

Ashe County

*150 Government Circle
Jefferson, NC 28640*



Meeting Minutes - Final

Monday, September 19, 2022

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**

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 & Vice Chairman Sands led the Opening Prayer.

III. Approval of Minutes

Vice Chairman Sands made the motion to approve the September 6, 2022 Regular Session Minutes. 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

[MIN 22-33](#) September 6th, 2022 Regular Session Minutes

Attachments: [09-19-22 September 6, 2022 Regular Session Minutes](#)

IV. Adoption of Agenda

Commissioner Powers made the motion to move PRES 22-153 - Authorization to Purchase Properties for Middle School to the Executive Session Meeting scheduled for today. This in part due to errors in wording on the contracts with the sellers of the property. Vice Chairman Sands 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

At 9:04 AM Chairman McNeill opened the floor for the Public Comment period of the meeting. He reminded those in attendance that this was separate from the upcoming "PUBLIC HEARING" on the Middle School Property Purchase. He stated that this segment was for anything. Seeing no movement in the courtroom and no public comment offered Chairman McNeill closed the floor for Public Comment.

VI. Presentations

[PRES 22-152](#) 9:05 AM - PUBLIC HEARING - County Manager Adam Stumb - Middle School Property Purchase.

Attachments: [09-19-22 PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE 9-19-22](#)

9:05 AM - Chairman McNeill opened the Public Hearing on the Middle School Property Purchase. Chairman McNeill also instructed those in attendance if they chose to speak

to address the Board as a whole and each speaker is given two minutes. Resident & Business owner Steve Johnson took the podium speaking on his behalf as well as the number of neighbors with him from his subdivision who's property is adjacent to the proposed land for the new Middle School. He stated that first he'd like to say that he and his neighborhood are all in support of the new school. He also requested that there be a 150' buffer between the subdivision property and the new middle school. He also stated that they would be good neighbors to the new school and hoped for the same in return. And expressed his hope that the county leaders would take care of him & his neighbors. He thanked the Board and returned to his seat.

County Attorney John Kilby then took the podium to point out some errors and changes in the contracts between the sellers & buyers of the proposed property for the New Middle School. Mr. Kilby only recently received copies of the contracts. The contracts mistakenly lists the Board of Education as the buyer when in fact it is the County that is the buyer. Mr. Kilby stated that the protocol for these type purchases is: the County acquires the land, the County acquires the Financing for the land and the property remains titled to the County until it's paid for. It is then titled to the Board of Education. He also stated he felt that the Public Hearing couldn't continue on the Purchase of Property until these contract issues were addressed. Chairman McNeill asked to move the discussion on the contract issues to today's scheduled Executive Session meeting. The Board & the County Attorney agreed also. The sellers present as well as Board of Education members present will also be invited to attend. Chairman McNeill then closed the Public Hearing at 9:10 AM.

No Action Taken

[PRES
22-153](#)

9:10 AM - County Manager Adam Stumb - Authorization to Purchase Properties for Middle School. (Woodie & Church Properties)

Commissioner Powers made the motion to move PRES 22-153 - Authorization to Purchase Properties for Middle School to the Executive Session Meeting scheduled for today. This in part due to errors in wording on the contracts with the sellers of the property. 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
22-154](#)

9:15 AM - County Manager Adam Stumb - Reimbursement Resolution

Attachments: [09-19-22 Reimbursement Resolution](#)

County Manager Adam Stumb presented to the Board the RESOLUTION OF THE COUNTY OF ASHE, NORTH CAROLINA DECLARING THE INTENT OF THE COUNTY OF ASHE, NORTH CAROLINA TO REIMBURSE ITSELF FOR CAPITAL EXPENDITURES FROM THE PROCEEDS OF CERTAIN TAX EXEMPT OBLIGATIONS. Adam explained that the resolution allows the Board of Commissioners to reimburse the County for any costs that are incurred beginning when this is adopted & when we actually go to finance the middle school project itself. This could include refinancing the property itself and any expenses we have already incurred or will incur with design costs. Commissioner Olive made the motion to approve the Reimbursement Resolution. Vice Chairman Sands seconded the motion. The motion was passed with unanimous approval.

Approved

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

[PRES](#)
[22-155](#)

9:20 AM - DSS Director Tracie McMillan - July 2022 Statistics Report

Attachments: [09-19-22 DSS Statistics July 2022](#)

DSS Director Tracie McMillan presented the Board with the Department of Social Services July 2022 Statistics. This report included numbers for Child Protective Services, Foster Care & Adoptions, Adult Services, Child Support Enforcement, Family Support Service Unit Monthly Totals, FNS & Medicaid Performance Measures and Program Integrity. She also spoke on the Ashe County Department of Social Services result reports for the review performed by NC Division of Social Services on July 19, 2022 by Child Welfare Monitor Kristen Icard. Which resulted in NO FINDINGS. A credit given to the hard work of DSS staff. Also, the Auditors Report for Ashe County for the fiscal year ending on June 30th, 2021 did not disclose any instances of non-compliance with the laws & regulations for which the North Carolina Department of Health & Human Services is responsible for resolution. No Corrective plan is necessary. DSS Director Tracie McMillan stated that she was proud of all the DSS Staff.

No Action Taken

[PRES](#)
[22-156](#)

9:25 AM - Tax Administrator Chris Lambert - Monthly Tax Report

Attachments: [09-19-22 Collections Monthly Totals Report \(1\)](#)
[09-19-22 Collections Monthly Totals Report \(2\)](#)

Tax Administrator Chris Lambert presented to the Board Monthly Tax Reports for July 2022 & August 2022. These reports included Collections Monthly Totals, Delinquent Tax Collections, Prior years outstanding balances as of 7/31/2022, and the Ashe County Releases Report for each month. Commissioner Sands made the motion to approve the Tax Reports 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](#)
[22-157](#)

9:30 AM - Regional Library Director Jane Blackburn - Appalachian Regional Library Annual Report.

Attachments: [09-19-22 Regional Library Annual Report](#)

Jane Blackburn Regional Library Director presented to the Board the Appalachian Regional Library Annual Report 2021-2022. This includes Ashe, Wilkes & Watauga Counties. She spoke on the Appalachian Regional Library's Five Year Plan (2022-2026). She also talked about their new Mission Statement and 4 regional goals of the Appalachian Regional Library which are to become known as the Gateway to and Centerpiece of our Communities. To Create Innovative Programming, Outreach & Partnerships. Also to deliver robust technology & digital literacy programming and build high quality collections. She spoke on the libraries 2021-2022 statistics such as number of users of the libraries and services, Programs & Services & Grants for Special Projects. She talked about the return of In-Library Events since the pandemic and the

achievements of all three county libraries. Director Blackburn also discussed the 2021-2022 Budget with the Regional total revenues for 2021-22 totaling \$2,672,271 coming from City & County Appropriations, State Aid Grant, Gifts & Donations, Federal Grants plus matching funds, Friends of The Library, Fines & Fees and other Grants. She quoted also the total expenditures for 2021-22 which totaled \$2,666,308. Funds spent on Personnel, Operations, Technology, Materials, & Programming. Ashe revenues were \$574,920 with expenditures being \$583,484. Director Blackburn also announced her retirement and that a new director will be hired in 2022-2023. Commissioner Jordan spoke highly on the service the library provides. All of the Board thanked her for her service and wished her a happy retirement.

No Action Taken

[PRES](#)
[22-158](#)

9:35 AM - Amanda Roten - ROAP Application

Attachments: [09-19-22 ACTA FY 2023 County ROAP Certified Statement](#)
[09-19-22 ACTA FY2023 ROAP Application](#)

Amanda Roten, Executive Director of the Ashe County Transit Authority presented to the Board the Application for Transportation Operating Assistance (ROAP Funds). These are State Funds and do not come out of the county budget. But does pass through the Board. The Rural Operating Assistance Program is a state-funded public transportation program administered by the North Carolina Department of Transportation Integrated Mobility Division created pursuant to Article 25 or Article 26 of Chapter 160A of the General Statutes. Commissioner Olive made the motion to approve the 2023 ROAP application. Commissioner Powers seconded the motion.

Approved

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

[PRES](#)
[22-159](#)

9:40 AM - County Manager Adam Stumb - Animal Control Heat & Air

Attachments: [09-19-22 Blue Ridge Heating & Air, LLC Quote](#)

County Manager Adam Stumb presented to the Board a quote from Blue Ridge Unlimited Heating & Air, LLC for the installation of a new heating & air system for Animal Control. Commissioner Powers made the motion to approve 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](#)
[22-160](#)

9:45 AM - County Manager Adam Stumb - Stormwater Grant - Resolution of Applicant

Attachments: [09-19-22 Stormwater Grant-Courthouse Improvements](#)

County Manager Adam Stumb presented the Board with the Stormwater Grant - Resolution of Applicant, seeking approval to move forward with applying for the grant. Our engineer, McGill & Associates, is looking to pursue grant funding to improve the lower Courthouse property to fix an ongoing storm water issue. The culvert that runs underneath US 221 often gets blocked during a major rain causing overflow onto the highway. This

Grant would help address this problem by adding capacity for water and then slowing the water before it reaches this culvert at 221. Commissioner Powers made the motion to approve applying for the Stormwater Grant. 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
22-161](#)

9:50 AM - County Manager Adam Stumb - Opioid Project Budget Ordinance

Attachments: [09-19-22 NC Opioid Settlement Grant Project Ordinance](#)

County Manager Adam Stumb presented to the Board the Opioid Project Budget Ordinance for adoption pursuant to Section 13.2 of Chapter 159 of the General Statutes of North Carolina. This in part consists of disbursing eligible expenditures and reimbursements of the NC Opioid Settlement monies distributed to Ashe County under the NC Opioid Settlement and the Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) between the NC Department of Justice and Ashe County. Commissioner Jordan made the motion to adopt the ordinance 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

[PRES
22-162](#)

9:55 AM - County Manager Adam Stumb - Employee Survey Results

County Manager Adam Stumb presented to the Board the results of the recently completed Employee Survey. This survey touched on many subjects and concerns for County Employees and gave them the platform & opportunity to express what is pleasing and/or unsatisfactory with their job/work environment & benefits. The survey did receive a lot participation from all county departments with responses being both positive & some negative. The survey also calculated responses in many areas such as pay, work environment, childcare, benefits, etc. Presentation did not require any action to be taken by the Board.

No Action Taken

GENERAL SESSION

VII. Commissioner Comments

VIII. Announcements

IX. Executive Session

Commissioner Powers made the motion to enter into Executive Session to discuss G.S. 143-318.11 (a) (3) Legal Issues - WBTU and G.S. 143-318.11(a)(5) Acquisition of Property (PRES-22-153). Commissioner Olive seconded the motion. The motion passed with unanimous approval. Chairman McNeill declared the Board into Executive Session at 11:00 AM and out of Executive Session at 12:42 PM.

Approved

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

[ES 22-15](#) G.S. 143-318.11 (a) (3) Legal Issues - WBTV

[ES 22-16](#) G.S. 143-318.11(a)(5) Acquisition of Property (PRES-22-153)

X. Adjournment

Commissioner Powers made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 12:45 PM. 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

Missy Seivers
Clerk to the Board