

Ashe County

*150 Government Circle
Jefferson, NC 28640*



Meeting Minutes - Final

Monday, July 15, 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 Meeting 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 Perry led the Pledge of Allegiance and Commissioner Dix offered the opening prayer.

III. Approval of Minutes**[MIN 19-34](#) June 4, 2019 Budget Work Session Minutes**

Attachments: [07-15-19 June 4, 2019 Budget Work Session](#)

Commissioner Dix made a motion to approve the June 4, 2019 Budget Work Session Minutes as written. 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

[MIN 19-35](#) June 4, 2019 Emergency Meeting Minutes

Attachments: [07-15-19 June 4, 2019 Emergency Meeting](#)

Commissioner Dix made a motion to approve the June 4, 2019 Emergency Meeting Minutes as written. 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

[MIN 19-36](#) June 4, 2019 Executive Session Minutes

Commissioner Dix made a motion to approve the June 4, 2019 Executive Session Minutes as written. 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

[MIN 19-37](#) June 5, 2019 Budget Work Session Minutes

Attachments: [07-15-19 June 5, 2019 Budget Work Session](#)

Commissioner Dix made a motion to approve the June 5, 2019 Budget Work Session Minutes as written. 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

[MIN 19-38](#) July 1, 2019 Regular Session Minutes

Attachments: [07-15-19 July 1, 2019 Regular Meeting Minutes](#)

Commissioner Dix made a motion to approve the July 1, 2019 Regular Session Minutes as written. 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

[MIN 19-39](#) July 1, 2019 Executive Session Minutes

Commissioner Dix made a motion to approve the July 1, 2019 Executive Session Minutes as written. 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

IV. Adoption of Agenda

Vice Chairman Sands made a motion to adopt the agenda with the deletion of PRES 19-129, PRES 19-130, and PRES 19-131. 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

V. Public Comment

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

VI. Presentations

[PRES](#)
[19-128](#)

9:05 AM - DSS Director Tracie Downer - DSS Departmental Update

Department of Social Services (DSS) Director Tracie Downer reviewed the monthly Statistical Report for DSS. She told the Board that DSS is on target with the training schedule for employees. In addition, they are engaging in safety improvements for workers in the office environment and especially for workers that are required to go into client homes. Communications for employees housed at Family Central are currently being reworked. An event to provide information and support for foster parents in Ashe

County will be held on August 24th at Bald Mountain Baptist Church.

Next, Medicaid Transportation Unit Supervisor Kathy Turner provided information on the state-mandated program that she supervises for Medicaid recipients. The program ensures medical, dental, and pharmacy transportation through the Ashe County Transportation Authority (ACTA) or by providing gas vouchers for recipients that use their own vehicles. Ms. Turner told the Board that her department has handled 1,716 active cases so far this year.

[PRES](#)
[19-129](#)

9:15 AM - Tax Administrator Chris Lambert - Monthly Tax Report & Settlement Report

Attachments: [07-15-19 Monthly Tax Report-Tax Collector Settlement FY2018-19](#)

Tabled

[PRES](#)
[19-130](#)

9:25 AM - Tax Administrator Chris Lambert - Charge Tax Administrator with Collections of the 2019 Real & Personal Property Taxes

Attachments: [07-15-19 Tax Administrator Charge](#)

Tabled

[PRES](#)
[19-131](#)

9:30 AM - Tax Administrator Chris Lambert - Offer to Purchase Surplus Property

Attachments: [07-15-19 Offer to Purchase Surplus Property](#)

Tabled

[PRES](#)
[19-132](#)

9:35 AM - Arts Council Board Member Becky Marsten - Introduction of Executive Director Jeff Fissel

Becky Marsten, incoming president of the Arts Council Board of Directors, explained the interview process that took place to fill the position of the Arts Council Director vacated by the retirement of Jane Lonon. Ms. Marsten explained that a transition committee was formed to begin a search for the person that would fill the position. The Arts Council Board resoundingly approved Jeff Fissel as the new director of the Ashe County Arts Council. Mr. Fissel then spoke to the commissioners providing a brief history of his prior work history and education.

[PRES](#)
[19-133](#)

9:40 AM - Executive Director Ann Rose - Lost Province Center for Cultural Arts Presentation & Funding Request

Attachments: [07-15-19 Lost Province Center for Cultural Arts](#)
[07-15-19 Lost Province Center-PowerPoint](#)

Ann Rose, executive director of Lost Province for the Cultural Arts, stated the vision of the non-profit organization which is "To revitalize our community by preserving and renovating this historic property (the Lansing High School which operated from 1937-1992) promoting the cultural arts and skills of the Appalachian region and creating sustainable multi-use housing." The challenge they are facing is funding to purchase the property. A request is being made for the County to fund the \$45,000 fee for one year for the accounting firm they will be working with. Ms. Rose explained the impact they expect the project to have on Ashe County. She also highlighted strategic partnerships with other organizations in the County. Expectations are for the project to take five years

from the time the property is purchased until completion. An offer will be made on the property after an environmental assessment, a market analysis, and a feasibility study are completed. Plans include 15 long term apartment rentals on the upper floor and 20 short term rentals. The bottom floor will be reserved for retail space and the high school will be used for classrooms. Commissioner Rhodes stated concern for utilizing taxpayer funds for this type of enterprise. Finance Officer Sandra Long stated that research needs to be made to see if taxpayer funds can be used for this purpose.

PRES
19-134

9:50 AM - Planning Director Adam Stumb - NC State Transportation Improvement Plan 2021-2032 (NCSTIP) - Project Submission Approval

Attachments: [07-15-19 NCSTIP 2021-2032](#)

Planning Director Adam Stumb presented four State Transportation Improvement Plan (STIP) projects for submission to the North Carolina Department of Transportation. Based on projects submitted in the past and based on requests by the towns, the following projects will be submitted: 1) US221 from Ashe Memorial Hospital to the US221/Hwy16 split, 2) Hwy163 - Nettle Knob to US221, 3) Mt. Jefferson Road - Oakwood Drive to Campus Drive, and 4) Airport Terminal. Planning Director Stumb explained that a change has been made from the projects proposed at the last meeting of the Board. The Department of Transportation suggested that two projects be combined for submission as one project, US221 from Ashe Memorial Hospital to US221/16 split and US221/16 split intersection improvement. Project NC163 - Nettle Knob to US221 will now be added to the projects submitted. Commissioner Rhodes made a motion to approve the STIP 2022-2031 projects proposal 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

GENERAL SESSION

Other Items for Consideration

MISC 19-14 Selection of Voting Delegate to the North Carolina Association of County Commissioners (NCACC) Conference

Attachments: [07-15-19 Selection of Voting Delegate-NCACC Conference](#)

Commissioner Rhodes made a motion to appoint Chairman Todd McNeill as voting delegate at the North Carolina Association of County Commissioners Annual Conference which will be held in August. 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

During commissioner comments, Commissioner Dix requested that a two-hour work session be held on August 19 to allow the Board to begin work on establishing goals for the County. Chairman McNeill agreed and requested that Senator Ballard and Representative Russell also attend the meeting. Commissioner Perry stated that she is

in favor of holding the work session and was going to suggest that the commissioners schedule a work session in the near future.

VIII. Announcements

IX. Executive Session

ES 19-14

Executive Session - G.S. 143-318.11 (a) (5) - Acquisition of Property

Commissioner Rhodes made a motion for the Board to enter into Executive Session to discuss the acquisition of property as provided for under G.S. 143-318.11 (a) (5). Vice Chairman Sands seconded the motion. The motion passed with unanimous approval. Chairman McNeill declared the Board into Executive Session at 10:07 a.m. and out of Executive Session at 11:12 a.m. with no action taken.

Approved

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

X. Adjournment

Commissioner Dix made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 11:13 a.m. 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

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, NCMCC
Clerk to the Board