

Ashe County

*150 Government Circle
Jefferson, NC 28640*



Meeting Minutes - Final

Monday, March 16, 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 Regular Meeting of the Ashe County Board of Commissioners to order at 9:00 a.m. at the Ashe County Courthouse.

- Present:** 4 - Commissioner Todd McNeill, Commissioner William Sands, Commissioner Paula Perry and Commissioner Larry Dix
- Absent:** 1 - Commissioner Larry Rhodes

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 20-11](#) March 2, 2020 Regular Session Minutes

Attachments: [03-16-20 March 2, 2020 Regular Session Minutes](#)

Commissioner Dix made a motion to approve the March 2, 2020 Regular Session Minutes as written. Commissioner Sands seconded the motion. The motion passed with unanimous approval.

Approved

- For:** 4 - Commissioner McNeill, Commissioner Sands, Commissioner Perry and Commissioner Dix

IV. Adoption of Agenda

Commissioner Sands made a motion to remove PRES 20-41 and PRES 20-42 by Ashe Services for Aging Director Patricia Calloway and PRES 20-49 to recognize Josh Hardin; and to add an update on the coronavirus by Appalachian Health Director Jennifer Greene. Commissioner Dix seconded the motion. The motion passed with unanimous approval.

Adopted

- For:** 4 - Commissioner McNeill, Commissioner Sands, Commissioner Perry and Commissioner Dix

V. Public Comment

Chairman McNeill opened the floor for comments from the public. Francis Fuller from Lansing spoke regarding the safety of convenience center workers due to the coronavirus. She also provided statistical information regarding the virus. No further comments were offered.

VI. Presentations

[PRES 20-31](#) 9:05 AM - Sheriff Phil Howell - Recognition of Dispatchers

Attachments: [03-16-20 Dispatcher Recognition](#)

Sheriff Howell introduced Dispatcher Janna Suttle and Dispatcher Jennifer Bryant whose actions saved the lives of several deputies in the line of duty. Because of their actions, both dispatchers received recognition from the State 911 Board. Each commissioner recognized and thanked the ladies for their service to the public and for the difficult job that they do.

[PRES 20-51](#) 9:08 AM - District Health Director Jennifer Greene - COVID-19 Update

Appalachian District Health Director Jennifer Greene provided information regarding action taken, along with preparations being made, by the Appalachian District Health Department regarding the coronavirus. The Health Department's Incident Management Team has been initiated and is working with key departments and agencies. Ms. Greene stated how important it is to make sure the public is aware of the importance that the hospital is not overrun by the worried well. People with concerns can call the Appalachian District Health Department for assistance and support. She reiterated that people that are sick need to stay home and everyone needs to adhere to the governor's guidelines which include limiting mass gatherings to slow the spread of the virus.

[PRES 20-32](#) 9:10 AM - DSS Director Tracie Downer - Monthly Departmental Update

Attachments: [03-16-20 DSS Departmental Update](#)

Department of Social Services Director Tracie Downer presented the monthly departmental update with statistics for January 2020. She highlighted alerts from the North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services (NCDHHS) regarding the coronavirus. She explained steps being taken to address coronavirus threats and to also continue providing services without clients having to come into the Courthouse. The NCDHHS sent a letter on March 12 highlighting the need to curtail some services due to the danger to workers and in an attempt to stop the transmission of the virus. Director Downer explained modification of certain procedures, the use of telecommuting services, and optional client visits that are being postponed.

[PRES 20-33](#) 9:20 AM - Penny Brittain and Tom Kilby - Ashe County Teen Court Update

Attachments: [03-16-20 Teen Court Update](#)

Tom Kilby, director of Youth Services of Northwest North Carolina, provided information on the Ashe County Teen Court or Tribal Court which provides an option for juvenile offenders committing a misdemeanor offense. In December 2019, the criminal juvenile age changed from 16 to 18 years of age. The Department of Public Safety provided funding to help establish restorative justice programs to meet the needs of 16 and 17 year old offenders. The Tribunal Court utilizes peer sentencing for juvenile offenders and is led by youth volunteers between the ages of 14 and 18 under the supervision of an adult judge. This provides an opportunity for youth volunteers that may want to pursue a career in the justice system. Juvenile offenders are held accountable for their actions and are given a chance to contribute to their community and to repair and pay for any harm that they caused.

[PRES 20-34](#) 9:30 AM - High Country Home Services - Request for Solid Waste Franchise - Second Reading

Attachments: [03-16-20 High Country Home Svcs Solid Waste Franchise - Second Reading](#)

Michael Johnson with High Country Home Services was present for the second reading of a solid waste franchise request. The first reading of the franchise was approved by the

commissioners on March 2, 2020. Commissioner Sands made a motion to approve the second reading of the solid waste franchise for High Country Home Services. Commissioner Dix seconded the motion. The motion passed with unanimous approval.

Approved

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

[PRES 20-35](#) 9:35 AM - Steadfast Property Services - Request for Solid Waste Franchise - Second Reading

Attachments: [03-16-20 Steadfast Property Services Solid Waste Franchise-Second Reading](#)

Jason Barker with Steadfast Property Services was present for the second reading of a solid waste franchise request. The first reading of the franchise was approved by the commissioners on March 2, 2020. Commissioner Dix made a motion to approve the second reading of the solid waste franchise for Steadfast Property Services. Commissioner Sands seconded the motion. The motion passed with unanimous approval.

Approved

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

[PRES 20-36](#) 9:40 AM - Economic Development Director Cathy Barr - USDA Loan Application for Rural Economic Development Funds

Attachments: [03-16-20 USDA Loan Application for Rural Economic Development Funds](#)

Economic Development Director Cathy Barr told the Board that approval is needed to move forward with an application to Blue Ridge Energy for a Rural Economic Development grant that will be used for the proposed industrial site property. Information on the grant was provided at the March 2, 2020 commissioners' meeting. Commissioner Dix made a motion to approve moving forward with the Blue Ridge Energy application as requested. Commissioner Sands seconded the motion. The motion passed with unanimous approval.

Approved

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

[PRES 20-37](#) 9:50 AM - Tax Administrator Chris Lambert - Monthly Tax Report

Attachments: [03-16-20 Monthly Tax Report](#)

Tax Administrator Chris Lambert presented the February 2020 Monthly Tax Report for approval by the Board. Commissioner Sands made a motion to approve the report as presented. Commissioner Perry seconded the motion. The motion passed with unanimous approval.

Approved

[PRES 20-38](#) 9:55 AM - Tax Administrator Chris Lambert - Request for Approval of Untimely Present Use Value Application #1

Attachments: [03-16-20 Untimely Present Use Value Application #1](#)

Tax Administrator Chris Lambert told the Board that the citizen making this request for approval of an untimely Present Use Value application has decided to pay the taxes. No action is required from the Board.

No Action Taken

PRES 20-39 10:00 AM - Tax Administrator Chris Lambert - Request for Approval of Untimely Present Use Value Application #2

Tax Administrator Chris Lambert presented a request for approval of an untimely Present Use Value Application. He explained that the property is not currently in the program and the application was submitted after the deadline. Commissioner Sands made a motion to not approve the request so that the Board remains consistent with prior action taken regarding these requests. Commissioner Perry seconded the motion. The motion passed with unanimous approval.

Approved

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

PRES 20-40 10:05 AM - Tax Administrator Chris Lambert - Suggested Meeting Dates for 2020 Board of Equalization & Review**Attachments:** [03-16-20 Meeting Dates for 2020 Board of Equalization & Review](#)

Tax Administrator Chris Lambert presented the following dates for the 2020 Board of Equalization and Review meetings: April 6, 2020 1:00 p.m. - 2:00 p.m. and April 20, 2020 1:00 p.m. - 2:00 p.m. Commissioner Dix made a motion to approve the dates as presented. Commissioner Perry seconded the motion. The motion passed with unanimous approval.

Approved

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

PRES 20-41 10:15 AM - Ashe Services for Aging Director Patricia Calloway - Designating Ashe Services for Aging as Lead Agency for the Home and Community Care Block Grant (HCCBG)**Attachments:** [03-16-20 Designation of Ashe Services for Aging as Lead Agency for HCCBG](#)

This item was tabled until the next meeting.

Tabled

PRES 20-42 10:20 AM - Ashe Services for Aging Director Patricia Calloway - Approval of HCCBG Planning Committee Members**Attachments:** [03-16-20 Approval of HCCBG Planning Committee Members](#)

This item was tabled until the next meeting.

Tabled

[PRES 20-43](#) 10:25 AM - Ashe Services for Aging Director Patricia Calloway - Reappointment of Charles and Louise Caudill to the Senior Tarheel Legislature

Attachments: [03-16-20 Senior Tarheel Legislature Reappointments](#)

Commissioner Sands made a motion to reappoint Charles Caudill and Louise Caudill to the Senior Tarheel Legislature. Commissioner Perry seconded the motion. The motion passed with unanimous approval.

Approved

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

[PRES 20-44](#) 10:30 AM - County Manager Adam Stumb - Ashe Opportunities Lease at Family Central

Attachments: [03-16-20 Ashe Opportunities Lease Approval](#)

County Manager Adam Stumb told the Board that Ashe Opportunities submitted a request to exchange a small amount of leased space at Family Central in an effort to centralize their operations by utilizing space vacated by Moving Mountains. Commissioner Dix made a motion to approve the lease request for Ashe Opportunities as presented. Commissioner Perry seconded the motion. The motion passed with unanimous approval.

Approved

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

[PRES 20-46](#) 10:40 AM - County Manager Adam Stumb - Moving Mountains Lease Payment Request

Attachments: [03-16-20 Moving Mountains Lease Payment Request](#)

County Manager Adam Stumb told the Board that Moving Mountains went out of business and vacated the space they were leasing at Family Central. They were not able to pay their last lease payment of \$1830. There is \$269 of subsidy payments owed to Moving Mountains from the Department of Social Services which can be applied toward their balance. This would leave a remaining balance of \$1561. Commissioner Perry made a motion to waive the balance of \$1561 that is owed on the lease payment of Moving Mountains. Commissioner Sands seconded the motion. The motion passed with unanimous approval.

Approved

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

[PRES 20-48](#) 10:50 AM - Finance Officer Sandy Long - Budget Amendments

Attachments: [03-16-20 Budget Amendments](#)

Finance Officer Sandra Long presented the following budget amendments for the Board's approval. Commissioner Sands made a motion to approve the budget amendments as presented. Commissioner Dix seconded the motion. The motion passed with unanimous approval.

BUDGET AMENDMENTS

March 16, 2020

General Fund:

To increase the appropriation for the department of Law Enforcement from \$2,942,493 to \$2,992,493; this increased appropriation of \$50,000 to come from unappropriated revenues from Civil Expense Advancements.

To increase the appropriation for the department of Social Services from \$8,166,034 to \$8,200,509; this increased appropriation to be made with \$34,475 in additional unappropriated CIP and LIEAP revenues.

To increase the appropriation for the department of Human Services from \$1,456,657 to \$1,478,867; this increased appropriation to be made with an additional \$22,210 in unappropriated NCDOT ROAP revenues.

To increase the appropriation for the department of Legal from \$157,260 to \$282,260; this increased appropriation of \$125,000 to be made by reducing the Contingency Fund from \$233,802 to \$108,802.

To increase the appropriation for the department of Fire from \$243,359 to 253,359; this increased appropriation of \$10,000 to be made by reducing the Contingency Fund from \$108,802 to \$98,802.

Enterprise Fund:

To increase the appropriation for the Environmental Services Enterprise Fund from \$3,235,250 to \$3,982,797; this increased appropriation to be made with \$747,547 in loan proceeds.

Approved

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

[PRES 20-49](#) 11:00 AM - State Championship Recognition of Josh Hardin

This item was tabled.

Tabled

GENERAL SESSION**Appointments**

[APP 20-5](#) Airport Advisory Board Appointment

Attachments: [03-16-20 Airport Advisory Board Appointment](#)

Commissioner Dix made a motion to approve the appointment of Richard Sherrill to the Airport Advisory Board. Commissioner Sands seconded the motion. The motion passed

with unanimous approval.

Appointment(s) Approved

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

[APP 20-6](#) High Country Workforce Development Board Appointment

Attachments: [03-16-20 High Country Workforce Development Board Appointment](#)

Commissioner Sands made a motion to reappoint Jeff Dreyer to the High Country Workforce Development Board. Commissioner Dix seconded the motion. The motion passed with unanimous approval.

Appointment(s) Approved

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

VII. Commissioner Comments

VIII. Announcements

IX. Executive Session

BUSINESS SESSION

[PRES 20-52](#) 10:45 AM - Coronavirus Response

Vice Chairman Rhodes participated via conference call.

County Manager Adam Stumb updated the Board on County policies regarding sick leave and donation of sick leave to employees that may need it due to being at high risk for the coronavirus. Extension Director Travis Birdsell updated the Board on the effect that the coronavirus could have on agriculture in our county. The Board also discussed things that have already been put into place to limit transmission of the coronavirus and things that can be done in the near future.

Discussion ended at 12:38 p.m. and the meeting was recessed until 1:30 p.m. for the scheduled mid-year budget review.

[PRES 20-50](#) 1:30 PM - Finance Officer Sandy Long - Mid-year Budget Review

Vice Chairman Rhodes participated via conference call.

Finance Officer Sandra Long presented the Mid-year Budget Review and Financial Report for July 1, 2019 - December 31, 2019. The Board also discussed upcoming budget needs.

The meeting ended at 2:22 p.m. and the Board moved back to the commissioners' meeting room to adjourn the meeting.

X. Adjournment

Commissioner Sands made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 2:25 p.m. Commissioner

Dix seconded the motion. The motion passed with unanimous approval.

Approved

For: 4 - Commissioner McNeill, Commissioner Sands, 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