

Ashe County

*150 Government Circle
Jefferson, NC 28640*



Meeting Minutes - Final

Monday, October 18, 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 Olive led the Pledge of Allegiance and Commissioner Powers offered the opening prayer.

III. Approval of Minutes

[MIN 21-39](#) October 4, 2021 Regular Session Minutes

Attachments: [10-18-21 October 4, 2021 Regular Session Minutes.pdf](#)

Vice Chairman Sands made a motion to approve the October 4, 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 21-40](#) October 4, 2021 Executive Session Minutes

Vice Chairman Sands made a motion to approve the October 4, 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

IV. Adoption of Agenda

Vice Chairman Sands made a motion to adopt the agenda with one addition of an appointment to the jury commission. 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](#)
[21-150](#)

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

Attachments: [10-18-21 DSS Monthly Report.pdf](#)

Department of Social Services Director Tracie Downer presented to the Board the department's monthly statistics report for August, noting that the number of children in foster care had fallen to 69 and that the recent addition of another foster care position was succeeding in helping move children into permanency. Ms. Downer also updated the Board on energy programs, adding that people can apply for the Crisis Assistance or Low Income Energy Assistance programs in person, over the phone, online through the e-pass system, or by submitting an application in the mail.

[PRES](#)
[21-151](#)

9:15 AM - Tax Administrator Chris Lambert - Monthly Tax Report

Attachments: [10-18-21 Monthly Tax Report.pdf](#)

Tax Administrator Chris Lambert presented the monthly tax report for September 2021. Commissioner Powers made a motion to approve the report 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](#)
[21-152](#)

9:20 AM - County Manager Adam Stumb - Ashe County Arts Council/Civic Center Merger Update

Attachments: [10-18-21 ACAC-CC Merger.pdf](#)

County Manager Adam Stumb shared with the Board an update regarding the merger of the Ashe County Civic Center and the Ashe County Arts Council. He said that if all goes smoothly, the groups plan for the merger to be complete by the end of the calendar year. County Manager Stumb added that the Assignment of Assumption of Lease transferring the lease of the County-owned Civic Center property to the Arts Council would require action by the Board, and that he and the other parties plan to meet following the merger to clarify and update the lease agreement. The Board requested the county attorney's opinion on the document, and County Attorney John Kilby stated that he saw no problem with approving the Assignment of Assumption of Lease, contingent upon the renegotiation of the Civic Center lease following the completion of the merger. Commissioner Powers made a motion to approve the agreement with the contingency as described by Mr. Kilby. 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](#)
[21-153](#)

9:30 AM - Dick Hails and Roger Bardsley, UNC Planning Department - Land Use Plan Development Update

UNC Planning Department Adjunct Professor Dick Hails provided the Board with an overview of the upcoming update to the county's community/land use plan, as required by statute. Mr. Hails explained that he is leading a group of planning master's students and

experienced planners that will look at the county's land use ordinance to see if it needs updates and draft a new community plan to be in compliance prior to the statutory deadline of July 1, 2022. This assistance is being provided without cost to the County, and the plan will be reviewed by the local planning board and the Board of Commissioners. The Board expressed concern over whether the plan would require county-wide zoning, and Mr. Hails assured them that it would not. Planning Director Wesley Barker also noted that the county's last land use plan was completed in 1999 and needs to be brought up to date.

[PRES
21-154](#)

9:45 AM - County Manager Adam Stumb - Premium Pay Policy

Attachments: [10-18-21 Premium Pay Policy.pdf](#)

County Manager Adam Stumb shared with the Board a premium pay policy for County employees. He added that County employees had worked diligently and that County offices had remained open throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, and that premium pay for local government workers that had continued work with the public during the pandemic was an eligible use of American Rescue Plan funds. The Board shared discussion about the best way to calculate the bonuses, requesting that the same pre-tax amount of \$2,000 be given to full-time employees. The time period worked was also discussed, with the Board expressing support for the time worked requirement to be set for the 2020-2021 fiscal year. The Board also agreed with giving the bonus to employees who retired during that period and pro-rating the bonus for employees that were hired during that time frame. County Manager Stumb offered to ask Human Resources Director Angie Eggers to complete calculations on which the Board could be updated before voting on the policy.

GENERAL SESSION

Appointments

[APP 21-7](#)

West Jefferson Extraterritorial Jurisdiction (ETJ) Planning Board Reappointments

Attachments: [10-18-21 ETJ Reappointments.pdf](#)

Commissioner Powers made a motion to reappoint James Ellis and Michael Vannoy to the West Jefferson Planning Board as ETJ members for an additional three-year term. Commissioner Jordan seconded the motion. The motion passed with unanimous approval.

Appointment(s) Approved

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

[APP 21-8](#)

Jury Commission Reappointment

Commissioner Jordan made a motion to appoint David Boone as Jury Commissioner for a two-year term from July 1, 2021 to June 30, 2023. Commissioner Powers seconded the motion. The motion passed with unanimous approval.

Appointment(s) Approved

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

VII. Commissioner Comments**VIII. Announcements****IX. Executive Session****ES 21-8****G.S. 143-318.11 (a) (3) - Legal Issues (Opioid Litigation)**

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). Commissioner Powers seconded the motion. The motion passed with unanimous approval. Chairman McNeill declared the Board in Executive Session at 10:59 a.m. and out of Executive Session at 12:45 p.m. with no action being taken.

Approved

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

X. Adjournment

Vice Chairman Sands made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 12:45 p.m. 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

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