

**MINUTES OF BUNCOMBE COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS'  
REGULAR MEETING OF MAY 19, 2015 AT 4:30 A.M.**

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**BE IT REMEMBERED:** That the Board of Commissioners met in regular session on May 5, 2015, in the Commissioner Chambers, 200 College Street, Room 326 in downtown Asheville, North Carolina at 4:30 p.m. where and when the following business was transacted:

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

David Gantt, Chairman  
Joe Belcher, Commissioner  
Ellen Frost, Commissioner  
Mike Fryar, Commissioner  
Holly Jones, Commissioner  
Miranda DeBruhl, Commissioner  
Brownie Newman, Commissioner

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

## **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

## **INVOCATION**

*In accordance with the Code of Ethics adopted by the Board, all County Commissioners have a duty to obey all applicable laws regarding official actions; to uphold the integrity and independence of the office; to avoid impropriety in the exercise of official duties; to faithfully perform the duties of the office; and to conduct the affairs of the governing board in an open and public manner. Is there any item on the agenda the outcome of which will have a direct, substantial, and readily identifiable financial impact for any Board member? Also, does any Board member have a financial interest in any public contract coming before this Board today? There being none all Board members have a duty and obligation to vote.*

## **PUBLIC COMMENT**

Don Yelton referenced economic development incentive funding to a brewery that created 130 jobs. He said they did not locate their company here because of the funding but for the good water. He said that the brewery is built on a brownfield site.

Jerry Rice said that he wanted children to be taken care of and he felt that the incentives given to the breweries were hurting quality of life. He felt that tourism development was hurting poor people.

Lisa Baldwin said that the County school system's enrollment had declined. Competition from private and charter schools had increased and the county system would lose even more students next year. She said that Koontz Intermediate School had lost the most students and should be converted to an elementary school to reduce overcrowding. She was opposed to the Enka Intermediate School being built on the current site and wanted the construction stopped.

Dee Styles said that the County should monitor development and consider helping small farmers get started by enabling them to afford the land—assistance for farmers or low income housing.

## **COUNTY MANAGER'S REPORT**

The County Manager gave a brief report on the status of the Zeugner pool. The pool would be transferred to the County school system who would keep the pool open for swim teams until a new pool was constructed.

She also reported that Duke Energy had announced that they would invest \$1.1 billion to build a new gas powered facility to replace the existing coal powered plant at Lake Julian. The pollution emission levels would be reduced and the tax base would be increased with their investment.

## **DISCUSSION/ADJUSTMENT/APPROVAL TO FOLLOW AGENDA**

Commissioner Frost moved to approve the consent agenda as presented. The Chairman seconded the motion and it passed 7-0.

- **Approval of the Minutes of the May 5, 2015 Regular Meeting**
- **Resolution approving Pyrotechnic Experts for Firework Displays**
- **Resolution Naming Diane Price as the Deputy Finance Officer**
- **Resolution Authorizing the County Manager to Execute Airport Grant Agreement**
- **Resolution Authorizing the Chairman to Execute an Inter-local Agreement with Buncombe County Board of Education for Operation of Zeugner Center**
- **Resolution Authorizing the Submittal of the Funding Plan and Other Information Related to the Juvenile Crime Prevention Council Program for FY15-16 to the NC Department of Public Safety Division of Juvenile Justice**

## **New Business**

- **Supporting the Hemlock Preservation Project**

Commissioner Newman gave the power point presentation that is included with the minutes of this meeting. He said that the Hemlock trees were in trouble due to an invasive species of wooly adelgid. The Carolina Hemlock could all die if nothing was done; however, a beetle can be introduced that would kill the wooly adelgids.

Commissioner Newman moved to instruct the County Manager to include in the FY16 budget \$25,000 to focus on preserving the Carolina Hemlock by purchasing \$25,000 worth of beetles to be used to preserve trees on County property through the work of WNC Communities. Commissioner Frost seconded.

Don Yelton commented about the loss of the native Chestnut trees and spoke in favor of treating the hemlocks in our area.

Dee Styles spoke in favor of saving the hemlocks.

Josh Kelly with Mountain True said that millions of trees have already been lost and urged all landowners to treat their hemlocks. He supported introducing the beetles as a treatment for the future as chemical treatment will not always be the answer.

Linda Bohaman with WNC Communities thanked the Board for considering the use of beetles. The Department of Agriculture started the 17 county regional effort and will be hiring a full time person to coordinate treatment of the trees.

John Johnson from Montreat said he had seen the devastating effects of the adelgids in Avery County, was supportive of the proposal and urged the Board to pass the motion.

Jerry Rice questioned the use of chemicals and encouraged forming a commission to study it.

Charlie Glazener said that he had treated his trees and he was happy to hear the County was considering treatment.

Commissioner Belcher confirmed that the \$25,000 from the County would be spent to purchase the beetles and their success would be measured and reported to the Board.

Commissioner Newman said that this would be a multi-year effort that could be monitored.

The motion passed 7-0.

- **Presentation of County Schools Budget Request**

Dr. Tony Baldwin, County School Superintendent, gave a power point presentation that is attached to the minutes of the meeting. He said that it was not clear how the State budget would impact the County schools budget.

He said that their move to digital learning would require moving three grades in this direction each year over three years and would cost \$750,000 to meet this state mandate. Increases for teachers and principals were included in the budget presented. Commissioner Frost said that the community school is an amazing school and a new facility would really help these students.

- **Presentation of City Schools Budget Request**

Dr. Pam Baldwin, City School Superintendent, said they have 9 schools and 4,300 students and are growing. She reviewed the strategic plan which is attached to the minutes of this meeting. She thanked the Board for the new Issac Dickson Elementary School and new Asheville Middle to open in 2016.

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

Dr. Dennis King, President of Asheville-Buncombe Technical Community College, presented the budget that is attached to the minutes of this meeting. He said they were asking for \$8.7 million which included an increase for maintenance for the three new buildings that would be opening soon.

Commissioner Fryar asked that the school review the numbers for the construction of the new Elm building. Dr. King agreed stating that the numbers presented were projections and would be reviewed.

- **Budget Request from the District Attorney**

Todd Williams, District Attorney, gave the funding request attached to the minutes of the meeting. He said that the jail management program had saved the County about \$1.4 million by expediting felony prosecutions in district court. In order to implement domestic violence hearings he was requesting additional positions to make the program successful in the court system. He said that the DA's office would fully support the domestic violence campaign.

- **County Budget Message FY16**

The County Manager presented the budget that is attached to the minutes of this meeting. Dr. Greene said that this was her 22<sup>nd</sup> budget. The budget presented did not include the requests made earlier in the meeting by the school systems. She asked the Board to set the budget public hearing for June 2, 2015 at 4:30 p.m. and for their continued input between now and the budget adoption on June 16.

*The Chairman introduced Diego Adams, a student from Koontz Intermediate School who was recently chosen to be a Commissioner for a Day by the Board. Commissioner Frost asked Diego if he would read one of the poems that he had written. His poem is attached to the minutes.*

## **Board Appointments**

Vice Chair Belcher moved to appoint **Al Whiteside** and **Larry Harris** to the **Audit Committee** for second terms. The motion passed 7-0.

Commissioners Fryar, DeBruhl, Jones, Vice Chair Belcher and Chairman Gantt moved to appoint Michael Marcus to the Downtown Commission; Commissioners Frost and Newman moved to appointed Evan Hauptmann. *Mr. Marcus was appointed; however there was only one vacancy on the Downtown Commission at this time.*

Commissioner Fryar moved to appoint **Ruth Summers** to the **Downtown Commission** and the motion passed 7-0.

## **Announcements**

The Chairman made the following announcements:

- *May 25 – 4:30 p.m. – The Board will hold a ribbon cutting for the Charters of Freedom Monument in County Plaza immediately following the Pack Square Memorial Day Ceremony*
- *June 2 – 3 p.m. – The Board will meet with the Police Chiefs in the first floor conference room at 200 College Street.*
- *June 2 – 4:30 p.m. – The next regular meeting of the Board in Room 326 at 200 College Street in downtown Asheville (including the public hearing on the FY16 budget)*

Commissioner Jones moved to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Frost 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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DAVID GANTT, CHAIRMAN  
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS