

**MINUTES OF BUNCOMBE COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS'
REGULAR MEETING OF MAY 19, 2022 AT 5 P.M.**

BE IT REMEMBERED: That the Board of Commissioners met in regular session on May 19, 2022, 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
Jasmine Beach-Ferrara, Commissioner
Amanda Edwards, Vice Chair
Robert Pressley, Commissioner
Parker Sloan, Commissioner
Terri Wells, Commissioner
Al Whitesides, Commissioner

Staff present: Avril Pinder, County Manager; Sybil Tate, Assistant County Manager; Donald Warn, Finance Director; Jennifer Barnette, Budget Director; Sharon Burke, Human Resources Director; Stoney Blevins, Health & Human Services Director; Rachael Nygaard, Strategic Partnerships Director; Mike Mace, General Services Director; Nathan Pennington, Planning Director; Jeremiah LeRoy, Sustainability; Rafael Baptista, Strategy & Innovation Director; Jennifer Harrison, Agriculture & Land Resources Director; Lamar Joyner, Clerk to the Board; Michael Frue, Senior Staff Attorney; Brandon Freeman, Staff Attorney

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

CONSENT AGENDA

Commissioner Pressley motioned to approve the Consent Agenda and the remainder of the agenda. Commissioner Whitesides seconded and the motion passed 7-0.

- Approval of May 3, 2022 Briefing Meeting Minutes
- Approval of May 3, 2022 Regular Meeting Minutes
- Resolution Approving Pyrotechnic Experts for Firework Display
 - Resolution
- Approval of State Lottery Project Application (Revision) – Asheville City Schools – Mold Remediation/Renovation
 - Application
- Ordinance Amending the Enforcement Provisions of Certain County Ordinances to Comply with Session Law 2021-138
 - Ordinance
 - More Information

PUBLIC COMMENT

Steven Fazio, Kassandra Cumming, Alexandra Duncan, and Laura Edmonds expressed their support and increase in

wages for County library staff.

Chris Kingsley, Brian McKeown, Lissa Pedersen, Maureen Smathers, Melanie Allen, Joan Hoffman, Mary Jaco, Amy Churchill, and Donna Justice expressed their support and increase in wages for Buncombe County Schools staff.

Vickie Meath discussed inflation, housing cost, and \$17.70 minimum wage for Buncombe County.

Timothy Wallace stated his issues with the County's Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA) and employee salaries.

Don Yelton questioned County property taxes and the reappraisal process.

GOOD NEWS

- **Governor's Volunteer Service Award**

Jennifer Aviles, Administrative Coordinator, acknowledged and congratulated the winners of award for their true spirit of volunteerism. The winner recipients were Lynn Lederer, James Stilwell, Hannah Soboleski, Edith Walker, and Dr. Greg Lentz.

PRESENTATIONS

- **Asian American & Pacific Islander Heritage Month Proclamation**

Commissioner Sloan read and presented the proclamation. Rachel Edens, Chief Equity and Human Rights Officer, accepted the proclamation and was thankful for the recognition.

- **Older Americans Month Proclamation**

Commissioner Whitesides read and presented the proclamation. Stoney Blevins, Health & Human Services Director, accepted the proclamation and thanked the Board for their support.

- **Comprehensive Plan Phase II Analysis & Phase III Rollout**

Gillian Phillips, Planning, and Nathan Pennington, Planning Director, provided an update of the Phase II, and requested guidance on the Phase III-Community Engagement Window of the Comprehensive Plan. Phase II progress included the following:

- The highlights of Community Engagement Window #1
- Lessons learned from the community engagement window
- General direction of vision and goals for the plan based on current data analysis
- Impact of COVID on project timeline

The Board provided guidance for the Phase III-Community Engagement Window that included three options. The agreed upon option was Option 1 (staff recommended).

- **FY2023 Budget Message**

Avril Pinder, County Manager, presented a detailed overview FY23 Recommended Budget to the Board. A public hearing for the budget will be held at the June 7th meeting and budget adoption will follow or will be considered at a later meeting.

PUBLIC HEARINGS

- **Personnel Ordinance Update**

Rafael Baptista, Strategy & Innovation Director, explained the proposed updates to the Personnel Ordinance. The updates include the removal of five policies (Supplemental Pay, Drug Free Workplace, Benefits, Leave, Grant-Funded Positions) from the Personnel Ordinance and shifting those policies to standalone Board policies.

The Chairman opened the hearing at 7:03 p.m.

Don Yelton had questions about the Board policies.

The hearing was closed at 7:05 p.m.

Commissioner Wells moved to approve the Ordinance Amending Personnel Ordinance as presented. Vice Chair Edwards seconded the motion and it passed 7-0.

Commissioner Sloan moved to approve the Resolution Adopting the Benefits, Drug Screening, Grant-Funded Position, Leave & Supplemental Pay Policies as presented. Commissioner Pressley seconded and the motion passed 7-0.

COUNTY MANAGER'S REPORT

Avril Pinder, County Manager, acknowledged and thanked the Elections Services staff for the successful Primary Election.

- **Homelessness Services Consultant**

Rachael Nygaard, Strategic Partnerships Director, provided an overview of the homelessness consultant process and identified the collaborating partners (City of Asheville-Lead Entity, Dogwood Health Trust-Funder, Buncombe County-Collaborator). The firm selected was National Alliance to End Homelessness.

OLD BUSINESS

- **Introduce Bond Orders and Resolution Setting a Public Hearing on the Bond Orders**

Don Warn, Finance Director, explained that the County intends pursue a referendum to issue General Obligation bonds for (1) acquisition and improvement of land or interests therein for conservation and protection of natural resources and preservation of farmland, including but not limited to, the development of greenways and trails for recreation purposes; and (2) to pay the capital costs of housing for the benefit of persons of low or moderate income, including construction of related infrastructure improvements and the acquisition of related land and rights-of-way in the amounts of \$30 million and \$40 million respectively. For the issuance of General Obligation bonds, it is required to approve a resolution setting a public hearing for each of the Bond Orders.

Commissioner Whitesides moved to approve Resolution Setting a Public Hearing on the Bond Orders as presented. Vice Chair Edwards seconded the motion and it passed 7-0.

NEW BUSINESS

- **Fleet Building Complex Life Cycle Cost Analysis**

Scott Metcalf, General Services, Jeremiah LeRoy, Sustainability, and staff from CPL provided an overview of the design plans for the new Fleet services building. They highlighted information about the HVAC Systems, battery storage, energy systems, LEED certification, and the life cycle cost analysis. The new facility was approved as part of the FY22 Capital

Improvement Project (CIP) and meets the threshold of the policy. Design documents should be complete by Fall of 2022 and construction is anticipated to begin in the Spring of 2023.

Chairman Newman moved to approve the Full Electrification (w/142 kW Solar PV) design option. Commissioner Sloan seconded and the motion passed 7-0.

- **Approval of FY2023 ART Leicester Highway Transit Extension & Route 170 Funding Request**

William High, Planning, explained the funding request from the City of Asheville. The request is for FY23 (July 1, 2022, through June 30, 2023) with funding in the amount of:

- \$78,108 to support the WE1 route and associated paratransit services; and
- \$82,623 to support the Route 170 route and associated paratransit services

Commissioner Wells moved to approve the funding request as presented. Commissioner Beach-Ferrara seconded and the motion passed 7-0.

- **Employee Compensation Study**

Sharon Burke, Human Resources Director, explained the overview of the multi-year project with details of the timeline and key aspects of the study. The new Compensation Plan will identify and fix any position compensation equity issues, create a new compensation structure and salary plan, and identify and fix any employee whose compensation is not in alignment with the new salary structure. The recommendation to adopt the compensation policy/salary plan will align County employees with the current market.

Commissioner Wells moved to approve the new Compensation Plan with the recommended effective date of May 21st. Vice Chair Edwards seconded and the motion passed 7-0.

- **Land Conservation Goals**

Commissioner Wells explained the goal of the County to help initiate the conservation of 20% of the county's total acres by 2030. The current status toward the goal and the estimated funding needed to complete the goal was shared.

Commissioner Sloan motioned to approve the 20% Land Conservation Goal. Commissioner Whitesides seconded and the motion passed 7-0.

- **Resolution Supporting Reform of the Room Occupancy Tax**

Chairman Newman provided information on the current occupancy tax structure and explained the resolution. Chairman Newman moved to approve the resolution as presented. Commissioner Pressley seconded and the motion passed 7-0.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman made the following announcements:

- *June 7 @ 3 p.m. - Commissioners' Briefing at 200 College Street, Room 326 in downtown Asheville.*
- *June 7 @ 5 p.m. - Commissioners' Regular Meeting at 200 College Street, Room 326 in downtown Asheville.*

CLOSED SESSION

Commissioner Whitesides moved to go into closed session pursuant to NCGS 143-318.11(a) (4) to hear economic development matters with no possible action anticipated following the closed session. Commissioner Wells seconded and the motion passed 7-0.

The Board heard the update and had discussion regarding the matters. No action was taken.

Commissioner Whitesides moved to go back into open session. Commissioner Beach-Ferrara seconded and the motion passed 7-0.

Vice Chair Edwards moved to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Beach-Ferrara seconded and the motion passed 7-0. The meeting was adjourned at 8:36 p.m.