Ashe County

150 Government Circle
Jefferson, NC 28640

Meeting Minutes - Final

Monday, October 4, 2021

9:00 AM

Commission Meeting Room

County Commission

Chairperson Todd McNeill
Vice Chair William Sands
Commissioner Chuck Olive
Commissioner Jerry D. Powers
Commissioner Jonathan Jordan

BUSINESS SESSION

I. 9:00 AM - Meeting Called to Order at the Ashe County Courthouse

Chairman McNeill called the Regular Session of the Ashe County Board of Commissioners to order at 9:00 a.m. at the Ashe County Courthouse.

Present: 5 - Commissioner Chuck Olive, Chairperson Todd McNeill, Vice Chairman William Sands, Commissioner Jerry D. Powers and Commissioner Jonathan Jordan

II. Pledge of Allegiance/Opening Prayer

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

III. Approval of Minutes

MIN 21-36 September 20, 2021 Regular Session Minutes

Attachments: 10-4-21 September 20, 2021 Regular Session Minutes.pdf

Vice Chairman Sands made a motion to approve the September 20, 2021 Regular Session Minutes as presented. Commissioner Olive seconded the motion. The motion passed with unanimous approval.
Approved

For: 5 - Commissioner Olive, Chairperson McNeill, Vice Chairman Sands, Commissioner Powers and Commissioner Jordan

MIN 21-37 September 20, 2021 Executive Session Minutes

Vice Chairman Sands made a motion to approve the September 20, 2021 Executive Session Minutes as presented. Commissioner Olive seconded the motion. The motion passed with unanimous approval.
Approved

For: 5 - Commissioner Olive, Chairperson McNeill, Vice Chairman Sands, Commissioner Powers and Commissioner Jordan

MIN 21-38 September 20, 2021 ARP Budget Work Session Minutes

Attachments: 10-4-21 September 20, 2021 Work Session Minutes.pdf

Vice Chairman Sands made a motion to approve the September 20, 2021 ARP Budget Work Session Minutes as presented. Commissioner Olive seconded the motion. The motion passed with unanimous approval.
Approved

For: 5 - Commissioner Olive, Chairperson McNeill, Vice Chairman Sands, Commissioner Powers and Commissioner Jordan

IV. Adoption of Agenda

Commissioner Powers made a motion to adopt the agenda as presented. Commissioner Olive seconded the motion. The motion passed with unanimous approval.

Adopted

For: 5 - Commissioner Olive, Chairperson McNeill, Vice Chairman Sands, Commissioner Powers and Commissioner Jordan

V. Public Comment

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

VI. Presentations

PRES 21-142 9:05 AM - Dr. Lee Beckworth - Proclamation in Honor of Gary Poe

Attachments: 10-4-21 Gary Poe Proclamation.pdf

Dr. Lee Beckworth, representing the Museum of Ashe County History, shared with the Board an invitation to the Museum's fall event to be held on Saturday, October 9, beginning at 10:00 a.m. The event is dedicated to former Museum Board member Gary Poe and will feature live music and the dedication of the museum's outdoor stage to Mr. Poe. Dr. Beckworth also shared a proclamation highlighting Gary Poe's contributions to Ashe County. Vice Chairman Sands made a motion to approve the proclamation as presented. Commissioner Powers seconded the motion. The motion passed with unanimous approval.

Approved

For: 5 - Commissioner Olive, Chairperson McNeill, Vice Chairman Sands, Commissioner Powers and Commissioner Jordan

PRES 21-143 9:10 AM - Economic Development Director Cathy Barr - Appalachian Regional Commission Industrial Park Grant Resolution

Attachments: 10-4-21 Industrial Park.pdf

Economic Development Director Cathy Barr presented to the Board a resolution to accept a $300,000 grant from the Appalachian Regional Commission for the development of the Ashe County Industrial Park. Commissioner Olive made a motion to approve the resolution as presented. Commissioner Powers seconded the motion. The motion passed with unanimous approval.

Approved

For: 5 - Commissioner Olive, Chairperson McNeill, Vice Chairman Sands, Commissioner Powers and Commissioner Jordan

PRES 21-144 9:15 AM - Vaya Health Community Relations Regional Director Zack Shepherd - Vaya Health Update

Attachments: 10-4-21 Vaya Health Update.pdf

Vaya Health Community Relations Regional Director Zack Shepherd shared with the Board a Vaya Health update, particularly relating to the recent Medicaid transformation in North Carolina. He explained the different types of plan options and detailed the areas that Vaya Health serves. Although Vaya Health's service area is increasing from 22 counties to 31, Mr. Shepherd added that the newly added counties are similar to the original 22 and that Vaya is good at serving small communities in more rural areas.

PRES 21-145 9:30 AM - Appalachian Regional Library Director of Libraries Jane Blackburn - Appalachian Regional Library FY20-21 Annual Report

Attachments: 10-4-21 Library Annual Report.pdf

Appalachian Regional Library Director of Libraries Jane Blackburn introduced to the Board Laura McPherson, the new Ashe County Librarian. Ms. Blackburn also presented the library's Fiscal Year 2020-2021 annual report, noting that the year saw a 13% increase in cardholders over the last pre-COVID year (FY18-19). She also pointed out that the region's libraries served as key Wi-Fi access points with the number of users increasing from approximately 38,000 in FY18-19 to 139,000 in FY20-21. Ms. Blackburn also described a new four-year plan and shared specific goals for the Ashe County Library.

PRES 21-146 9:45 AM - County Manager Adam Stumb - American Rescue Plan (ARP) Update

Attachments: 10-4-21 ARP Update.pdf

County Manager Adam Stumb shared with the Board an American Rescue Plan (ARP) update, including an edited budget spreadsheet to facilitate easier tracking over time. He added that he would like to start easing funds out once paperwork is completed for a few small eligible projects. Commissioner Olive made a motion to approve the fourth quarter 2021 ARP budget as presented. Vice Chairman Sands seconded the motion. The motion passed with unanimous approval.
Approved

For: 5 - Commissioner Olive, Chairperson McNeill, Vice Chairman Sands, Commissioner Powers and Commissioner Jordan

PRES 21-147 9:55 AM - County Manager Adam Stumb - Approval of Jail Camera Financing Proposal

Attachments: 10-4-21 Jail Camera Financing Proposals.pdf

County Manager Adam Stumb provided financing proposals from three local institutions for the replacement of the camera system in the jail. Chairman McNeill added that he had discussed the options with Finance Officer Sandra Long and that she was comfortable with the lowest rate for a three-year period, which was provided by First National Bank. Ms. Long added that the funds saved by not borrowing directly from the vendor could go toward the camera system maintenance contract expense. Commissioner Powers made a motion to approve the proposal from First National Bank for a three-year term, as presented. Vice Chairman Sands seconded the motion. The motion passed with unanimous approval.
Approved

For: 5 - Commissioner Olive, Chairperson McNeill, Vice Chairman Sands, Commissioner Powers and Commissioner Jordan

PRES 21-148 10:05 AM - County Manager Adam Stumb - Blue Ridge Energy Hwy. 163 Site Easement

Attachments: 10-4-21 Blue Ridge Energy Easement.pdf

County Manager Adam Stumb presented for the Board's approval an easement from Blue Ridge Energy. He explained that due to the construction of the Hwy. 163 convenience

center site, Blue Ridge Energy had to separate the underground electric service to the log cabin from the service to the convenience center. Vice Chairman Sands made a motion to approve the easement as presented. Commissioner Olive seconded the motion. The motion passed with unanimous approval.
Approved

For: 5 - Commissioner Olive, Chairperson McNeill, Vice Chairman Sands, Commissioner Powers and Commissioner Jordan

PRES 21-149 10:15 AM - County Manager Adam Stumb - DSS/Health Department Building Update

Attachments: 10-4-21 DSS Health Building.pdf

County Manager Adam Stumb shared with the Board an update regarding plans for new Department of Social Services (DSS) and Health Department buildings. He explained that he had been working with architects to project growth and space needs until 2040, while also taking into consideration requests from DSS staff to have all DSS employees in the same building with individual offices and better security features. DSS Director Tracie Downer expanded on the department's requests and explained how the preferred changes would increase the efficiency of the department and augment confidentiality. County Manager Stumb noted that the challenge in these projects would be finding the balance with enough room for growth but not more than is needed, and he said that plans for these buildings will be an ongoing discussion.

GENERAL SESSION

VII. Commissioner Comments

VIII. Announcements

IX. Executive Session

ES 21-7 G.S. 143-318.11 (a) (3) - Legal Issues (Opioid Litigation) & G.S. 143-318.11 (a) (5) Acquisition of Property

Vice Chairman Sands made a motion to enter into Executive Session to discuss legal issues regarding the national opioid litigation as provided for under G.S. 143-318.11 (a) (3) and the acquisition of property as provided for under G.S. 143-318.11 (a) (5). Commissioner Powers seconded the motion. The motion passed with unanimous approval. Chairman McNeill declared the Board in Executive Session at 10:57 a.m. and out of Executive Session at 12:28 p.m. with no action being taken.
Approved

For: 5 - Commissioner Olive, Chairperson McNeill, Vice Chairman Sands, Commissioner Powers and Commissioner Jordan

X. Adjournment

Commissioner Olive made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 12:28 p.m. Vice Chairman Sands seconded the motion. The motion passed with unanimous approval.
Approved

For: 5 - Commissioner Olive, Chairperson McNeill, Vice Chairman Sands, Commissioner Powers and Commissioner Jordan

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

Ashley G. Honeycutt
Clerk to the Board