1 - Commissioner Rose

MISC 17-3 Amendment to Board of Commissioners' Rules of Procedure to Include that the Agenda and Packet Information Be Sent by Noon on Wednesday Prior to the Regular Meeting

Attachments: [02-20-17 Amendment to Board's Rules & Procedures Manual](#)

Commissioner Rose made a motion to amend the Board of Commissioners' Rules of Procedure to include that the agenda and packet information be sent by noon on the Wednesday prior to each Regular Meeting. 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

MISC 17-10 Request for Additional Funding for Jail Administrator Position

Attachments: [02-20-17 Jail Administrator Position Funding Request](#)

County Manager Sam Yearick explained the need to add \$2000 to the budget to hire a person to fill the jail administrator position. Commissioner Rose made a motion to appropriate \$2000 from the Contingency Fund for a jail administrator position. Commissioner Roark seconded the motion. The motion passed with unanimous approval.

BUDGET AMENDMENTS
February 20, 2017

General Fund:

To increase the appropriation for the department of Corrections from \$1,896,752 to \$1,898,752; this increased appropriation to be made with an appropriation of \$2,000 from the Contingency Fund.

Approved

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

MISC 17-6 Reclassification of Vacant Sergeant Position in the Narcotics Division to an Administrative Captain Position Increasing the Pay Grade from 66 to 71

Sheriff Buchanan explained his request to reclassify a sergeant position in the Narcotics Division to an administrative captain position at the Sheriff's Department. He told the Board that the position was removed during the last administration. The employee would work in administration and as a fill-in lieutenant in the patrol division. Commissioner Sands stated that he would prefer to make a decision on filling this position during the annual budget review that will take place in several months. Commissioner Rose made a motion to approve the request. Commissioner Rhodes then asked for specifics regarding funding for the position. County Manager Sam Yearick explained that an appropriation of \$9105 would need to be made for the position plus any needed Contingency Fund appropriations. The amount will need to be noted at an upcoming meeting of the Board. With no further questions, 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

MISC 17-8

Discussion & Possible Action on Sheriff's Salary

County Manager Sam Yearick opened discussion regarding the pay grade for newly appointed Sheriff Buchanan. After reviewing G.S. 153A-92 which deals with classification plans, he determined that the pay grade should be increased from 78 to 80. The county manager referenced the pay grade change from 78 to 80 made when Sheriff Williams was elected. The County pay classification plan failed to reflect the increase in the pay grade for the sheriff's position. Commissioner Rhodes clarified the action taken by the Board during the FY2010 budget work session meetings. The Board increased the pay grade to 80 due to job responsibilities and out of appreciation for the job Sheriff Williams was doing. However, the Board did not increase the pay grade on the County pay plan. Commissioner Roark then called Sheriff Buchanan to the podium and asked if he had been contacted by former Sheriff Williams regarding this issue. Sheriff Buchanan told the Board that he has a recorded call from the former sheriff explaining the need to be increased to pay grade 80 if the commissioners would like for him to play it. The Board declined listening to the recording. Sheriff Buchanan also told the Board that he contacted the Sheriff's Association and was told that he should be on the same pay grade that the outgoing sheriff was on. With no further discussion, Commissioner Rose made a motion for the county attorney to research this issue before a vote is taken by the Board. 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

MISC 17-9 Ashe County Partnership for Children Lease Proposal

Attachments: [02-20-17 Ashe County Partnership for Children Lease Proposal](#)

County Manager Yearick told the Board that he met with the Partnership for Children Board to discuss the lease for Family Central with the County. The Partnership for Children no longer wants to lease the Family Central facility from the County. The outstanding balance on their loan with the USDA is \$223,130 with annual payments in the amount of \$38,440. Chairman Sands told the Board that he used to serve on the Partnership Board and he was in the same meeting with the county manager and the Partnership Board. The Partnership for Children serves over 1000 children and 800 families each year. He added that the Partnership has spent \$1.5 million in upgrades on the building. In 2000, the Partnership borrowed \$500,000 from USDA. For 16 years they have managed and cared for the building. But there are fewer renters and the Partnership cannot survive now. Chairman Sands suggested that the County pay off the loan and take over the facility. The Partnership for Children could then lease from the County. Kim Barnes and David Blackburn representing Ashe Partnership for Children were present to answer questions from the Board. Ms. Barnes told the Board they the Partnership brings in \$650,000 each year in program monies to serve families and \$145,000 in subsidy funds to serve children. In answer to a question from Commissioner Roark, Ms. Barnes answered that costs to upkeep the building amounts to \$102,000 a year. David Blackburn told the Board that the County is already paying \$128,000 to Family Central for space used by Wilkes Community College, DSS, and the Sheriff's Office. In addition, the County would receive money from renters. In less than two years, the County would receive enough money to pay off the USDA loan. The County is already in control of the gym and ballfields. Mr. Blackburn told the Board that the facility is used by a lot of citizens in Ashe County. Commissioner Rhodes made a motion based on the information provided to look at taking over lease payments or paying off the loan. 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

MISC 17-7 North Carolina Association of County Commissioners (NCACC) February Video Update**VII. Commissioner Comments****VIII. Announcements****IX. Executive Session**

ES 17-2**Executive Session - G.S. 143.318-11 (a) (6) - Personnel Issues & G.S. 143.318-11 (a) (3) Legal Issues**

Vice Chairman Perry made a motion to enter into Executive Session to discuss personnel issues as provided for under G.S. 143.318-11 (a) (6) and to discuss legal issues as provided for under G.S. 143-318.11 (a) (3) regarding the following existing lawsuits between the County of Ashe and Appalachian Materials, Tommy Combs, Joseph and Elaine Bizarro, and Gerald Price. Commissioner Roark seconded the motion. The motion passed with unanimous approval. Chairman Sands declared the Board into Executive Session at 10:44 a.m. At 11:25 a.m., Commissioner Roark made a motion to move Executive Session to the county manager's conference room for the purpose of interviewing applicants for the Tax Administrator's position. Vice Chairman Perry seconded the motion. The motion passed with unanimous approval. Next, Commissioner Rose made a motion to conclude Executive Session at 2:20 p.m. Commissioner Roark seconded the motion. The motion passed with unanimous approval. Commissioner Rose made a motion to increase Major Rick Clayton to paygrade 74, step 5, and for the pay increase to be retroactive to his first day of work with funds to be appropriated from the Contingency Fund. 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

X. Adjournment

Commissioner Roark made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 2:21 p.m. 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

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.

William Sands, Chairman

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