

Ashe County

*150 Government Circle
Jefferson, NC 28640*



Meeting Minutes - Final

Monday, January 6, 2020

9:00 AM

Commission Meeting Room

County Commission

*Chairperson Todd McNeill
Vice Chair Larry Rhodes
Commissioner William Sands
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 January 6, 2020 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 Sands led the Pledge of Allegiance and Vice Chairman Rhodes offered the opening prayer.

III. Approval of Minutes

[MIN 20-1](#) December 16, 2019 Regular Session Minutes

Attachments: [01-06-20 December 16, 2019 Regular Session Minutes](#)

Commissioner Sands made a motion to approve the December 16, 2019 Regular Session Minutes as written. 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

[MIN 20-2](#) December 16, 2019 Executive Session Minutes

Commissioner Sands made a motion to approve the December 16, 2019 Executive Session Minutes as written. 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

IV. Adoption of Agenda

No changes were made to the agenda. Commissioner Dix made a motion to adopt the agenda as written. 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. Allen Briggs from Obids thanked the Board for their progress made in 2019. He noted the planned expansion of the industrial park, plans for a new convenience center on Highway 163, progress made on the new middle school, the good decision made on hiring a great county manager, and for the professional and collegial way that the Board conducts

business. No further comment was offered.

VI. Presentations

PRES 20-1 9:05 AM - Emergency Management Coordinator Patty Gambill - Pond Mountain Ambulance Franchise Ordinance - Second Reading

Attachments: [01-06-20 Pond Mountain Ambulance Service Franchise](#)

Emergency Management Coordinator Patty Gambill presented the Pond Mountain Ambulance Franchise Ordinance for second reading after being approved at first reading on December 19, 2019. Ms. Gambill told the Board that state inspections have been completed and she is meeting this afternoon to finalize EMS response maps. Commissioner Dix made a motion to approve the second reading of the Pond Mountain Ambulance Franchise Ordinance. 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 20-4 9:10 AM - County Manager Adam Stumb - Boundary Line Agreement

Attachments: [01-06-20 Boundary Line Agreement](#)

County Manager Adam Stumb introduced Surveyor Randy Rhodes who summarized an inconsistent property boundary line between the County's property at the Old Jefferson School, where Daymark Recovery Services and the Sharing Center are located, and a piece of property owned by Christian Moreno. Surveyor Rhodes explained that there is not enough evidence or data to establish the boundary between the County property and Mr. Moreno's property which includes lots 30, 31 and 32 of the College Hill Subdivision. A boundary line agreement is needed from the County before the owner of the three lots in the subdivision will be able to sell the property. County Manager Adam Stumb stated the approval is needed on the proposed boundary line so that the boundary line agreement can be drawn up and recorded. After discussion by the Board, Vice Chairman Rhodes made a motion to approve a property line agreement between the County and Mr. Moreno based on the survey prepared by Surveyor Randy Rhodes. 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 20-3 9:25 AM - Amanda Roten, Director of Ashe County Transportation Authority - Rural Operating Assistance Program (ROAP) Application Approval

Attachments: [01-06-20 ROAP Application](#)

Director of Ashe County Transportation Authority Amanda Roten presented the FY2020/21 Rural Operating Assistance Program (ROAP) application for approval by the Board. Ms. Roten explained the areas included in the funding: Rural General Public Program (RGP) - \$72,761.90, Elderly & Disabled Transportation Assistance Program (EDTAP) - \$67,688.67, and Employment (EMPL) - \$9,759.31 which supports the elderly and disabled through human services agencies, for a total funding amount of

\$150,209.88. She told the Board that last year's funding supported 45,380 trips that helped citizens to maintain their independence. Commissioner Dix made a motion to approve the ROAP application as submitted. 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

Resolutions

[RES 20-1](#) Resolution - 100th Anniversary of Passage of 19th Amendment to the US Constitution & Founding of League of Women Voters

Attachments: [01-06-20 Resolution-19th Amendment 100 Year Anniversary](#)

Commissioner Dix made a motion to adopt the resolution in honor of the 100th anniversary of passage of the Nineteenth Amendment to the United States Constitution and founding of the League of Women Voters. Commissioner Perry seconded the motion. The motion passed 5 - 0 with Vice Chairman Rhodes not casting a vote. The Commissioners' Rules of Procedure and G.S. 160A-75 states that a member that does not vote must be recorded as having voted in the affirmative.

Adopted

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

Other Items for Consideration

[MISC 20-1](#) Announcement of Meetings that Occur on a Holiday in 2020

Attachments: [01-06-20 Meetings that Occur on a Holiday in 2020](#)

An announcement was made regarding the meeting that occurs on Martin Luther King Jr. Day which will be held on Tuesday, January 21, 2020 and the meeting that occurs on Labor Day will be held on Tuesday, September 8, 2020.

VII. Commissioner Comments

VIII. Announcements

IX. Work Session to Discuss Property Acquisition for Industrial Park Site

After a 15 minute recess to allow the meeting to move to the second floor conference room, Economic Development Director Cathy Barr introduced work session attendees. She stated the goal for today's meeting which is to have Jason Bertoncino with Withers Ravenel at the meeting to answer questions from the commissioners and to discuss the next steps that need to be taken prior to the purchase of property that is being considered for an industrial park site.

Jason Bertoncino thanked the Board for hiring his firm which specializes in environmental engineering for the industrial park project. He told the Board that a project like this is an

opportunity that is coupled with risks. An explanation was provided of waterways and wetlands and the three primary drainage features on the site. The property includes two perennial streams that will likely require 30-foot buffers on either side of the stream to adhere to the Town of West Jefferson requirements and one intermittent stream that will not be subject to buffer requirements to comply with local ordinances. Mr. Bertoncini told the Board that he talked with the town manager of West Jefferson about zoning of the property and there appears to be no issues, although he would not recommend final purchase of the property until it is certain that the County can use the property for the reason that it is being purchased. He believes this piece of property is one of the most suitable for development of an industrial park due to the close proximity to public utilities, favorable soil conditions, and the lack of significant environmental concerns. The need for installation of a well or water tank will depend on the needs of the industries that locate there and on how the County wants to position itself in the competitive marketplace. Economic Developer Cathy Barr stated that Town Manager Brantley Price would like to have a well installed on the site. Jason Bertoncini asked the Board if they want to move forward on final design of the site and wetland impact permitting.

Realtor Joe Chamberlain stated that February 20, 2020 is the end of the examination period and the original \$15,000 earnest money will become "hard money. An additional \$15,000 will become "hard money" on May 15, 2020. If rezoning fails, the monies will be returned to the County. Those monies would only go to the seller if the County backs out for a reason other than rezoning issues. Mr. Bertoncini stated that in talking with the town manager, he was told that the rezoning process would take approximately six to eight weeks. Including other items that must be addressed, the process would take approximately 120 days and would allow for closing a little earlier than originally scheduled. Joe Chamberlain asked Cathy Barr to elaborate on possible funding that would be a reason to move the process up. Cathy Barr explained that the Rural Economic Development Loan and Grant Program provides funding for rural projects through local utility organizations. The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) provides zero interest loans to local utilities for projects that create jobs in rural areas. Up to \$2 million in loans may be requested with a 0% interest rate for up to 10 years. Up to 80% of the project cost can be borrowed. She recommended that the County move as soon as possible with an application for funding to be used for development of the property.

Joe Chamberlain told the Board that if the decision is made to move forward on the project immediately, he would meet with County Attorney John Kilby and have a modification to the contract drawn up moving the due diligence up and making the \$30,000 earnest money immediately "hard money". All of the other terms of the contract would remain unchanged. The seller would then be able to submit the application for rezoning to the Town of West Jefferson.

The commissioners were in agreement to move forward with the project. Commissioner Dix made a motion for the seller to move forward with submission of a permit for rezoning and for Joe Chamberlain to amend the contract with the seller changing the due diligence period to January 7, 2020 on both "hard money" dates. Commissioner Sands seconded the motion. The motion passed with unanimous approval.

The commissioners then moved back to the commissioners' meeting room to adjourn the meeting.

Approved

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

[PRES 20-5](#) Withers Ravenel Presentation

Attachments: [01-06-20 Withers Ravenel Presentation-Industrial Park Site](#)

X. Adjournment

Commissioner Sands made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 10:45 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.

Todd McNeill, Chairman

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