

**MINUTES OF BUNCOMBE COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS'  
REGULAR MEETING OF MAY 2, 2017 AT 5 P.M.**

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**BE IT REMEMBERED:** That the Board of Commissioners met in regular session on May 2, 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  
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**

### **INVOCATION –**

*The Chairman remembered former Commissioner Doris Giezentanner who recently passed away. Ms. Giezentanner served for 16 years as a County Commissioners from 1976 to 1992.*

*Commissioner Belcher mentioned that Thursday, May 4 was the national day of prayer event that would be held at City/County plaza.*

## **PUBLIC COMMENT**

Ali Climo spoke in support of the resolution on the consent agenda regarding age friendly communities.

Bill O'Connell spoke in favor of the resolution supporting Older Americans Month and the network of aging services.

John Maddox from Weaverville spoke in favor of public transport outside of Asheville asking that the City and County work together to solve the problem.

Roberta Madden from Black Mountain spoke in support of the equal rights amendment and made a request to have the Commissioners adopt a resolution of support.

Nan Crouch also spoke in favor of the equal rights amendment stating that she had petitions with over 900 signatures from Buncombe County residents in favor of the resolution.

Jerry Rice complained about the increases in the budget over the last 10 years. He questioned the revenue neutral number and the amount of debt that the county carries.

Timothy Sadler spoke about the difficulty in getting housing for homeless veterans and asked if the Commissioners could help with who to contact about the problem.

Charlie Glazener with Asheville City Schools spoke in recognition Joe Bly who attended Asheville City School Board meetings for many years and had recently passed away.

## **CONSENT AGENDA**

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

- **Approval of the Minutes of the April 18, 2017 Meeting**
- **Resolution Authorizing Assignment of Bid**
- **Resolution Authorizing Buncombe County to Join the WHO/AARP Network of Age-Friendly Communities**
- **Release Report**
- **Resolution Authorizing Pyrotechnic Experts for Firework Displays**

## **GOOD NEWS**

- **Proclamation of Motorcycle Awareness Month**

Commissioner Pressley read the proclamation and presented it to Jody Martin with the Concerned Bikers Association. Mr. Martin said that his association had been working on providing motorcycle safety for 20 years.

- **Proclamation of YWCA-Asheville Month**

Vice Chair Frost read the proclamation and presented it to Beth Maczka with the YWCA-Asheville. Ms. Maczka thanked the Board for the proclamation and reviewed the history of the YWCA and some of the ways that they have served the community. On May 11 the YWCA of Asheville will celebrate their 110 anniversary.

- **Foster Family Appreciation Month Recognition**

Commissioner Belcher and Angie Garner with HHS presented the Foster Families with recognitions as follows:

The **Nurture Back to Health Award** was presented to **Sarah and Ryan Sperling** who had been licensed for parents with BCDHHS for one year. The first child they had was a newborn baby boy who was born addicted to methadone. Sarah is a nurse and cut back on her work hours to help this child quickly work through a methadone ween. Once he was healthy and stabilized, the Sperlings' helped transition him to another foster home where his brother and sister were placed. In November the Sperlings' accepted placement of a 7 month old little girl with a feeding tube and a failure to thrive diagnosis. They have done an exceptional job nursing this child back to health which has allowed for the feeding tube to be removed. The Sperlings' and the mother attend doctor's visits together and now they are all attending church together as well. The Sperlings' not only have helped these children but also have worked closely in partnership with the birth parents.

The **Shining Supporters Award** was presented to **Gina Hagar and Kim Leibowitz**. Gina and Kim have been licensed foster parents with BCDHHS for 3 years now. They have one birth child of their own and have recently adopted a little girl from us. Two months ago they took placement of a 5 year old little girl and were able to provide her with love and stability that helped her settle into their home quickly. A few weeks later placement was needed for this child's younger brother and Gina and Kim agreed to take him. It was never in their plan to be caring for 4 children under the age of 6, but they are doing an excellent job with it. Gina and Kim are working well with the birth family, advocating for the children at school and following up on all needed doctor's appointments and therapies. Both children have settled into Gina and Kim's home and as Gina says "they have found their light again."

The **Creating Impact Award** was presented to **Brande Lamb & Brandi MacKenzie**. The "Brandes" as they are known as have been foster parents for just around 2 years. They took on the placement of a young girl (newly three) who came to them with significant developmental delays just days after receiving their foster parent license. They worked tirelessly through the young girl's behavioral outbursts, erratic sleep patterns, and attachment issues, putting her needs before their own. They continue to work diligently with child development specialists, therapists and medical providers to ensure she has every opportunity to grow onto a beautiful person. All people who knew the young girl when she came to stay with the Brandes and see her now cannot help but notice the progress socially and developmentally these two loving parents have helped create.

The **Perseverance and Dedication Award** was presented to **Angela and Chris Anderson**. Their situation is unique to the typical foster care scenario in that this family have been a lifelong safety resource for two extraordinary young women. The Andersons stepped up to the plate when the girls needed them most and have provided them emotional and physical safety and stability with a focus on healing. The family has gracefully managed the complexities of the contentious relationship with someone to whom they were once close and have simultaneously been fierce advocates for the girls and have been committed to shielding them from further harm. Chris and Angela's focus from the very beginning of this fostering journey has been the safety, stability and well-being of the two spectacular young women entrusted into their care. The young women in question have certainly experienced their share of trials, trauma and adversity but have also had the Anderson's to offer them endless support, guidance and stability. They are both straight A students, successful athletes, devoted church members and active in their community. Most recently, the older of the two was accepted to college where she was chosen for cheerleading squad. It is a joy to recognize this family for their hard work and dedication in a process that has proven to be pro-longed and, at times, emotionally anguishing.

## **PUBLIC HEARING**

- **Rezoning Request R-3 to EMP by Duke Energy**

Debbie Truempy, County Zoning Administrator, explained the request from Duke Energy to rezone property from R-3 to EMP. She said that the Planning Board and Planning staff have found that this rezoning would be consistent with the Comprehensive Land Use Plan and in the public interest.

The Chairman opened the public hearing at 5:46 p.m.

Henrietta Dillingham, a resident of the area, asked if they were going to cut any trees on the property. She was opposed to having any more trees removed and was concerned about traffic the area.

Jason Walls with Duke Energy said this was another step in retiring the coal plant and converting it to natural gas. They understand the community's concerns and will be redirecting traffic with the community involved.

Susan Fisher, resident of the area, asked what road would be used to access the property, what Duke planned to do with the vacated homes and if more trees were going to be removed.

The Chairman closed the public hearing at 5:52 p.m.

Mr. Walls said that the vacated homes would be removed and some additional trees will be removed to create a laydown yard. This would be a temporary use for the property and Duke Energy had committed to the neighbors to have open dialogue as to what they would like to see as a future use of this property.

Commissioner Fryar moved to find that this was consistent with the land use plan and in the public interest. Commissioner Whitesides seconded and the motion passed 7-0.

Commissioner Pressley moved to approve this rezoning as requested. Commissioner Belcher seconded and the motion passed 7-0.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

- **Asheville City Schools Budget Presentation**

Dr. Bobbie Short, Interim Superintendent of the Asheville City Schools, gave a power point presentation of the City Schools request from the County. She said that the City's school enrollment was increasing 1.5 percent annually. She addressed recent legislation that would impact class size and the need for teachers and additional classroom

space. She addressed how the students would be housed across the system. They plan to expand their pre-school program across the system.

- **Asheville Buncombe Technical Community College Budget Presentation**

Dr. Dennis King, President, gave a history of the college and some recent accomplishments. He said they currently had a total of 22,863 students enrolled. They were asking for just over \$7 million which included a salary increase based on the state budget.

Dirk Wilmoth, CFO of the College, presented the capital maintenance plan covering 10 years and totaling \$8.8 million with \$1.5 million for this year. He said that some of the buildings were 30 to 40 years old and many of these buildings had reached the end of their useful life.

Vice Chair Frost asked for a concrete plan going forward that will prevent the dilapidated state of buildings. She also asked for the racial breakdown of staff and students enrolled in and graduating from the college. She also wanted the most popular programs and their enrollment.

Commissioners Belcher and Whitesides agreed that the preventative maintenance plan should help the college going forward.

- **County Budget Message**

Dr. Wanda Greene, County Manager gave a budget message that is attached to the minutes of the meeting. She thanked the staff that worked to make the budget presentation possible.

Vice Chair Frost questioned why the fund balance appropriation was lower this year and why it could not be increased to prevent a tax increase. Chairman Newman stated that he agreed with not using fund balance but instead budget for the actual need.

Commissioner Beach-Ferrara asked for a list of mandated services that the county was required to provide for homeschooled students.

Vice Chair Frost said that the Equity Task Force was never formed and the funding recommendations came from Health and Human Services.

The Manager explained the debt service and retirement of debt as outlined in the attached powerpoint, saying that most major projects had been covered during the last 30 years. She announced the budget retreat scheduled for May 16 at noon and the public hearing on the budget and the economic development coalition funding to be held on June 6.

Commissioner Belcher asked about the impact of the Ferry Road property purchase on the budget. The Manager said that there had been some interest in purchase of the property but it had not sold and that did have an impact. When it is sold it would be a one-time revenue. Commissioner Fryar questioned the sale of the Ferry Road property. The Chairman said that, at the end of the day, when the property sells, the County having invested half the value of the property would come out ahead to the tune of several million dollars.

## **BOARD APPOINTMENTS**

Commissioner Whitesides moved to appoint **Sarah Fraser** to the **Land Conservation Advisory Board**. Commissioner Belcher seconded and the motion passed 7-0.

## **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Chairman made the following announcement and adjourned the meeting:

- *May 16 – Noon – Board of Commissioners will hold a budget workshop in the First Floor Conference Room @ 200 College Street in downtown Asheville*
- *May 16 -- 5 p.m. Regular Meeting Board of Commissioners in Room 326 @ 200 College Street in downtown Asheville*

Vice Chair Frost moved to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Whitesides seconded and the motion passed 7-0. The meeting was adjourned at 7:45 p.m.

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KATHY HUGHES, CLERK TO THE  
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

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BROWNIE NEWMAN, CHAIRMAN  
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS