

Ashe County

*150 Government Circle
Jefferson, NC 28640*



Meeting Minutes - Final

Monday, March 2, 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**

Vice Chairman Larry Rhodes called the March 2, 2020 Regular Meeting of the Ashe County Board of Commissioners to order at 9:00 a.m. at the Ashe County Courthouse.

Present: 4 - Commissioner William Sands, Commissioner Larry Rhodes, Commissioner Paula Perry and Commissioner Larry Dix

Absent: 1 - Commissioner Todd McNeill

II. Pledge of Allegiance/Opening Prayer

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

III. Approval of Minutes**[MIN 20-8](#) February 3, 2020 Special Meeting - Roundtable Meeting with Towns**

Attachments: [03-02-20 February 3, 2020 Special Meeting Minutes](#)

Commissioner Sands made a motion to approve the February 3, 2020 Special Meeting Minutes as written. Commissioner Perry seconded the motion. The motion passed with unanimous approval.

Approved

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

[MIN 20-9](#) February 17, 2020 Regular Session Minutes

Attachments: [03-02-20 February 17, 2020 Regular Session Minutes](#)

Commissioner Sands made a motion to approve the February 17, 2020 Regular Session Minutes as written. Commissioner Perry seconded the motion. The motion passed with unanimous approval.

Approved

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

[MIN 20-10](#) February 17, 2020 Executive Session Minutes

Commissioner Sands made a motion to approve the February 17, 2020 Executive Session Minutes as written. Commissioner Perry seconded the motion. The motion passed with unanimous approval.

Approved

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

IV. Adoption of Agenda

Commissioner Dix made a motion to adopt the agenda with the addition of Economic

Development Director Cathy Barr presenting information on the Blue Ridge Energy Loan Application that would be used for property improvement at the proposed industrial park. Commissioner Perry seconded the motion. The motion passed with unanimous approval.

Adopted

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

V. Public Comment

Vice Chairman Rhodes opened the floor for comments from the public. Tom Cecchetti of West Jefferson recommended that the Board approve the solid waste franchise on today's agenda for Jason Barker with Steadfast Property Services. No further comments were offered.

VI. Presentations

[PRES 20-26](#) 9:05 AM - Tax Administrator Chris Lambert - Request for Approval of Untimely Present Use Value Application

Attachments: [03-02-20 Present Use Value Application](#)

Tax Administrator Chris Lambert presented a request for approval by the Board to allow him to consider two untimely Present Use Value applications. One application was included in the packet and will be considered first. Commissioner Dix made a motion to approve the application as presented. Commissioner Perry seconded the motion. Vice Chairman Rhodes opened the floor for commissioner comments. Commissioner Sands stated that the Board needs to be consistent with action taken on these requests. Tax Administrator Lambert stated that historically the commissioners do not approve untimely applications. Commissioner Perry stated that this is the first request that she has seen that should be approved due to the circumstances surrounding the request. Commissioner Dix agrees that the Board should be consistent, but believes the Board needs to look at each situation. Vice Chairman Rhodes stated that over the years there have been unique situations, but he must vote the way he has down through the years and remain consistent. With no further comments, the vice chairman called for a vote to the motion on the floor. The motion failed with a vote of 2 - 2; Commissioners Rhodes and Sands voted in opposition. Since the second application was not included in the packet, to adhere to the Board's Rules of Procedure, this will be considered at the next meeting.

Failed

For: 2 - Commissioner Perry and Commissioner Dix

Against: 2 - Commissioner Sands and Commissioner Rhodes

[PRES 20-27](#) 9:15 AM - High Country Home Services - Request for Solid Waste Franchise - First Reading

Attachments: [03-02-20 High Country Home Services Solid Waste Franchise](#)

Michael Johnson with High Country Home Services presented a request for a solid waste franchise to provide waste pickup in Ashe County. The floor was opened for questions from the commissioners. Commissioner Sands then made a motion to approve the Solid Waste Franchise for High Country Home Services at first reading. Commissioner Dix seconded the motion. The motion passed with unanimous approval. The second reading

of the franchise will be held at the March 16, 2020 meeting.

Approved

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

[PRES 20-28](#) 9:25 AM - Steadfast Property Services - Request for Solid Waste Franchise - First Reading

Attachments: [03-02-20 Steadfast Property Services Solid Waste Franchise](#)

Jason Barker with Steadfast Property Services made a request for approval of a solid waste franchise. Mr. Barker then answered questions from the Board. Commissioner Sands made a motion to approve the first reading of the Solid Waste Franchise for Steadfast Property Services. Commissioner Dix seconded the motion. The motion passed with unanimous approval. The second reading of the franchise will be held at the March 16, 2020 meeting.

Approved

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

[PRES 20-29](#) 9:35 AM - Extension Director Travis Birdsell - Memorandum of Understanding - Ashe County CIS Afterschool Program

Attachments: [03-02-20 Afterschool Program MOU](#)

Extension Director Travis Birdsell provided information on the Ashe County CIS Afterschool Program Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). The document needs to be reworked and will need to be brought back before the Board for approval. He explained that at the end of this school year, Cooperative Extension will no longer be operating the afterschool program. They no longer have the internal support structure from their governing agencies to be able to meet licensing standards. And they can no longer operate without it costing the taxpayers. A group is working to find a way to continue providing services for children which includes kindergarten through sixth grade at the county's three elementary schools. The group is trying to identify another community partner to provide the services due to the announcement last Friday that the Communities & Schools of NC will not be able to provide services. All of the other entities included in the MOU will work together to establish a plan and to notify parents. There are limited agencies available to work with school age and younger children. The school system will be very heavily involved in the program. County Manager Adam Stumb explained that the group has dealt with a lot of setbacks in trying to formulate a plan to provide afterschool care for children. And the hope is that the program will be self-sustaining. Commissioner Perry made a motion to table action on the Memorandum of Understanding. Commissioner Dix seconded the motion. The motion passed with unanimous approval.

[PRES 20-47](#) 9:45 AM - Economic Development Director Cathy Barr - Blue Ridge Energy Loan Application Information

Economic Development Director Cathy Barr presented a copy of the Blue Ridge Energy Loan Application for the commissioners to review. The loan would be used to improve property at the new industrial park. The grant would come from the Rural Economic Development Loan Grant program and the applicant for the loan is Blue Ridge Energy. The grant provides an opportunity to apply for a \$1,360,000 USDA loan of which \$300,000 is grant monies. The loan amount would be \$1,060,000 for ten-years at a 0% interest

rate. The application must be submitted by March 30, 2020 and the County will hear back mid-August.

GENERAL SESSION

VII. Commissioner Comments

VIII. Announcements

IX. Executive Session

X. Adjournment

Commissioner Sands made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:38 a.m. Commissioner Perry seconded the motion. The motion passed with unanimous approval.

Approved

For: 4 - 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