

**Regular Meeting**  
**Monday, November 2, 2015**  
**Chowan County Public Safety Center**  
**305 West Freemason St.**  
**Edenton, NC**  
**6:00pm**

Present: Chairman Jeff Smith, Commissioners Keith Nixon, Greg Bonner, Alex Kehayes, Emmett Winborne and John Mitchener.

Commissioner Ellis Lawrence came in during public comment.

Staff present: County Manager Kevin Howard, Finance Officer Willie Carawan, County Attorney Lauren Arizaga-Womble and Clerk Susanne Stallings.

**Regular Meeting**

Chairman Smith called the regular meeting to order and led all in attendance in the pledge of allegiance. Commissioner Nixon then offered the invocation.

**Approval of Agenda**

Chairman Smith noted an amendment to the agenda to add interim Tax Administrator oath, COA Capital request and a Closed Session for personnel. Commissioner Nixon moved to approve the agenda as amended. Chairman Smith asked for all in favor, the motion passed unanimously (6-0).

**Public Comment**

Chairman Smith then opened the floor to public comment in accordance with NCGS 154A-52.1. He noted that the maximum time allotted would be 3 minutes.

TJ Little 110 Twiddy Avenue Edenton stated he was speaking out of concern for the future of the former DF Walker Highschool He stated he hoped the Board would form a group to come up with ideas for the campus. He noted that he had concerns with comments from Commissioner Winborne regarding the Committee's comments about the future of the building and he stated his appreciation for the comments of Commissioner Mitchener regarding looking into similar uses like what was done with Swain apartments.

Commissioner Lawrence joined the meeting.

Kristie LaLonde, 330 Sandy Ridge Rd. Edenton stated she lived within a mile of the proposed wind mill facility. She stated she just learned about the project. She stated she was not made aware of the project and does not read the legal ads in the paper. She stated she felt the Board was not being transparent in the process. She stated the Board has allowed Apex in and has not sought its own experts. She stated the Board dismissed the recommendation of the Planning Board. She stated that she moved to Chowan County from a city that was devastated by industry

and she would not permit her property to also be devastated. She stated the Board has forgotten their place and stated the voters would put them in their place.

Jack Gibson, 224 Mulberry Hill Ln. Edenton stated he would recommend the Board obtain a consultant to research the wind energy facility project. He stated the Board should look into scrap value, scope of decommissioning and who has the financial risk. He provided information regarding the process for obtaining surety bonds. He provided the Board with a handout of his with documentation supporting his comments. A copy is in the meeting file labeled November 2, 2015.

Clara Stage 105 West Church Street Edenton stated she would like the Board to look at the ordinance. She stated the Board has great responsibility and power. She provided the Board with a handout of her written comments. A copy of her comments are in the meeting file labeled November 2, 2015. Ms. Stage provided information from a former county commissioner from Tipton County Indiana who states she thought she was helping her community economically by voting for a wind energy facility in 2012. She notes the expected revenues and health studies are of great concern. She noted that Commissioner Kehayes has indicated his concern with regards to health effects. She stated the commissioner who wrote this letter states that if she could vote again on the matter, she would not have supported the project. She recommended the Board look over the letter and the four topics it raises.

Jessie Rivers 233 Hawthorne Rd. Edenton stated her support for the preservation of the former DF Walker Highschool. She stated the building is on the campus of the original Rosenwald School and is included on a list of properties in North Carolina considered to be historical. She shared information on the recognition of the building and the site. She shared a photograph of the original Rosenwald School on the campus, which is now open space on the site. She shared information regarding the Rosenwald School Network and a conference that was held in Edenton.

William Miller 100 Blount Street Edenton stated the former DF Walker Highschool building is important to the community. He stated the use of the building could be promoted both for private or public use. He urged the Board to consider uses of the property to bring the community together and urged the Board to not demolish the building.

Bill Dunn 204 Powhatan Trail Edenton stated that he was informed the canal would not be treated for Hydrilla. He stated his concern over the spread of the aquatic weed at Arrowhead Beach and throughout the Chowan River.

Brian Ferracio 126 Rockfish Dr. Edenton stated that the proposed setbacks in the wind energy facility is established by "industry standards". He stated that nobody notes that the industry standard is 1500 feet for a 200 foot turbine. He stated that the proposed turbines in Chowan County will be 600 feet tall. He stated the Board owes it to the County to do their due diligence.

Eric Unsworth 328 Yeopim Rd. Edenton stated that he has a house in Edenton. He noted that at his property in Massachusetts there were three wind turbines put up. He stated that the turbines dominate the landscape and can be seen from the beach. He stated these turbines are 255 feet

tall. He stated that he was concerned with the proposed turbines in Chowan County being 600 feet tall. He stated that the performance of the turbines in Massachusetts has been disappointing and the residents have been told it is because the wind is not moving fast enough.

Brenda Little read comments into the record on behalf of Susan Inglis. She stated her concern and desire to preserve the former DF Walker Highschool. She stated that the building is an important landmark in the community and that they are sad to see it underutilized. She stated that finding a use for the building would not only add great value to the neighborhood but would contribute to healing wounds previously inflicted on that same site.

Being no further public comment Chairman Smith closed the floor.

### **Oath – Interim Tax Administrator**

Board Clerk Susanne Stallings administered the oath of office to Interim Tax Administrator William “Pete” Rodda.

### **Consent Agenda**

Chairman Smith then presented the Consent Agenda.

### **Minutes**

The minutes of October 7, 2015, October 14, 2015 and October 19, 2015 for the Board’s review and consideration.

Commissioner Mitchener moved to approve the minutes with the amendments noted. Chairman Smith asked for all in favor, the motion passed unanimously (7-0).

### **Fee Schedule Amendment**

Mr. Howard noted that staff has requested an amendment to the Fee Schedule for the Building Inspections Fees. The previous schedule did not include a section for “Green Energy Fees”. Attached is a current fee schedule with the proposed amendment highlighted.

Solar Arrays/Pods \$50 per pod  
Wind Turbines - \$1,000 per tower

Commissioner Kehayes asked for clarification on pods.

Mr. Howard stated that 3 panels is a pod.

Commissioner Smith asked if this is in line with others in the area.

Mr. Howard stated yes.

Commissioner Bonner moved to approve the fee schedule amendment as presented. Chairman Smith asked for all in favor, the motion passed unanimously (7-0).

### **COA Capital**

Joe Turner of COA stated that he is requesting that some facilities issues are addressed at the campus. He stated one concern was the doors of the culinary building. He stated one of the doors is difficult to lock and the second door does not fit well and allows heat and cool air to escape. He noted that none of the doors are ADA compliant. COA would like to use capital fund monies to replace the doors and the low bid came in at \$8,100.

Commissioner Lawrence moved to accept the request to utilize \$8,100 in capital monies for the repair.

Commissioner Nixon asked if the door would be like others on the campus. He stated he noticed the bid was for dark glass and asked why.

Mr. Turner stated this was to match what currently exists on the campus.

Chairman Smith asked for all in favor, the motion passed unanimously (7-0).

Mr. Turner stated the Buildings and Grounds Committee of the Board of Trustees has also requested that he ask the Commissioners to consider increasing the threshold of \$5,000 that requires Commissioner approval for capital projects. He stated that before he can bring a request the Commissioners, he has to get approval from the buildings and grounds committee and then the Chowan County Board and then the Board of Commissioners.

Commissioners Lawrence requested that the Commissioners hold off on making a decision on the matter and place it on the next meeting agenda for consideration.

### **Public Hearing – Recreation Master Plan Update**

Wes McLeod provided the Board with a PowerPoint executive summary of the Recreation Master Plan Update. A copy of the PowerPoint is in the meeting file labeled November 2, 2015. He provided information from the inventory showing a deficit in playground, trails and baseball fields. He provided the Board with information from a survey conducted that received 651 responses. He noted the survey indicates the public would like for the county to upgrade existing parks and facilities and develop new parks and facilities. The greatest request for new amenities were for an aquatic center. The plan recommends the county look at outdoor or indoor swimming opportunities. The second goal is to consolidate facilities. (Centralized location for baseball, soccer, football etc.). Goal 3 is to enhance facilities Goal 4 is to connect greenways. Goal 5 is to increase opportunities and goal 6 is to conduct a program life cycle analysis.

Nelson Spear stated he was speaking on behalf of the Recreation Advisory Board, he recognized members of the Board present at the meeting and stated the Advisory Board supports the plan as presented.

Commissioner Bonner thanked the Advisory Board and Mr. McLeod for a comprehensive study.

Commissioner Nixon moved to open the floor for the public hearing. Chairman Smith asked for all in favor, the motion passed unanimously (7-0).

Chairman Smith called for public comment, there was none.

Commissioner Mitchener moved to close the public hearing. Chairman Smith asked for all in favor, the motion passed unanimously (7-0).

Ms. Stallings noted the Board would also consider adoption of a resolution. She noted the last paragraph of the resolution states that the County is under no obligation to fund any recommendations, goals or strategies contained within the Chowan County Parks and Rec Master Plan.

Commissioner Mitchener moved to adopt the plan and the resolution.

Commissioner Winborne stated he would like to get updates on the progress of the plan.

Commissioner Mitchener stated he would amend his motion.

Commissioner Nixon stated that he did not wish to bind future boards with a reporting requirement.

Commissioner Mitchener stated he would rescind his previous motion and then move to adopt the resolution and plan as presented. Chairman Smith asked for all in favor, the motion passed unanimously (7-0).

The Board discussed a desire to get updates from the Recreation Department on the plan as well as seeking any available PARTF funds.

Chairman Smith called for a 5 minute recess.

After 5 minutes he called the meeting back to order.

## **RESOLUTION**

### **ADOPTING THE CHOWAN COUNTY PARKS AND RECREATION MASTER PLAN**

**WHEREAS**, the citizens and stakeholders of Chowan County's Parks and Recreation system value a well-planned network of facilities for their use and enjoyment; and

**WHEREAS**, the provision of parks, recreation, and open space opportunities for physical activity may serve to enhance health outcomes of Chowan County citizens; and

**WHEREAS**, the Chowan County Parks and Recreation Advisory Board formally recommends adoption of the Parks and Recreation Master Plan by the Chowan County Board of Commissioners; and

**WHEREAS**, the Chowan County Parks and Recreation Advisory Board shall use the Parks and Recreation Master Plan as a guide to advance the recommendations, goals, and strategies of the Parks and Recreation Master Plan; and

**WHEREAS**, the Chowan County Board of Commissioners is under no obligation to fund any recommendations, goals, or strategies contained within the Chowan County Parks and Recreation Master Plan;

**NOW, BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED** that the Chowan County Board of Commissioners hereby adopts the Chowan County Parks and Recreation Master Plan.

**Former DF Walker High School Study Committee**

Chairman Smith stated that the Board has been provided with a list of those that have volunteered to serve on the study committee. He stated he recommends the following appointments:

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|---------------------------------|---|
| <b>County Representatives:</b>  | <b>Kevin Howard</b>                       |
|                                 | <b>Emmett Winborne or Designee</b>        |
|                                 | <b>Greg Bonner</b>                        |
| <b>Town Representatives:</b>    | <b>Anne-Marie Knighton</b>                |
|                                 | <b>Elton Bond</b>                         |
| <b>COA Representatives:</b>     | <b>Sally Francis Kehayes</b>              |
|                                 | <b>Kandi Deitemeyer (or her designee)</b> |
| <b>DF Walker Alumni Assn:</b>   | <b>Rev Raymond Privott</b>                |
|                                 | <b>Mr. Louis Belfield</b>                 |
|                                 | <b>Ms. Carolyn Anthony</b>                |
| <b>Edenton Chowan Schools :</b> | <b>Rob Jackson or Designee</b>            |
|                                 | <b>School Board Member</b>                |

Commissioner Kehayes moved to adopt the membership as recommended.

Commissioner Nixon stated he wanted to make it clear that the mission of this committee is to look into all avenues. He noted the County has a lease with COA for the building.

Ms. Stallings noted this committee could have 12 members if a school board member joins.

Commissioner Kehayes clarified his motion to state that would be what he would approve.

Chairman Smith stated he would recommend that Commissioner Winborne serve as the temporary chair and organize the first meeting.

Chairman Smith asked for all in favor, the motion passed unanimously (7-0).

Commissioner Winborne stated he would work on getting the first meeting scheduled.

### **Merchant Marine Request for Support**

Chairman Smith stated that Don Horton has requested that the Board of Commissioners submit a letter of support asking Senator Richard Burr to reconsider his decision of non-support for S 1775 and HR 1288, WWII Merchant Mariners Service Act.

Board members discussed the request and asked that the request be tabled and forwarded to the Veterans Services Agent to provide the Board with more information on what is being requested.

### **Animal Control Annual Report**

Animal Control Director Louann Fisher provided the Board with an update on the activities of Animal Control.

### **External Board/Committee Report**

Chairman Smith stated that the Board members are asked to report on the activities of the external boards to which they have been appointed.

Commissioner Mitchener reported on the Senior Center Advisory Board.

Commissioner Nixon reported on the Health Department Board.

### **Manager's Report**

County Manager Kevin Howard updated the Board on the following:

#### **Salary Study**

Mr. Howard provided the Board with preliminary information regarding his survey of County employee salaries.

Commissioner Nixon asked what a 1% cost of living adjustment (COLA) would be for all employees.

Mr. Howard stated that it would be around \$58,000.

Commissioner Nixon asked if the Board could elect to give some salary adjustments and COLA.

Mr. Howard stated that would be what he recommends doing.

Commissioner Nixon discussed possibly making the adjustments retroactive.

Mr. Howard stated he needed the Board to decide on how much money it wants to spend on this proposal so that he could provide the Board with a recommendation for adjustments.

Commissioner Winborne thanked the Manager for the information and urged the Board to give it much consideration. He asked where the monies would come from.

Mr. Howard stated he would recommend fund balance.

Commissioner Nixon asked for the report to be emailed.

Mr. Howard noted this report does not include comparisons for years of service.

Commissioner Winborne asked if the Manager had a deadline for implementing the plan.

Mr. Howard stated he would recommend the first of 2016.

Chairman Smith stated he would recommend that the Board discuss this at a later time.

#### Pembroke Creek

Mr. Howard noted the kayak launch is installed.

#### Water

Mr. Howard noted that he has worked with the water supervisor and the county engineer on the letter that was sent to DENR this week.

### **Timely and Important Matters**

#### STEM Project

Commissioner Lawrence reported that he is working on a STEM project with area schools. He stated the funds for the program are from NASA. He stated that this is a 3 year project and he will be implementing the program in Chowan, Perquimans and Gates Counties.

### **Closed Session**

Commissioner Bonner moved that the Board go into closed session, in accordance with NCGS 143-318 (11) (a) (6) personnel. Chairman Smith asked for all in favor, the motion passed unanimously (7-0).

The minutes of the closed session are sealed.

Commissioner Nixon moved to come out of closed session Chairman Smith asked for all in favor, the motion passed unanimously (7-0).

**Adjourn**

Being no further business, Commissioner Nixon moved that the meeting be adjourned. Chairman Smith asked for all in favor, the motion passed unanimously (7-0).

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Jeffery Smith  
Chairman

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L. Susanne Stallings, Clerk