

# **Ashe County**

*150 Government Circle  
Jefferson, NC 28640*



## **Meeting Minutes - Final**

**Monday, October 21, 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 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 Rhodes led the Pledge of Allegiance and Vice Chairman Sands offered the opening prayer.*

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

*Vice Chairman Sands made a motion to adopt the agenda with the deletion of PRES 19-183 Airport Manager Eric Payne and the addition of the appointment of a jury commissioner for the Clerk of Court's office. 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

**V. Public Comment**

*Chairman McNeill opened the floor for comments from the public.*

*Allen Miller and David Fox representing the VFW Post 7946 invited the Board to attend dinner tonight at 6:00 p.m. with VFW members. Mr. Miller updated the Board on the community projects that the VFW is involved in.*

*Maggie Fernandez with Moving Mountains Afterschool and Summercamp Program which is located at Family Central presented a letter to the Board explaining their program and the financial situation they are in. The program has been operating since 2005. Their home church has been supporting the program financially and has made the difficult decision to discontinue funding after October 31, 2019. A request was made for assistance from the County to keep the program open.*

*John Blevins expressed support for the services provided by Moving Mountains.*

*Eric Langseff told the Board that he has three children that have attended Moving Mountains. He has two children with special needs and he stated support for the program.*

*Pat Foyner, a staff person at Moving Mountains, stated appreciation for the children that attend their program and also read a letter in support of the program from one of the parents whose child attends the program.*

*Judy Roten, a staff person at Moving Mountains, told the Board what the program has done for her.*

No further comments were offered.

## VI. Presentations

[PRES](#)  
[19-180](#)

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

**Attachments:** [10-21-19 DSS Monthly Update](#)

*DSS Director Tracie Downer presented the monthly departmental update. She reviewed statistics through August 2019 and highlighted the Crisis Intervention Program (CIP) which provides year round funding and the Low Income Energy Assistance Program (LIEAP) energy programs offered. A new requirement from the state for these programs is for participants to submit income verification. Next, Jamie Shepherd with the Adult Services Program, provided information to the commissioners on the Star Christmas Tree program set up for elderly and disabled adults. The trees will be displayed at Food Lion, Ingles, Wendy's, and Harvest Cafe. The Appalachian Senior Program sponsors the program and will also take monetary donations. Director Tracie Downer presented the Board with an updated list of food pantries in the County.*

[PRES](#)  
[19-181](#)

9:15 AM - Jeff McRee with Republic Services Inc. - Solid Waste Franchise Renewal - Second Reading

**Attachments:** [10-21-19 Republic Services Solid Waste Franchise Renewal](#)

*Jeff McRee, division manager with Republic Services Inc., was present for the second reading of the solid waste franchise renewal for Republic Services, formerly GDS, Inc. Mr. McRee explained services provided and answered questions from the Board. Commissioner Rhodes made a motion to approve the second reading of the franchise renewal for Republic Services Inc. 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](#)  
[19-182](#)

9:25 AM - Ned Fowler, Executive Director - Appointment of Trustee of Northwestern Regional Housing Authority

**Attachments:** [10-21-19 Northwest Regional Housing Authority Trustee Appointment](#)

*Ned Fowler, executive director of Northwestern Regional Housing Authority, provided an explanation of services their organization offers. Northwestern Regional Housing Authority is a 40-year old public non-profit organization that provides affordable housing opportunities in seven counties in northwest North Carolina. Mr. Fowler explained that Fred Lemley, who is the current trustee for Ashe County, has asked to step down from his position. Attorney Jak Reeves has agreed to serve in the position which is a five-year term. Attorney Reeves told the Board that he has served as board member on Northwestern Housing Enterprises since 2012. Commissioner Rhodes made a motion to appoint Attorney Jak Reeves as trustee representing Ashe County to the Northwestern Regional Housing Authority Board. 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](#)  
[19-183](#)

9:35 AM - Airport Manager Eric Payne - After Hours Call Out Policy

*This item was deleted from the agenda.*

[PRES](#)  
[19-184](#)

9:45 AM - Emergency Management Coordinator Patty Gambill - Budget Amendment for Emergency Management Office

**Attachments:** [10-21-19 E M. Coordinator Patty Gambill - Budget Amendment](#)

*Emergency Management Coordinator Patty Gambill presented a request for the commissioners to approve a budget amendment for the Emergency Management Office. She explained that Ashe County was awarded a \$14,500 grant from the state to conduct disaster exercises. Commissioner Rhodes made a motion to approve the budget amendment for \$14,500. Vice Chairman Sands seconded the motion. The motion passed with unanimous approval.*

**BUDGET AMENDMENT**  
October 21, 2019

*The following budget amendment was approved upon motion by Commissioner Rhodes, seconded by Commissioner Sands, as provided for by GS 153-127; vote carried unanimously.*

*General Fund:*

*To increase the appropriation for the department of Emergency Management from \$196,585 to \$211,085; this increased appropriation of \$14,500 to be made with an appropriation of \$14,500 from NC Department of Public Safety – State Grant.*

**Approved**

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

[PRES](#)  
[19-185](#)

9:55 AM - Parks & Recreation Director Kevin Anderson - Proposed Cafeteria Use Application

**Attachments:** [10-21-19 Parks & Rec Proposed Cafeteria Use Application](#)

*Parks and Recreation Director Kevin Anderson presented a proposed application for use of the cafeteria at Family Central. He explained the application process and rules and regulations that will be used to hopefully reopen the cafeteria to make it a successful asset for the County. After questions from the commissioners, the decision was made for the parks and recreation director to bring back a revised application along with recommendations at the next meeting.*

[PRES](#)  
[19-186](#)

10:05 AM - Communications Director Brian Greer - Alarm System Ordinance, Chapter 96

**Attachments:** [10-21-19 Alarm System Ordinance](#)

Communications Director Brian Greer presented a proposed amendment to the Ashe County Code of Ordinances, Alarm System Ordinance, Chapter 96. The amendment would remove Section 96.01, the requirement that all alarms be permitted or registered. He explained that the alarm companies provide information to dispatch making this section of the ordinance unnecessary. The county attorney will review the ordinance to make sure the correct verbiage is used. Emergency Management Coordinator Patty Gambill stated that the permitting process would have no effect on emergency services. The part they would like to keep is the charge for excessive alarms. A public hearing will be advertised and held at a future meeting to gain citizen input regarding changes to the ordinance.

[PRES](#)  
[19-191](#)

10:15 AM - Sheriff Howell - Budget Amendment Approval

**Attachments:** [10-21-19 Sheriffs Request for Budget Amendment Approval](#)

Sheriff Phil Howell presented a request for approval of a budget amendment to move monies to begin the K9 program with two dogs and training for two officers. The budget amendment request is for \$15,000 to be placed in the line item for Capital Outlay/Equipment. Funds in the amount of \$10,000 would be transferred from the Donations/Sheriff line item and \$5,000 from the Drug Funds and Forfeitures/Sheriff line item. Commissioner Rhodes made a motion to approve the budget amendment request as presented. Vice Chairman Sands seconded the motion. The motion passed with unanimous approval.

**BUDGET AMENDMENT**

October 21, 2019

The following budget amendment was approved upon motion by Commissioner Rhodes, seconded by Commissioner Sands, as provided for by GS 153-127; vote carried unanimously.

**General Fund:**

To increase the appropriation for the department of Law Enforcement from \$2,796,944 to \$2,811,944; this increased appropriation of \$15,000 to be made with unappropriated revenues in the General Fund. \$10,000 from Donations & Contributions/Sheriff and \$5,000 from Drug Funds & Forfeitures (Sheriff's Federal Drug Fund).

**Approved**

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

[PRES](#)  
[19-187](#)

10:25 AM - Interim County Manager Adam Stumb - Personnel Policy - Travel Expense Advancement and Reimbursement

**Attachments:** [10-21-19 Personnel Policy-Travel Advancement](#)

Interim County Manager Adam Stumb told the Board that the Personnel Policy Committee has been updating the Personnel Policy Manual and to be in line with the IRS policy, a change is being requested to remove expense reimbursements for non-overnight travel. Reimbursements would be made when there is an overnight stay. Commissioner Rhodes made a motion to approve the requested amendment to the Personnel Policy Manual. 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](#)  
[19-192](#)

10:35 AM - Interim County Manager Adam Stumb - Appointment of Jury Commissionoer

*Commissioner Rhodes made a motion to appoint David Boone as Jury Commissioner for a term from July 1, 2019 - June 30, 2021. Commissioner Dix seconded the moiton. 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 19-16](#)

Discussion Regarding Changing Meeting Times

*Vice Chairman Sands stated that he asked for this item to be placed on the agenda because since the meeting time was changed to include one monthly night meetings beginning on July 1, 2019, there has not been attendance by the public at the monthly night meetings. This has been tried before with the same results. Attendance at the meetings are driven by the items on the agenda. He noted compensatory time for employees that stay late for the meetings and the lack of people attending. He would like to discontinue the night meetings as we are moving into the winter months with the November 4th meeting being the final night meeting. Commissioner Rhodes stated that he has been a commissioner for 21 years and attendance is based on agenda items. There are concerns for the cost to hold night meetings now that we have the means to watch meetings online or on the television. He is in favor of moving all meetings to 9:00 a.m. with the understanding that the Board can call special meetings when necessary. Commissioner Dix stated his disappointment with the number of people attending the night meetings. He is still hearing that people like the commissioners holding night meetings and wants to keep the night meetings for the public. Commissioner Perry stated that her first thought was to have evening meetings but she has not seen people that requested night meetings attend any of the night meetings. She added that the agenda items dictate who attends and also wants to move the night meeting back to 9:00 a.m. Chairman McNeill agreed that attendance at night meetings has been disheartening. With no further commissioner comments, Vice Chairman Sands made a motion to move the night meetings to 9:00 a.m. Commissioner Rhodes seconded the motion. The motion passed 3-2, with Commissioners McNeill and Dix voting in opposition.*

**Approved**

**For:** 3 - Commissioner Sands, Commissioner Rhodes and Commissioner Perry

**Against:** 2 - Commissioner McNeill and Commissioner Dix

**VII. Commissioner Comments****VIII. Announcements**

**IX. Executive Session****X. Adjournment**

*Commissioner Dix made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 10:40 a.m. 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

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.

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**Todd McNeill, Chairman**

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**Ann J. Clark, MMC, NCMCC**  
**Clerk to the Board**