

**MINUTES OF BUNCOMBE COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS'
REGULAR MEETING OF JUNE 6, 2017 AT 5 P.M.**

BE IT REMEMBERED: That the Board of Commissioners met in regular session on June 6, 2017, in the Commission Chambers, 200 College Street, Room 326 in downtown Asheville, North Carolina at 5 p.m. where and when the following business was transacted:

The Chairman called the meeting to order with the following members present:

Brownie Newman, Chairman
Ellen Frost, Vice Chair attending by phone.
Joe Belcher, Commissioner
Mike Fryar, Commissioner
Jasmine Beach-Ferrara, Commissioner
Robert Pressley, Commissioner
Al Whitesides, Commissioner

Staff present: Wanda Greene, County Manager; Mandy Stone, Assistant County Manager; HHS Director; Jon Creighton; Assistant County Manager/Planning Director; Tim Flora, Finance Director; Robert Deutsch, County Attorney; Kathy Hughes, Clerk to the Board.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

(Scouts from Boy Scout Troop 15 lead the pledge of allegiance).

INVOCATION

The Chairman noted that this was the anniversary of D-Day, the beginning of the end of World War II. He asked for a moment of silence in honor of this day.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Carol Peterson, former County Commissioner, thanked Wanda Greene for devoting two decades of her life to the well-being of the County citizens. She said that the community reflects the work that she has been a part of including its financial stability. She said that relationships matter and Ms. Greene has built good relationships across the state and we should be thankful for her work.

Dave Holister, with Sundance Power and part of the Energy Innovation Task Force, expressed his gratitude for the work on energy futures. He supported the recommendations of the Task Force saying he felt that renewable energy was the best long term investments that the community could make.

Leanna Blair spoke in favor of greenways and Connect Buncombe's efforts. She felt greenways were a good return on investment and good economic incentive.

Jessie Wilder spoke about the East Asheville Library. She asked that the Board commit to the planning and construction of the new library, asking that the County have full responsibility for the library at the current site instead of the City. She, speaking on behalf of several groups and members of the audience, asked for reassurance that funds were in the budget; the plan is to begin construction with the County having full responsibility and a community representative assigned to the community during the construction process.

Ian Williams with ABCCM in Hominy Valley asked for continued funding.

Carl Mumpower, Chair of the Buncombe County Republican Party, spoke about the Commissioners' responsibility to handle the revaluation results in relation to the tax rate to be set.

Katherine Clawson spoke in favor of the renewable energy proposal. She was opposed to gas fired plants for energy.

Linda Vanderson spoke in favor of the navigator partnership program. They deliver foods as part of the pop up markets and feel that food is much needed as part of these programs.

Robert Simmons was a navigator that helped deliver food to the community. He felt the program was important

Tyler Garrison was concerned about the problem of global warming and climate change.

Beth Masca with YWCA gave an update on the swim equity program and said that they had secured funding and were requesting \$20,000 for the fall. Amanda Reid, with the YWCA, spoke about the positive aspects of the Mother Love program that helped pregnant teens graduate from high school.

Cheryl Olson asked for funding to keep the community connector in their ministry as part ABCCM. Patty Winstean shared some of the stories of citizens that she has worked with in the community.

Jamie Frederick spoke about the energy task force recommendations and the need to more aggressively address global warming.

Diane Ledbetter asked for continued funding for the kitchen ready and green opportunities programs.

James Smith was concerned about climate change and his future.

Gail Soloman Campy spoke about funding the recommendations made by the energy innovation task force.

Lisa Baldwin encouraged the school board to be more innovative and asked the Commissioners to hold them accountable for the spending of the funding they receive.

April Burgess Johnson with Helpmate thanked the Board for their support and asked that it continue. She spoke about the work of Helpmate serving almost 3,000 citizens this year.

Ellen Brown spoke in favor of the work of the energy innovation task force. She supported renewal energy.

Judy Maddox with the Sierra Club spoke in favor of the energy innovation task force. She supported the recommendations and asked that they be funded.

Tim Braine spoke in favor of the energy innovation task force recommendations and the funding.

Kimberly Williams spoke in favor of greenways in the County. She felt they were great economic incentives.

Carter Webb was concerned about a development on Overlook Road and the impact on the character of the area, traffic and safety of the area. He said that the Board of Adjustment would hear the request on June 14 and he hoped that they would not approve the development.

Jeff Wallace was concerned about the activity in the Ridgecrest area where a ministry had begun development and made a mess in the neighborhood.

Nany McNair spoke in favor of mental health counseling.

Jenna Reece from Oak Forest neighborhood was opposed to the 271 apartment complex that was proposed for her neighborhood. She asked for a delay by the Board of Adjustment to allow the neighbors to respond.

Paula Dinga, President of the Association of Educators, asked the Board to endorse the salary supplement.

Amy Asta spoke was concerned about the development in her neighborhood in Ridgecrest and the business coming to the lot next to her house which was supposedly affordable housing for ministry interns but the director lives in Hollard.

Susana Parks spoke in favor of the energy innovation task force work and asked that it be funded.

Johanna director of ABIPPA asked to keep her funding.

Pastor Hardaway from Rock Hill Baptist Church asked for continued funding for his summer day camp.

Katie Greman spoke for the Manna Program and their work to solve food insecurity asking for continued funding of community service navigators.

Beverly Kirkland from Ridgecrest was concerned for the recent development in the neighborhood which she felt was a dishonest development and she asked that their permits be denied.

Jeff McLeay spoke against the apartment complex off Overlook Road, concerned with safety and traffic.

Jackie Kiger spoke in favor of Pisgah Legal Services funding.

Amy Churchill, member of the County Board of Education, thanked the Board for their support.

Jim Boyer spoke against the Ridgecrest neighborhood development. He felt it was bad development and disregard for the permitting process.

Robin Merrill spoke in favor of funding for the Pisgah Legal Services. She gave some of the examples of the clients that they assist. She said that they may lose funding from the State.

Brian Chapman spoke against the apartment complex proposed on Overlook Road. He was a resident of the Oak Forest neighborhood and wanted a postponement of this development.

Mike Marcus asked for funding for his business at Arts Space.

Nicole Counsen wants the City to reallocate money from the Asheville Police Department. She was opposed to white supremacy which she felt was in the city.

Jeff Knolie, Mountain Child Advocacy Center, asked for continued funding to provide child abuse prevention.

Mike Collins advocates for the local people and not the police. He was opposed to detention centers and handcuffs and was opposed to the funding requested by the Sheriff.

Jerry Rice said that he appreciated Wanda Greene's leadership as County Manager but the leadership must come from the Board.

Sheriff Van Duncan thanked the County Manager for all that she had done for the County. He said that the Sheriff's department partners with lots of groups and community members. He said that when law enforcement is disconnected from the community the community is at a loss.

Don Yelton reviewed the purchase of the Ferry Road property and the blame for debt and decisions that have been made. He urged the Board to ask questions on the agenda.

Pam Myers, Director of the Art Museum, asked for continue funding for the museum. She invited the Board to come see the \$24 million project. She wanted support for the Pack Square Development as well.

CONSENT AGENDA

Commissioner Whitesides moved to approve the consent agenda as presented. Commissioner Pressley seconded and the motion passed 7-0.

- **Approval of the Minutes of the May 16, 2017 Meeting**
- **Resolution Authorizing the County Manager to Execute Grant Agreement for Project 3-37-0005-049-2017 at the Asheville Regional Airport**
- **Approval of Aging Coordinating Consortium Funding Allocations**
- **Release Report**
- **Resolution Approving Pyrotechnic Experts for Firework Displays**

GOOD NEWS

- **Proclamation of World Elder Abuse Awareness Day**

Commissioner Beach-Ferrara read the proclamation and presented it to Christina Stenhouse with the Health and Human Services Department. She asked the community to help the staff protect our elder residents and reminded everyone of the World Elder Abuse Walk scheduled at Carrier Park on June 15.

- **Senior Champions**

Wendy Marsh with the Council on Aging presented the Senior Champions nominated by community members and chosen by the community. They were recognized at a banquet on May 2. She introduced the champions: Becky Anderson; Julie Bantin; Dr. Julia Capps; Roy Harris; Louise Jones; Janet Ledder; Dr. Mel Skiles; Dr. Robert Yearout.

- **2017 Griffin Awards for Historic Preservation**

Jack Thompson, Executive Director of the Preservation Society, announced that the County has won a Griffin Award for the preservation of the Smith & Carrier Building located at 205 College Street. He gave some of the history of the building that was built in 1920, purchased by the County in 1994 and restored to house the Register of Deeds. The County also won for the Sandy Mush Farm Heritage Trail and the NC Room at Pack Library's the downtown in the 1980's six part series.

- **Energy Innovation Task Force Update**

Sam Roarke with the Task Force gave the presentation that is attached to the minutes of this meeting. He said that the local utility and local government coming together could be a model for local government.

Jason Walls with Duke Energy reviewed the progress on energy efficiency and their marketing for more energy efficiency in community behaviors.

Brad Roush reviewed the ways that low income energy efficiency can become a reality. They were requesting funding for these energy upgrades.

Commissioner Belcher said that he understood that there were a number of citizens struggling with payment on power bills and advocated for investigation on why these small homes are having large power bills.

Commissioner Fryar was opposed to the funding requested by the task force.

The Chairman said there was strong community support for addressing energy efficiency concerns and it would be foolish not to take advantage of some of these programs. Heating assistance to poor people could be better addressed by helping them improve their homes for more efficient energy use.

PUBLIC HEARING

- **Zoning Ordinance Amendments Chapter 78**

Debbie Truempy, Zoning Administrator, reviewed the text amendments to Chapter 78 of the County Zoning Ordinance. She reviewed the changes that were proposed saying that the Planning Board held a public hearing and recommended the amendments finding them consistent with the land use plan.

The Chairman opened the public hearing at 8:17 p.m.

The hearing was closed at 8:18 p.m.

Commissioner Belcher moved to approve the amendment as presented. Commissioner Whitesides seconded and the motion passed 7-0.

- **Land Development & Subdivision Ordinance Chapter 70 Amendments**

Debbie Truempy, Zoning Administrator, reviewed the text amendments to Chapter 70 the Land Development & Subdivision Ordinance. She said that these amendments were approved by the Planning Board after a public hearing.

The Chairman opened the public hearing at 8:19 p.m.

Don Yelton asked if the Board would do an overlay of the rules and their impact on property values. He felt that they were impacting the values of lots that were involved in these changes.

The Chairman closed the hearing at 8:21 p.m.

Commissioner Belcher moved to approve the changes as outlined. Commissioner Pressley seconded and the motion passed 7-0.

- **FY18 County Budget**

The County Manager gave a brief overview of budget that is attached to the minutes of the meeting. She said that the Board continues to try and get the tax rate closer to the revenue neutral rate of .51. She said that adoption of the budget was scheduled for June 20 regular meeting.

The Chairman opened the public hearing on the budget at 8:27 p.m.

Tracey Elliot, Director of Asheville Humane, asked for continued funding of the society. He reviewed their achievements including be named in the top 30 of the 5,000 animal shelters in the United States.

Don Yelton proposed that the non- profits be put under an umbrella that required people to work for their funding. He wanted the Board to be more creative.

Jerry Rice complained about the budget increases. He wanted the Board to set a .50 tax rate and suggested taking the county schools' fund balance to use to balance the county budget.

Roy Harris was concerned with the cost of living in the County. He asked that they work to keep a good quality of life in the community.

The Chairman closed the hearing at 8:40 p.m.

The Chairman thanked the County Manager and staff for working hard on the budget. The core services must be supported and preservation of quality of life is important while keeping tax as low as possible and preserving the AAA credit rating.

NEW BUSINESS

- **Resolution Establishing Method of Intra-Fund Borrowing for Solid Waste Capital Expenditures**

Tim Flora, Finance Director, reminded the Board that this was an enterprise fund and asked that this resolution be approved along with the Solid Waste Ordinance and the Budget Amendment. Commissioner Belcher moved to approve the three documents as requested. Commissioner Whitesides seconded and the motion passed 7-0.

- **Resolution Regarding Expansion of the Use of the Article 46 One-Quarter Percent Sales Tax**

The County Manager said that Dennis King, President of AB Technical Community College was supportive of this resolution.

Commissioner Fryar asked that language be added to the resolution that the County contract with Greg Isreal to oversee construction and evaluate every facility for major maintenance at the college. The Chairman agreed that there needs to be a high quality assessment of the college and perhaps that should be a separate item. Commissioner Frost asked that this be voted on at the regular meeting on June 20. The Board gave consensus.

Commissioner Belcher moved to approve this resolution as presented. Commissioner Pressley seconded the motion.

Don Yelton criticized the resolution and changing the use of the tax for something not voted on. He suggested that the college do their own maintenance.

Jerry Rice questioned the use of the funds.

The motion passed 7-0.

- **Resolution to Issue a Request for Proposals for a Solar Farm at the Old Landfill**

(The Chairman noted at the beginning of the meeting that no company he works with would submit as part of the RFP for the solar farm).

The Chairman said that this resolution was the result of concerns at the last meeting and desires to open up the process to accept proposals for the project. Any company can send the County their qualifications to install and operate a solar farm system.

Jon Creighton, Assistant County Manager, said that this would open up the ability of anyone to submit a proposal for the construction and operation of a solar farm.

Commissioner Beach-Ferrara moved to approve the resolution as presented. Commissioner Whitesides seconded.

Don Yelton asked how long the proposal would be out and how would they recruit possible companies.

Jerry Rice was concerned that this was the only thing on this landfill.

Jason Walls, Duke Energy, said that they want to deal with any questions in their intent to partner with the community and they will continue to be willing to work toward this investment.

The motion passed 7-0.

BOARD APPOINTMENTS

The Board instructed the Clerk to set up interviews with the four candidates for the Reynolds District representative on the Planning Board for their next meeting.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman made the following announcement and adjourned the meeting:

- *June 20 -- 5 p.m. Regular Meeting Board of Commissioners in Room 326 @ 200 College Street in downtown Asheville*

Commissioner Jasmine Beach-Ferrara moved to go into closed session pursuant to NCGS 143-318.11a(3),(4) & (6) a legal matter, economic development incentive and a personnel issue. Commissioner Whitesides second and the motion and it passed 7-0.

CLOSED SESSION

The Board discussed a possible economic development incentive for a local company wanting to expand by adding 131 jobs between \$16 and \$21 per hour. The Board gave consensus to continue working with the company on a possible incentive plan.

The Board discussed the position of County Manager and whether to promote from within or begin a search for a new manager when the current manager retires July 1. After some deliberation, the Board agreed to have the Chairman speak with an in-house candidate for the position and schedule a special closed session in the coming week to continue the discussion.

The County Attorney updated the Board on his legal work regarding an aspect of the opioid crisis. The Board gave consensus for him to continue on this issue. No action was taken.

Commissioner Whitesides moved to return to open session. Commissioner Belcher seconded and the motion assed 7-0.

Commissioner Belcher moved to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Whitesides seconded and the motion passed 6-0. (*Vice Chair Frost left the meeting by phone prior to this vote*). The meeting was adjourned at 11 p.m.

KATHY HUGHES, CLERK TO THE
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

BROWNIE NEWMAN, CHAIRMAN
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS