

**MINUTES OF BUNCOMBE COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS'  
REGULAR MEETING OF NOVEMBER 21, 2017 AT 5 P.M.**

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**BE IT REMEMBERED:** That the Board of Commissioners met in regular session on November 21, 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: Mandy Stone, County Manager; Jon Creighton; Assistant County Manager/Planning Director; Jim Holland, Assistant County Manager/HHS Director; Tim Flora, Finance Director; Kathy Hughes, Clerk to the Board; Mike Frue, Senior Staff Attorney.

## **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

## **INVOCATION**

The Chairman asked for a moment of silence to reflect on the many things that we all have to be thankful for.

## **PUBLIC COMMENT**

Monica Crase spoke about the opioid epidemic as a recovering addict. She proposed a possible solution in a handout that she gave the Board. *Commissioner Belcher encouraged the Assistant County Manager to reach out to her for more information*

## **CONSENT AGENDA**

Vice Chair Frost moved to approve the consent agenda as presented. Commissioner Belcher seconded the motion and it passed 7-0.

- **Approval of Minutes of November 7, 2017 Regular Meeting**
- **Resolution Authorizing Execution of an Easement for Fiber Line to Provide Internet Access for Craggy Prison**
- **Resolution Authorizing Assignment of Bid**
- **Resolution Awarding a Service Firearm to a Retiring Deputy (Dana Fox; Patrick Evans; Robert Davis)**
- **Grant Projects Ordinance – NC Water Resources Grant**
- **Grant Project Ordinance – Crime Control Grant**
- **Special Projects Ordinance**

## **GOOD NEWS**

- **Enka High and Owen High FFA Chapters Success**

Christy Cheek with Buncombe County Schools expressed her thankfulness for the Board's support of education. She said that she traveled to Indiana with the FFA Students who competed nationally and was very impressed with their academic and technical skills.

Zeb Holland from Enka High School spoke for the Ag Mechanics team who placed first, second, third and fourth in the state and went on to compete nationally. Louis Fender, Eli Tipton, Kevin Franklin also competed in local events including welding, math and natural life skills.

Kevin Franklin, Advisor from Enka High, said that the students competed against 20,000 members from North Carolina and finished first. Nationally they competed with 650,000 from across the nation and they ranked at a very high level.

Tonya Robinson, Enka High School Principal, said that she was very proud of these students and thanked the Board for their support.

Rachael Beaver, Owen High FFA student said that she won the regional and state competitions and then got to compete nationally making friends and learning a lot about herself.

## COUNTY MANAGER'S REPORT

- **Facts About Child Welfare System in NC**

Tammy Shook, Social Work Director, gave a power point presentation that is attached to the minutes of the meeting. She said that the State had reported that Buncombe was doing very well and continued to work to improve outcomes. She said that over the past two years, 70 percent of the children that entered foster care ended up there because one or both parents had a substance abuse problem. She said that they had begun using new procedures to help reunite mothers with their babies and children including prenatal planning to take care of the child after the birth and ABBA's house that would house 14 women and their infants while the mothers were receiving treatment. She reviewed the permanency plan options emphasizing the County's attempts to reunify children with their parents. She emphasized that, contrary to some public comment remarks, Buncombe County spends significant dollars above and beyond any federal or state reimbursements for both foster care and adoption services. She further stated that many of the additional supports in place for both foster care and adoption services are not reimbursable at all but rather specific to Buncombe County's family reunification efforts and/or establishing forever homes for children. She said that in 2016, 64 adoptions were completed through Health and Human Services and that County staff work every day to provide the best services possible to the children and families of Buncombe County

Vice Chair Frost thanked Ms. Shook and her team for the excellent work of child welfare workers.

- **Let's Talk Campaign**

Lisa Eby, HR/Community Engagement Director, said that the communications team had put together an organized way to encourage the public to give input and feedback to the County through a website, phone number, email address or comment card that would be available in county departments. The feedback will be reviewed and issues addressed and answered by herself, Kathy Hughes and/or Terri Orange.

Commissioner Belcher said that he had used the site to refer citizens to for information. He said that the lists of actions were very helpful.

## NEW BUSINESS

- **Medic Emergency Ambulance Franchise**

Kermit Tolley, owner of MEDIC, gave a power point presentation asking the County through application for an ambulance transportation franchise. He said that he had a contract for ambulance services for the Veterans Administration Hospital and Park Ridge Hospital. He reviewed MEDIC's equipment, facilities and continuing education with their employees and with the community.

Mike Frue, Senior Staff Attorney, said that he had applied for an ambulance franchise and had submitted an audit. He said that per the County's Ambulance Franchise Ordinance, the staff must investigate to determine how the applicant could enhance the overall emergency services plan.

Commissioner Belcher moved to approve the application for franchise submitted by Medical Emergency Ambulance Transport doing business as MEDIC for a non-exclusive emergency transportation Franchise in the unincorporated areas of Buncombe County contingent upon completion of an investigation of the applicant's operation and a finding that the conditions for granting this franchise have been met pursuant to Ordinance 22-43 (c). He further asked that assistance with this investigation (evaluation)\* be provided by the independent third-party--Management Solutions for Emergency Services and that the results of the investigation be brought to this Board in regular session at the earliest opportunity and if the conditions for granting of the franchise have been met, the franchise would be issued and the terms and conditions of a contract for emergency ambulance services and standards would be considered and granted. Commissioner Frost seconded the motion.

Chairman Newman asked if allowing a private for-profit group to provide ambulance services was common practice in the state.

A representative from a Disaster Management Company said that this was an evaluation of the operation and an investigation. He suggested that the County review the bigger picture of all the ambulance services.

Commissioner Belcher and Vice Chair Frost agreed to change the wording of their motion to reflect "evaluation" instead of "investigation" when referring to the actions needed in regard to the ambulance franchise request.\*

Commissioner Fryar said he would like to see if this could be resolved without using an outside agency.

Commissioner Pressley asked if this franchise could be fast forwarded. Mr. Frue said that using an outside consultant could expedite the process and be a review of the entire system.

Chairman Newman said that this was an important decision and that an evaluation from an outside agency was a necessity to review the strengthening of the overall emergency response system. He felt that the organization's opinion was important.

The motion passed 7-0.

- **Resolution Authorizing Execution of a Greenway Easement to the City of Asheville**

Mike Frue, Senior Staff Attorney, explained that this would assure a greenway easement across the Ferry Road property, allowing a prospective buyer to see where the easement would be located. The easement would finalize any undefined greenway locations moving forward.

Commissioner Belcher moved to approve the resolution as presented. Vice Chair Frost seconded and the motion passed 7-0.

## **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Chairman made the following announcement and adjourned the meeting:

- *November 23 & 24 – County Offices Closed for Thanksgiving Holiday*
- *November 30 – Opioid Town Hall @ Fairview Branch Library from 6 to 8 p.m. hosted by District 2 Commissioners Mike Fryar and Ellen Frost*
- *December 5 @ 5 p.m. Board of Commissioners Regular Meeting @ 200 College Street, Room 326 in downtown Asheville*

Commissioner Whitesides moved to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Pressley seconded the motion which passed 7-0. The meeting was adjourned at 6:50 p.m.

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KATHY HUGHES, CLERK  
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

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BROWNIE NEWMAN, CHAIRMAN  
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS