

Ashe County

*150 Government Circle
Jefferson, NC 28640*



Meeting Minutes - Final

Monday, April 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**

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

III. Approval of Minutes**IV. Adoption of Agenda**

Commissioner Rose made a motion to adopt the agenda as presented. Commissioner Rhodes seconded the motion. The motion passed with unanimous approval.

Adopted

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

V. Public Comment

Chairman Sands opened the floor for comments from the public.

Lee McMillan spoke to the Board regarding plans to demolish Fleetwood Elementary School due to Fleetwood Fire Department moving to the location of the school. The fire department has to build a new building due to the widening of Hwy 221. He offered possible other options for placement of Fleetwood Fire Department.

Sheriff Buchanan introduced several employees in the Sheriff's Office. He updated the Board regarding new programs he is implementing in the County. Sheriff Buchanan stated concerns regarding a request for public records submitted to the County from WBTV in Charlotte.

Joseph Chamberlain spoke regarding the importance of Ashe Memorial Hospital to Ashe County and the need for continued funding from the commissioners.

No further comment was offered.

VI. Presentations

[PRES 17-33](#) Public Hearing - To Entertain Public Comment on Bank Financing of Property in the Town of Jefferson for the Future Construction of a New Middle School

Attachments: [04-17-17 Public Hearing - Middle School Property Financing](#)

The Ashe County Board of Commissioners held a Public Hearing for the purpose of entertaining public comment on bank financing for a 40-acre tract of land located within the Town of Jefferson for the future construction of a new middle school. The Board of Commissioners unanimously approved purchase of the property at a regular meeting held

on January 3, 2017. The financing contract will be for a three-year term, with a fixed interest rate of 1.85% with First National Bank and shall not exceed \$1,540,000. Chairman Sands opened the Public Hearing at 9:28 a.m. No comment was offered. The Public Hearing was closed at 9:29 a.m. Commissioner Rose made a motion to accept the proposal offered by First National Bank for a three-year loan with a fixed interest rate of 1.85% and to authorize the finance officer and other County officials to execute the necessary financing agreements needed to secure the loan to finalize the purchase of the Dollar property for the future location of a new middle school. 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 17-34 Ramona Renfroe & Lonnie Jones - Museum of Ashe County History Update

Lonnie Jones, president of the Ashe County Museum of History Board, told the commissioners that he appreciates the occupancy tax appropriation from the County that is used to operate the museum. He also stated appreciation for the storage area provided at the old Jefferson School. Mr. Jones highlighted future plans for the museum which includes a historic complex planned for the grounds around the museum. Ramona Renfroe detailed programs and events offered at the Museum of History. She recognized volunteers that are very important to the operation of the museum and the donation of so many artifacts that have been donated by local citizens. There are approximately 15,000 visitors to the Museum of History each year, with 40% of those being local residents. Lonnie Jones extended an invitation for the commissioners to attend a ceremony that will be held on the 29th of April beginning at 11:00 a.m. Soldiers that were killed in World War I and the Vietnam War will be recognized and exhibits will open for World War I and the Vietnam War. Future plans include restoration of the courtroom and construction of cabins that will include activities making the Museum of History a truly cultural campus.

PRES 17-35 Amber Dixon with A Safe Home for Everyone (ASHE) - Proclamation Recognizing April as Sexual Assault Awareness Month

Attachments: [04-17-17 Proclamation-Sexual Assault Awareness Month](#)

Amber Dixon with A Safe Home for Everyone (ASHE), read a proclamation recognizing April as Sexual Assault Awareness Month. Commissioner Rhodes made a motion to adopt the proclamation 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

PRES 17-36 Ashe Memorial Hospital CEO Laura Lambeth - Hospital Update

Tom Efford, president of the Ashe Memorial Hospital Board of Trustees, addressed the Board. He introduced Hospital CEO Laura Lambeth who presented the Hospital State of the Union report through a PowerPoint presentation. She told the Board that Ashe Memorial Hospital is the 4th largest employer in the County. She spoke about new services offered and told the Board that there are now 48 physicians and providers working at the hospital. CEO Lambeth also explained renovation projects that have taken place at the hospital. James Lambert, vice president of compliance and safety,

detailed national awards received by the hospital, patient satisfaction and quality scores, and community outreach. Charles Wright highlighted hospital growth, patient revenue, expenses and allowable loss, charity care and bad debt, profit and loss, and the 2017 budget. Curt Shaw, Novant CFO, thanked the Board for their continued support of the hospital. Mr. Shaw spoke of the financial stress at the hospital when Novant took over three years ago. He also noted improvements made in the last three years. There were capital projects needed and he reported that the new Emergency Department and Infusion Center projects have been completed. There is still more work that needs to be done in these financially challenging times that all hospitals are experiencing. He reported that 80 hospitals have closed since 2012. They need the continued support of the County and its citizens, adding that one of their goals is future financial independence.

PRES 17-37 Adam Stumb & Eric Payne - NCDOT Draft 2018-2027 State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) & Approval of Letter of Support

Attachments: [04-17-17 NCDOT STIP 2018-2027](#)

Planning Director Adam Stumb explained to the Board the three highway projects that Ashe County has listed in the NCDOT Draft 2018-2027 State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP). Those projects include: 1) US 221 E Project at Business 221 and Highway 163 which is being widened to four lanes; 2) Highway 88 from Jefferson to Warrensville road improvements; and 3) Highway 221 at Beaver Creek School Road intersection improvements. Highway projects are funded at 100% with no cost to the County. Also included in the NCDOT Draft 2018-2027 STIP are two aviation projects at the Ashe County Airport. Those projects include: 1) land acquisition next to the existing runway, and 2) an expansion to the airport apron. Aviation projects are funded at 90% with a 10% required funding match from the County. Airport Manager Eric Payne explained the two aviation projects for Ashe County Airport in the STIP and current projects ongoing at the airport. Commissioner Rhodes made a motion to approve the letter of support as requested. 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

GENERAL SESSION

Other Items for Consideration

MISC 17-14 Appointment of Tax Administrator

Commissioner Rhodes made a motion to appoint Chris Lambert to a four-year term as Tax Administrator. Vice Chairman Perry seconded the motion. The motion passed with Commissioners Sands, Perry, Rhodes and Roark voting in favor of the motion. Commissioner Rose failed to vote which will be recorded as a vote in the affirmative.

Approved

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

MISC 17-15 Approval of Lease Agreement for Ashe County Fire & Rescue Association

Attachments: [04-17-17 Fire & Rescue Assn Lease Agreement](#)

County Manager Sam Yearick told the Board that the County will fund construction of the Ashe County Fire Training facility, but it will be owned by the Ashe County Fire and Rescue Association. A loan is being provided by the USDA to finance the costs of construction. The County will be responsible for insurance, electricity, water, and sewer on the facility. Commissioner Rose made a motion to approve the lease between Ashe County and the Ashe County Fire and Rescue Association. 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 17-16](#) North Carolina Association of County Commissioners (NCACC) Monthly Video Update

VII. Commissioner Comments

Commissioner Rhodes requested that a discussion regarding the Fleetwood Fire Department and the Phillips property be placed on the next agenda.

Chairman Sands asked that an Executive Session to discuss surveys completed by department heads be added to the next agenda.

VIII. Announcements**IX. Executive Session****X. Adjournment**

Commissioner Roark made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 10:42 a.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

