

# **Ashe County**

*150 Government Circle  
Jefferson, NC 28640*



## **Meeting Minutes - Final**

**Monday, January 7, 2019**

**9:00 AM**

**Commission Meeting Room**

### **County Commission**

*Chairperson Todd McNeill*

*Vice Chair William Sands*

*Commissioner Larry Rhodes*

*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 Dix led the Pledge of Allegiance and Commissioner Perry offered the opening prayer.*

**III. Approval of Minutes**

[MIN 19-3](#) December 17, 2018 Regular Session Minutes

**Attachments:** [01-07-19 December 17, 2018 Regular Session Minutes](#)

*Commissioner Rhodes made a motion to approve the December 17, 2018 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 19-4](#) December 17, 2018 Executive Session Minutes

*Commissioner Rhodes made a motion to approve the December 17, 2018 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 Rhodes made a motion to adopt the agenda as presented. Vice Chairman Sands seconded the motion. The motion passed with unanimous approval.*

**Adopted**

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

**V. Public Comment**

*Chairman McNeill opened the floor for comments from the public. No comment was offered.*

**VI. Presentations**

**PRES 19-1** 9:05 AM - DSS Director Tracie Downer - Monthly Departmental Update**Attachments:** [01-07-19 DSS Statistics-November 2018](#)

*Department of Social Services (DSS) Director Tracie Downer presented the monthly departmental update for the Social Services Department. She updated the Board on the recent disbursement of funds for the Low Income Energy Assistance Program (LIEAP) and the Crisis Energy Assistance Program and stated that DSS is currently out of funds in both energy programs. A reallocation of these funds is being requested as the funds become available. Next, Ms. Downer updated the Board on child support services including security procedures and measures being put into place. Statistics from the November 2018 departmental report were then reviewed.*

*DSS Director Tracie Downer introduced Grier Hurley, staff attorney for DSS. Ms. Hurley provided an overview of her job responsibilities which include child protective services and adult protective services, some personnel issues, and assisting the agency with required training for employees/workers. Ms. Hurley told the Board that she serves as a member of the community child protection team and the child fatality team and has been a member of the Juvenile Crime Prevention Council for many years. In addition she handles continuing requests for records pertaining to custody and civil matters.*

*Commissioner Dix questioned statistics on the monthly report regarding the number of children in foster care in Ashe County and the number of children placed out of the county. Commissioner Dix also asked if Ashe County has the ability to foster children requiring higher levels of foster care. Ms. Downer answered that Ashe County only fosters standard care in the County; children requiring higher levels of care are placed outside of the County. Commissioner Dix stated that there are 19 licensed foster homes in Ashe County, adding that there is a big need for foster homes.*

*DSS Director Downer spoke to the Board about the many benefits of having a staff attorney as opposed to a contract attorney for DSS. Next, DSS Director Tracie Downer passed out draft copies of the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) Ashe County and the State. The State is asking for amendments to the MOU. She stated concern with the data collection process. The DSS Director will report back to the Board after the state-wide meeting she will attend later this week where she will get additional information from other DSS directors.*

*Vice Chairman Sands asked if our local DSS has been affected by the federal government shutdown. Ms. Downer answered that currently they are unaffected due to reserves in place.*

*DSS Director Downer thanked Acting County Manager Adam Stumb for his leadership in working with the High Country Council of Governments on the Urgent Repair Program that will assist with funding for urgent repairs to homes in Ashe County.*

**PRES 19-2** 9:20 AM - Extension Director Travis Birdsell - Extension Office Expense Request**Attachments:** [01-07-19 Extension Office Expense Request](#)

*Extension Director Travis Birdsell provided information on the County portion of salaries for positions that have remained unfilled in the Cooperative Extension Office. Even though they are working to become fully staffed, the money saved during this year's budget for the unfilled positions is expected to be \$77,000. A request was made to*

redistribute these funds to replace worn carpeting in the Cooperative Extension Offices. The carpeting is 18 years old and is worn due to high traffic. He does not believe carpeting is the best option for these offices because of the services they provide for agriculture. A quote was received to replace the carpeting with tile laminate. The only quote received was given by a contractor in the County and supplies would be purchased within the County. He added that the job would be labor intensive because of the many cubicles and office furniture that would need to be moved. Because of this, it will be hard to quote an exact amount for the labor. The extension director also told the Board that the quote received was for the Cooperative Extension Office only. He questioned the possibility of getting the carpet replaced in the entire building using the unspent funds for salaries. Commissioner Dix stated that this request shows the need for a capital improvement plan for the County. Commissioner Rhodes questioned if there is a stipulation regarding moving money from salaries and using it for a construction project. Finance Officer Sandra Long answered that funding can be moved at the approval of the Board. Commissioner Dix questioned the process for obtaining quotes for a project since only one quote was submitted for this one. Extension Director Travis Birdsell answered that he contacted the flooring supplier and was given a list of preferred contractors. Commissioner Dix questioned the process the County uses for construction projects. Acting County Manager Adam Stumb answered that for construction projects, department heads will attempt to obtain three quotes. A large building project will fall under different guidelines. Chairman McNeill questioned if any of the positions would be filled before the end of the year. Mr. Birdsell answered that the projections submitted include filling of the vacant positions. Commissioner Rhodes asked if there is money for building repair and maintenance in the budget. Finance Officer Sandra Long answered that this is a capital project and that it is unbudgeted. Commissioner Rhodes would like for the extension director to research and have quotes provided for replacing flooring in the entire building and to report back to the Board at soon as possible. The Board was in agreement.

[PRES 19-3](#) 9:30 AM - Building Inspections Supervisor Jeff Cornett - Solid Waste Development Fee

**Attachments:** [01-07-19 Solid Waste Development Fee](#)

Building Inspections Supervisor Jeff Cornett explained to the Board that there is a \$25 solid waste disposal fee charged for new residential permits, a \$20 fee for residential additions and remodels, and a \$15 commercial fee. Last year approximately \$2200 in solid waste disposal fees were collected by the Building Inspections Department. The General Assembly has passed a bill that reads "all fees collected shall be used for support of the administration and activities of the inspection department and for no other purpose". Acting County Manager Adam Stumb recommended that the fee be removed from building inspection permits and for the Board to look at redoing fees in the building inspections department during the FY2019/20 budget work sessions. Commissioner Rhodes made a motion to adhere to the state law, to remove the solid waste disposal fee from the permit fees, and to then look at building inspection fees during the FY2019/20 budget work sessions. Vice Chairman Sands seconded the motion. Chairman McNeill opened the floor for commissioner comments. Commissioner Dix noted that the effective date of the bill is June 30, 2019 and that it is for "all fees collected under this section" as stated in the accompanying agenda packet information. Acting Manager Adam Stumb stated that the Building Inspections Department is currently undergoing upgrades to permit software and it makes sense to make the change now. The Board discussed that the fee was collected to offset costs associated with the permit and disposal costs at the landfill. With no further questions, Chairman McNeill called for a vote to the motion on the floor. The motion passed with unanimous approval.

**Approved**

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

[PRES 19-4](#) 9:40 AM - Acting County Manager Adam Stumb - Approval of Cleaning Contract

**Attachments:** [01-07-19 Cleaning Contract Approval](#)

*Acting County Manager Adam Stumb told the commissioners that the company the County currently uses for cleaning services has recently made internal changes by hiring a supervisor to oversee the work being done. He made a recommendation for the County to continue with the current company until the end of the fiscal year and to reconsider the contract during the FY2019/20 budget work sessions. Commissioner Rhodes made a motion to continue with the current cleaning contract until the FY2019/20 budget review. 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 19-5](#) 9:50 AM - Acting County Manager Adam Stumb - Approval of Mowing Contract

**Attachments:** [01-07-19 Mowing Contract Approval](#)

*Acting County Manager Adam Stumb presented the following three bids that were received for the 1 1/2 year mowing contract for County facilities: Daniel Cole - \$70,500, Ashe County Mowing & Yard Maintenance - \$65,000, and High Country Landscaping - \$121,340. The county manager's recommendation to the Board is to accept the low bid of \$65,000 for a 1 1/2 year contract with Ashe County Mowing & Yard Maintenance. Commissioner Rhodes made a motion to accept the bid from Ashe County Mowing & Yard Maintenance for 1 1/2 years at \$65,000. Vice Chairman Sands seconded the motion. Commissioner Perry stated that she would need to recuse herself from voting because Ashe County Mowing & Yard Maintenance is a customer with her insurance business. Commissioner Dix stated that a structured evaluation process needs to be implemented for both this contract and the cleaning contract. With no further comments from the Board, Chairman McNeill called for a vote to the motion on the floor. The motion passed with unanimous approval.*

**Approved**

**For:** 4 - Commissioner McNeill, Commissioner Sands, Commissioner Rhodes and Commissioner Dix

**Recused:** 1 - Commissioner Perry

**GENERAL SESSION****Appointments**

[APP 19-1](#) Appointments to the Local Emergency Planning Committee

**Attachments:** [01-07-19 Local Emergency Planning Committee Appointments](#)

*Commissioner Rhodes made a motion to reappoint Phyllis Yates and Tracie McMillan Downer to the Local Emergency Planning Committee for four year terms; and to appoint Danny Houck to fill the term of Marc Kitts that expires February 2021 and Adam Stumb to fill Sam Yearick's term that does not have an expiration date. Vice Chairman 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 19-2** Appointment to the Ashe County Joint Community Advisory Committee

**Attachments:** [01-07-19 Joint Community Advisory Committee Appointment](#)

*Commissioner Rhodes made a motion to reappoint Cheryl Lanning to the Ashe County Joint Community Advisory Committee for an additional three-year term. Vice Chairman 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

**Resolutions**

**RES 19-1** Resolution for the Disposal of Surplus Property

**Attachments:** [01-07-19 Surplus Property Disposal Resolution](#)

*Commissioner Rhodes made a motion to adopt the resolution for the disposal of surplus property, a 2009 Ford Explorer (VIN1FMEU73E59UA36584). Commissioner Perry seconded the motion. The motion passed with unanimous approval.*

**Adopted**

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

**VII. Commissioner Comments**

**VIII. Announcements**

**IX. Executive Session**

**ES 19-1** Executive Session - G.S. 143-318.11 (a) (6) - Personnel Issues

*Vice Chairman Sands made a motion to enter into Executive Session to discuss Personnel Issues as provided for under G.S. 143-318.11 (a) (6). Commissioner Rhodes seconded the motion. The motion passed with unanimous approval. Chairman McNeill declared the Board into Executive Session at 10:12 a.m. and out of Executive Session at 10:53 a.m., with no action taken.*

**No Action Taken**

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

**X. Adjournment**

*Vice Chairman Sands made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 10:55 a.m.  
Commissioner Rhodes seconded the motion. The motion passed with unanimous approval.*

**Approved**

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

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