

Ashe County

*150 Government Circle
Jefferson, NC 28640*



Meeting Minutes - Final

Monday, February 4, 2019

9:00 AM

Second Floor Conference 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 Meeting of the Ashe County Board of Commissioners to order at 9:00 a.m. at the Ashe County Courthouse.

II. Pledge of Allegiance/Opening Prayer

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

III. Approval of Minutes**[MIN 19-5](#) December 3, 2018 Organizational Meeting - Old Business**

Attachments: [02-04-19 December 3, 2018 Old Business-Organizational Meeting](#)

Commissioner Dix made a motion to approve the December 3, 2018 Old Business-Organizational Meeting 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 19-6](#) December 3, 2018 Organizational Meeting - New Business

Attachments: [02-04-19 December 3, 2018 New Business-Organizational Meeting](#)

Commissioner Dix made a motion to approve the December 3, 2018 New Business-Organizational Meeting 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 19-7](#) December 3, 2018 Executive Session

Commissioner Dix made a motion to approve the December 3, 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

[MIN 19-8](#) January 7, 2019 Regular Session

Attachments: [02-04-19 January 7, 2019 Regular Session](#)

Commissioner Dix made a motion to approve the January 7, 2019 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 19-9](#)

January 7, 2019 Executive Session

Commissioner Dix made a motion to approve the January 7, 2019 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

[MIN 19-10](#)

January 22, 2019 Regular Session

Attachments: [02-04-19 January 22, 2019 Regular Session](#)

Commissioner Dix made a motion to approve the January 22, 2019 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 19-11](#)

January 22, 2019 Executive Session

Commissioner Dix made a motion to approve the January 22, 2019 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

[MIN 19-12](#)

January 23, 2019 Special Meeting

Attachments: [02-04-19 January 23, 2019 Special Meeting](#)

Commissioner Dix made a motion to approve the January 23, 2019 Special Meeting 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

Vice Chairman Sands made a motion to adopt the agenda as written. Commissioner Rhodes 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.

Ben Massey, president of the Ashe County Farmer's Market, thanked the Board for recent funding support.

Jessica Janc, High Country Watershed Coordinator with Blue Ridge Resource Conservation & Development, introduced herself to the Board and thanked the Board for their support. She also highlighted Blue Ridge RC&D projects in Ashe County.

Jerry Heath, who is new to the county, introduced himself to the Board stating that he is just beginning to get involved in Ashe County.

No further comment was offered.

VI. Presentations

[PRES 19-19](#) 9:05 AM - DSS Director Tracie Downer - Monthly Departmental Report

Attachments: [02-04-19 DSS Statistics-December 2018](#)
[02-04-19 DSS MOU with County & State](#)
[02-04-19 DSS Mandated Programs & Services](#)

Department of Social Services Director Tracie Downer presented the monthly DSS departmental update. She began with an update regarding the effect that the federal government shutdown has had on Food and Nutrition Services. She also provided information on projects within the DSS department. Next, Ms. Downer reviewed departmental statistics for December 2018. An update was provided on the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the State and Ashe County which outlines procedures on following policies. Two areas of concern in the MOU include using the word "discharge" regarding child welfare, and the need to limit placement of foster children unless it is a benefit to the child. She asked the Board to send a cover letter with the modified MOU stating agreement with the document. Commissioner Rhodes made a motion to approve the modified MOU including the two changes as presented by DSS Director Downer. Vice Chairman Sands seconded the motion. The motion passed with unanimous approval. Next, information was provided on mandated services provided and staffing changes. Information was also given regarding the NCFast program which was due to go live in western counties on January 22, 2019. Due to issues with staffing, the go-live date has been changed to March 2019.

Approved

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

[PRES 19-20](#) 9:15 AM - Emergency Management Coordinator Patty Gambill - Emergency Operations Plan Update Approval

Attachments: [02-04-19 Emergency Operations Plan Update](#)

Emergency Management Coordinator Patty Gambill presented amendments to the Emergency Operations Plan which is approved annually. Updates were provided to the commissioners in the agenda packet. Commissioner Rhodes made a motion to approve

the Emergency Operations Plan with the amendments as presented. 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

PRES 19-21 9:20 AM - County Librarian Suzanne Moore & Regional Director Jane Blackburn - Request for Assistance with Mobile Library

Attachments: [02-04-19 Mobile Library Assistance Request](#)
[02-04-19 Mobile Library PowerPoint Presentation](#)

County Librarian Suzanne Moore and Regional Library Director Jane Blackburn provided a PowerPoint presentation regarding a request for funding assistance for establishing a mobile library in Ashe County. The request is for the County to fund one-half of the salary for a full-time and a part-time person for the first year and to fund the positions at 100% thereafter. The first year's cost would be \$25,727 and increase to \$51,454 in the years after that. Regional Library Director Jane Blackburn explained that the grant for the bookmobile is a federal grant and with matching funds a bookmobile could be purchased at no cost to the County except for staff and ongoing expenses to the County for fuel and vehicle maintenance. The grant application deadline is February 28, 2019. The Board was in agreement to add consideration of the request to the February 18, 2019 agenda to allow time for the commissioners to review materials presented at today's meeting. County Librarian Suzanne Moore told the Board that if they are awarded the grant, the bookmobile would not be in operation until December 2019 and therefore the salary would be for half of a year.

PRES 19-22 9:35 AM - Volunteer Coordinator Terri Hopkins - Budget Request for Volunteer Awards Ceremony

Attachments: [02-04-19 Volunteer Awards Ceremony Budget Request](#)

Volunteer Coordinator Terri Hopkins made a request for increased funding for the Volunteer Awards Ceremony budget. She explained that costs for the ceremony have been over budget by \$200 to \$300 for the last two years. Food costs have continually increased as well as the number of volunteers being nominated has increased. The current budget for the Volunteer Awards Ceremony is \$3200 and a request is being made to increase the budget to between \$3600 - \$4000. Vice Chairman Sands made a motion to increase the Volunteer Awards Ceremony budget to \$4000. Commissioner Perry seconded the motion. Commissioner Rhodes requested that the motion on the floor be amended to increase the budget to \$4500. Vice Chairman Sands agreed to amend his motion as requested. Commissioner Perry made a second to the amended motion. The motion passed with unanimous approval.

Approved

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

PRES 19-23 9:40 AM - Tax Administrator Chris Lambert - 2018 Collections Report of Unpaid Taxes

Attachments: [02-04-19 Unpaid Taxes Collection Report Approval](#)

Tax Administrator Chris Lambert presented the 2018 Delinquent Taxes Report as

required by General Statute. He told the Board that 90.85% of delinquent taxes for 2018 were collected as of January 1, 2019. Approval of the report is not required by the Board.

PRES 19-24 9:45 AM - Tax Administrator Chris Lambert - Notification that Second Notices for Late Taxes Mailed on January 28, 2019

Tax Administrator Chris Lambert notified the Board that 5900 second notices for late taxes were mailed on January 28, 2019.

PRES 19-25 9:50 AM - Tax Administrator Chris Lambert - Request to Advertise Tax Liens

Tax Administrator Chris Lambert made a request for the Board to set a date to advertise tax liens. General Statute requires that tax liens are advertised between March 1 and June 30. Typically the advertisement runs during April each year. Commissioner Rhodes made a motion to advertise tax liens during the first week of April 2019. Vice Chairman Sands seconded the motion. The motion passed with unanimous approval.

Approved

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

PRES 19-26 9:55 AM - Extension Director Travis Birdsell - Quotes to Replace Flooring at the Agricultural Services Building

Attachments: [02-04-19 Ag Building Flooring Quotes](#)

Cooperative Extension Director Travis Birdsell presented two quotes received to replace flooring in the Agricultural Services building with Flexco rubber tile. The quotes are as follows: Billy Goodman Construction - \$73,098.22 and Goss Construction - \$66,500.00. Mr. Birdsell explained that moving cubicles is extremely labor intensive, therefore installation quotes are written for existing carpet to remain at cubicles in areas where it is feasible to do so. He also provided information on the rubber tile material that will be used. The initial cost is more expensive than alternative flooring options, but the lifetime costs are one-third the cost of other flooring. In addition, the rubber tile flooring requires no buffing or stripping which would save on lifetime maintenance costs. Cooperative Extension Director Birdsell told the Board that both quotes came in under the projected salary windfall of \$77,000 due to employee vacancies in the department this year. Finance Officer Sandra Long stated that the quotes need to be firm quotes. The Board was in agreement that the contract would include wording that the total cost for the project would not exceed the quoted amount. Commissioner Rhodes made a motion to approve the low bid from Goss Construction at \$66,500. 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

GENERAL SESSION

Appointments

APP 19-5 Planning Board Appointment & Reappointment

Attachments: [02-04-19 Planning Board Appointment & Reappointment](#)

Commissioner Rhodes made a motion to reappoint Priscilla Cox and to appoint David McMillan to the Ashe County Planning Board. 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 19-6](#) Farmland Preservation Advisory Board - (3) Appointments & (1) Reappointment

Attachments: [02-04-19 Farmland Preservation Advisory Bd Reappointment & Appointments](#)

Chairman McNeill told the Board that he leases land to one of the appointees and needs to recuse himself from voting on the appointments to the Farmland Preservation Advisory Board. Commissioner Rhodes made a motion to reappoint Cecil Miller and to appoint Jimmy Cox, Anthony Farmer and Loyd Miller to the Farmland Preservation Advisory Board. Cooperative Extension Director Travis Birdsell told the Board that the appointments will be for three-year terms except for Anthony Farmer whose term will be for two years. Commissioner Rhodes amended the motion on the floor to include the terms as stated by the cooperative extension director. Commissioner Dix made a second to the amended motion. The motion passed with unanimous approval.

Appointment(s) Approved

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

Recused: 1 - Commissioner McNeill

VII. Commissioner Comments

Vice Chairman Sands requested to add an item to the next agenda regarding the request for our local legislators to introduce legislation that would change how the sheriff's position, when it is vacated mid-term, would be appointed. The Board was in agreement to add this to the February 18, 2019 agenda.

VIII. Announcements

IX. Executive Session

[ES 19-4](#) G.S. 143-318.11 (a) (5) Acquisition of Property

Commissioner Rhodes made a motion for the Board to enter into Executive Session as provided for under G.S. 143-318.11 (a) (5) to discuss acquisition of property. Commissioner Dix seconded the motion. The motion passed with unanimous approval. Chairman McNeill declared the Board into Executive Session at 10:45 a.m. and out of Executive Session at 10:55 a.m. with no action taken.

Approved

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

X. Adjournment

Commissioner Rhodes made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 10:58 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.

Todd McNeill, Chairman

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