

**MINUTES OF BUNCOMBE COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS'
REGULAR MEETING OF AUGUST 18, 2020 AT 5 P.M.**

BE IT REMEMBERED: That the Board of Commissioners met in regular session on August 18, 2020, 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
Joe Belcher, Commissioner
Amanda Edwards, Commissioner
Anthony Penland, Commissioner
Robert Pressley, Vice Chair
Al Whitesides, Commissioner

Staff present: Avril Pinder, County Manager; Sybil Tate, Assistant County Manager; Dakisha Wesley, Assistant County Manager; Jennifer Barnette, Budget Director; Sharon Burke, Human Resources Director; Keith Miller, Tax Assessor; Sheriff Quentin Miller; Tim Love, Business Officer; Nathan Pennington, Planning Director; Lamar Joyner, Clerk to the Board; Michael Frue, Senior Staff Attorney; Heather Hockaday, Attorney

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

INVOCATION

The Chairman requested a moment of silence for students and staff now that schools in the county are opening up in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic.

CONSENT AGENDA

Commissioner Edwards motioned to approve the Consent Agenda as presented, add **Public Comment Update to New Business** and move **Resolution in Opposition of Catawba Native American Nation Casino in North Carolina** after the **Consent Agenda**. Commissioner Whitesides seconded and the motion passed 7-0.

- Approval of August 4, 2020 Briefing Minutes
- Approval of August 4, 2020 Regular Meeting Minutes
- Resolution to Authorize the Transfer of Ownership of a Sheriff's Office K-9
- Leicester Patrol Office Renovation Design Contract
 - Contract
- Sidewalk Maintenance Contract
 - Contract
 - More Information
- Budget Amendment for State Library - CARES Project Grant Award
 - Ordinance
 - More Information
- Budget Amendment for Justice Services Grant: DWI Court 2021
 - Ordinances
- Budget Amendment for Long Term Care Strike Team and PPE Grants
 - Ordinance

NEW BUSINESS

- **Resolution in Opposition of Catawba Native American Nation Casino in North Carolina**

Principle Chief Richard Sneed of the Eastern Cherokee Native Americans provided background and additional information for the opposition of the casino that was initially present at the Briefing on August 4. He answered questions presented by the Board and explained some differences in the process of establishing the Cherokee Casino.

Commissioner Belcher moved to approve the resolution as presented. Commissioner Edwards seconded and the motion passed 6-1. (NOES-Penland)

PRESENTATIONS

- **One Buncombe Fund Summary**

Kit Cramer, Asheville Chamber of Commerce President; Phillip Hardin, Social Services; and Matt Raker, Mountain BizWorks Executive Director summarized the partnership with Buncombe County, City of Asheville, Asheville Chamber of Commerce and other community stakeholders to form the One Buncombe Fund. The Fund raised \$1.375 million, provided 92 loans and retained 674 jobs. Funds in the amount of \$453,057, have been received by 1,048 individuals for life essential needs, such as rent, mortgage, and utility bills.

- **Tourism Jobs Recovery Fund**

Chris Cavanaugh, Buncombe County Tourism Development Authority, and Noah Wilson, Mountain BizWorks, shared

information related to \$5 million in grant funds that were received by local tourism-related small businesses. The program provided 394 grants that retained 4,787 jobs in Buncombe County. Several local business owners shared their testimonies.

PUBLIC HEARINGS

- **Schedule of Values for Reappraisal 2021**

Keith Miller, Tax Assessor, stated that holding the public hearing was the next step for approval of the proposed schedule of values and previewed the dates for the final steps. No action was required at this time.

The Chairman opened the hearing at 6:16 p.m.

The hearing was closed at 6:17 p.m.

- **Indian Branch Rezoning Request**

Nathan Pennington, Planning Director, presented the request, stated that the request was consistent with the comprehensive plan and was unanimously approved by the Planning Board. The parcel would move from CS-Commercial Service to R-3 Residential at the unaddressed property off Old US Highway 19/23 and Smokey Park Highway, Candler. The total acreage is 5.94.

The Chairman opened the hearing at 6:20 p.m.

The hearing was closed at 6:21 p.m.

Commissioner Belcher moved to adopt the plan consistency statement. Vice Chair Pressley seconded the motion and it passed 7-0.

Commissioner Whitesides moved to approve the rezoning request. Commissioner Belcher seconded the motion and it passed 7-0.

- **Watkins Rezoning Request**

Nathan Pennington, Planning Director, presented the request, stated that the request was consistent with the comprehensive plan and was unanimously approved by the Planning Board. The four parcels would move from R-3 Residential to CS-Commercial Service at the addresses of 2254 & 2256 US Highway 70 and consist of a total acreage of 0.58.

The Chairman opened the hearing at 6:24 p.m.

The hearing was closed at 6:25 p.m.

Commissioner Edwards moved to adopt the plan consistency statement. Vice Chair Pressley seconded the motion and it passed 7-0.

Commissioner Penland moved to approve the rezoning request. Commissioner Edwards seconded the motion and it passed 7-0.

COUNTY MANAGER'S REPORT

Avril Pinder, County Manager, informed the Board that the sign-up for employee Health Risk Assessment (HRA) was opening up.

NEW BUSINESS

- **Public Comment Update**

Lamar Joyner, Board Clerk, lead a discussion about different options for changing the public comment session during the regular meetings, in response to these meetings being closed to the public due to the COVID-19 pandemic. A live call-in option was explained that the Board expressed interest.

Commissioner Whitesides moved to approve the live call-in for one hour, starting at 5:15 pm for the general public comment period. Vice Chair Pressley seconded the motion and it passed 7-0.

- **Boards & Commissions Process**

The Board discussed the process of appointing applicants to boards and commissions by identifying them into three categories: advisory, governance and quasi-judicial.

Commissioner Belcher motioned to approve that advisory boards/commissions can interview and make written recommendations to the Commission, while quasi-judicial & governance boards/commissions can make written recommendations but will be interviewed by the Commission and the Commission has final authority. Commissioner Penland seconded the motion. Chairman Newman made a friendly amendment to the motion that Strategic Partnership Grants Committee, Affordable Housing Subcommittee, Asheville Regional Housing Consortium and Early Childhood Education & Development Committee would move from advisory to the interview category (new category- **Funding Advisory**). The friendly amendment was accepted and the motion and it passed 7-0.

After much conversation and legal input as to reconsider an earlier deliberated topic, Commissioner Beach-Ferrara moved to reconsider the topic of the Boards and Commissions Process and reopen discussion of how reappointments are made and to approve that reappointments that are in good standing may often be reappointed without being interviewed. Whitesides seconded the motion and it passed 5-2. (NOES-Pressley, Belcher)

BOARD APPOINTMENTS

Chairman Newman moved to reappoint **Linda Wilkerson** and **Kay Wall** to the **Library Board**. Commissioner Penland seconded and the motion passed 7-0. **Keely Knopp** was appointed to the **Library Board**.

Chairman Newman moved to designate current members **Dot Cordell**, **Martin Moore** and **Andy Ball** as regular members (serving unexpired terms) and **Josh Holmes** and **Wendell Howard** as alternate members (serving unexpired terms) to the **County Board of Adjustment**. Commissioner Belcher seconded and the motion passed 7-0. Commissioner Belcher moved to appoint by general consensus of receiving the most votes **Katherine Morosani**, **Gabe Quesinberry**, **Carla Barnard** and **Greg Phillips** as regular members to the **County Board of Adjustment**. Vice Chair Pressley seconded the motion and it passed 7-0. Commissioner Belcher moved to appoint **Joel Mazelis**, **Wesley Greene**, **Tim Henderson**, **Damien Vacaflor** and **Paul Kelman** as alternate members to the **County Board of Adjustment**. Chairman Newman seconded the motion and it passed 7-0. Frue asked the board to establish staggered terms for these new board of adjustment members and suggested that those with the most votes get opportunity for the longest terms. By general consensus the board agreed. New board of adjustment members appointed as follows:

As Regular Members:

- (1) Katherine Morasani, for an initial two (2) year term
- (2) Gabe Quisenbury, for an initial two (2) year term
- (3) Greg Phillips, for an initial one (1) year term
- (4) Carla Barnard, for a full (3) year term

As Alternate Members:

- (1) Tim Henderson, for an initial two (2) year term
- (2) Wesley Greene, for an initial two (2) year term
- (3) Joel Mazelis, for an initial one (1) year term
- (4) Damien Vacaflor, for an initial one (1) year term
- (5) Paul Kelman, for a full (3) year term

Commissioner Edwards moved to reappoint **Jesus Amadeo Valdez**, **Gregory Narron**, **Martha Salyers** and **Jim Pitts** to the **Health & Human Services Board**. Commissioner Whitesides seconded and the motion passed 5-2. (NOES-Pressley, Belcher)

Commissioner Beach-Ferrara moved to appoint **Jennifer Teague** and **Timea Jones** to the **Homeless Initiative**. Commissioner Whitesides seconded and the motion passed 7-0.

Commissioner Belcher moved to appoint **James Coman** to the **Historic Resources Commission**. Commissioner Penland seconded and the motion passed 7-0. Chairman Newman moved to reappoint **Stephanie West** to the **Historic Resources Commission**. Commissioner Belcher seconded and the motion passed 7-0.

The Board agreed to interview for the Tourism Development Authority and Civic Center Commission.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Natilda Bliss stated COVID testing should be increased and the County should close.

Don Yelton suggested that budget amendments should not be on the Consent agenda, revaluation should cease, and the meeting should be open to the public.

Nora Scheff and Ariel Shumaker recommended that Women's Commission be allowed to interview and screen applicants to ensure diversity on the commission.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman made the following announcements:

- *September 1 @ 3 p.m. - Commissioners' Briefing at 200 College Street, Room 326 in downtown Asheville.*
- *September 1 @ 5 p.m. - Commissioners' Regular Meeting at 200 College Street, Room 326 in downtown Asheville.*

Commissioner Belcher moved to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Beach-Ferrara seconded and the motion passed 7-0. The meeting was adjourned at 7:58 p.m.