

Regular Meeting
Tuesday, September 2, 2014
Chowan County Public Safety Center
305 West Freemason Street
6:00pm

Minutes

Present Chairman Keith Nixon, Commissioners Jeff Smith, Alex Kehayes, John Mitchener, Ellis Lawrence (came in late), Emmett Winborne and Greg Bonner.

Staff present County Manager Kevin Howard, Finance Officer Willie Carawan and Board Clerk Susanne Stallings.

Regular Meeting

Chairman Nixon called the regular meeting to order and led the pledge of allegiance.

Commissioner Smith then offered the invocation.

Approval of Agenda

Commissioner Smith noted the minutes of the July 30, 2014 would be tabled until they can be approved by the Committee first. He then moved to approve the agenda as amended. Chairman Nixon asked for all in favor, the motion passed unanimously (7-0).

Public Comment

Chairman Nixon opened the floor to public comment in accordance with NCGS 153A-52.1.

Beth Stanley 4H Agent with North Carolina Cooperative Extension and Sheriff Deputy Ricky Weinberger provided the Board with a PowerPoint on the activities of the Kids and Cops program. A copy of the PowerPoint is in the meeting file labeled September 2, 2014.

Commissioners Smith and Winborne commended Sheriff Goodwin, his staff and Extension staff on a job well done with the program.

There was no further public comment.

Consent Agenda

Chairman Nixon then presented the consent agenda.

a. Minutes

Minutes of the August 4, 2014 and August 18, 2014 meetings for the Board's review and consideration.

Commissioner Smith moved to approve the consent agenda as presented. Chairman Nixon asked for all in favor, the motion passed unanimously (7-0).

Commissioner Winborne asked for clarification on tax customers financing their tax bill.

Mr. Howard stated this was a previous policy and stated he would look into it.

Emergency Management (EM) Annual Report

EM Director Cord Palmer provided the Board with a PowerPoint update on the activities of the Emergency Management for the past year. He noted the calls for EM for the current year were 39 as of 09-02-14). He shared information on the status of tornado repairs from Chowan County victims (resulting from the April 25, 2014 tornadoes). He shared photographs of a generator switch that has been installed at a potential shelter location. He noted that the site is now wired and ready for a generator.

Commissioner Winborne asked about the status of the LEPC meeting.

Mr. Palmer stated the committee is scheduled to meet in October.

Chairman Nixon asked about the status of the pet shelter.

Mr. Palmer and Mr. Howard noted they are working with the newly formed Animal Control Department to develop a new shelter location recommendation.

Chairman Nixon thanked Mr. Palmer for his report.

Recreation Items

Recreation Director Jason Petersen presented the Board with information on a grant application to update the Recreation Master Plan. He stated that part of the plan includes conducting a survey to assess the public needs in Chowan County.

Grant Request

He stated the grant is 100% and requires no matching funds. He stated the only cost to the county is if it incurs expenses beyond the \$9,000 that is given in the grant. He noted that the second part of his presentation is a recreation survey.

Commissioner Mitchener moved to accept the grant funds up to \$9,000.

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

Recreation Survey

He noted that at the request of the Recreation Advisory Board he compiled a survey to assist the Recreation Department in developing a Master Plan. He noted that part of the grant requires that a consultant compile a survey assessment of the County.

County Manager Kevin Howard stated he would recommend that the Recreation Director provide the consultant who is to prepare a survey a copy of the survey that Mr. Petersen has drafted.

Chairman Nixon recommended that the Board members review the proposed survey and if they have any recommendations for the survey to share it with the Recreation Director. He noted that in order for the Recreation Department to apply for PARTF grants, an updated Master Plan must be on file. He noted the last update of the master plan was done in 2005.

Commissioner Winborne asked how the survey would be passed along to the community.

Mr. Petersen stated that he will advertise a digital version of the survey to the public.

Commissioner Smith stated that he would like for the consultant to make the questions in the survey Chowan County specific.

Commissioner Lawrence stated he wanted to make sure that the survey is widely distributed in the community and not just digital.

Mr. Petersen stated he would find other means for distributing the survey.

Chairman Nixon recommended providing churches with the survey.

Commissioner Kehayes recommended utilizing the school technology and iPads to also distribute the survey.

EMS Fiscal Review

Chairman Nixon stated that he request that the Board discuss EMS revenues and expenditures for the current fiscal year.

EMS Director Colin Ryan provided the Board with an account analysis from the billing company as of September 1, 2014. He stated that the report shows a significant drop in call volume over the past four years. He noted it was about a 25% decrease over the past 4 years.

Mr. Howard noted that EMS had an additional expense to bring the advance life support (ALS) on. He noted the decreased call volume without the ALS in place would have resulted in even worse revenue loss.

Mr. Ryan stated he was concerned with the current collection. He stated that EMS companies in the State are complaining about Medicaid and Medicare payouts and that may be the problem.

Commissioner Smith asked if EMS would be providing transports for other hospitals.

Mr. Ryan stated that the hospitals are aware that EMS has ALS transport now.

Chairman Nixon noted he reviewed the printout on EMS from finance. He stated the revenues are the same as last year. He noted the billing company has been paid double this year from the previous year.

Finance Officer Willie Carawan stated that he will pull the invoice. He noted that this mostly likely had to be posted in the current fiscal year. He stated that our audit does not back post for EMS like it does for other funds (Sales Tax etc.).

Mr. Ryan noted that they are working with a new billing clerk with the collection company. He stated that he would be meeting with the company to determine why the revenues are coming in slow.

Capital Projects

Mr. Howard stated the Board has requested time to prioritize the Capital Projects list as compiled by the Planning and Enterprise Committee.

List of Capital requests to be considered at the end of FY 2013-14 (some items added by committee) – List not prioritized

- Repairs at Jail	\$14,000
- Recreation Department multipurpose tractor Lawn mower	\$8,500
- 2- Sheriff patrol cars	\$50,000
- Repairs at Bennetts Millpond	\$6,000
- Repairs at Shepard Building	\$50,000
- Swain Building Repairs	\$41,000
- 1980's Courthouse Repairs	\$10,000
- Hydrilla	\$10,000
Total	\$197,500
Monies remaining in Capital Line	(\$38,000)
	\$159,500

(Items added by Planning/Enterprise Committee)

Chairman Nixon asked what the projected fund balance is from the auditor.

Mr. Carawan stated that \$725,000 is the rough estimate on growth. He noted this amount could vary.

The Board discussed what monies were designated or not.

Mr. Carawan stated that he projects \$475,247 of unrestricted monies.

Commissioner Winborne noted that monies from fund balance are also budgeted to balance the FY 2014-15 budget.

Commissioner Smith asked if monies have been donated for the repairs at Bennetts Millpond.

Mr. Petersen stated that equipment and labor have been offered but no monetary donations.

Commissioner Winborne asked if Recreation could go without the mower until spring.

Mr. Petersen stated he could make that work.

Chairman Nixon asked if \$38,000 is what remains in the capital line.

Mr. Carawan stated yes, however he would double check that and send that information in an email to the Board on the next day.

Chairman Nixon noted that \$25,000 for the Sheriff Car has been spent already because the car has been ordered. He stated the \$10,000 for Hydrilla has also already been committed.

The Board discussed estimates on the repairs at the Shepard Building, Swain and the Jail. The Board discussed their individual preferences on prioritizing the list.

Chairman Nixon asked the clerk to provide the Board members with a list of the projects. He requested that the Board members rate the projects and the Board would discuss the list later in the meeting.

External Board/Committee Report

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

Commissioner Smith reported on the Fire Study Committee.

Commissioner Mitchener provided the Board with his notes from the Hydrilla meeting.

Commissioner Winborne asked for an update on the Dilliards Millpond project from the attorney.

Ms. Stallings stated she has forwarded the file to the County Attorney and is awaiting his opinion.

Manager's Report

County Manager Kevin Howard noted that the Northern Chowan Community Center has partially reopened. He stated the gym and aerobics room floors will be delivered mid-September and installed by the end of September.

Timely and Important Matters

Chairman Nixon noted that Leon Evans will host his annual 911 memorial service on September 11, 2014 at 11:00am at his home on Rocky Hock Road.

Chairman Nixon noted that a former Commissioner in Perquimans County, Charles Ward passed away. He stated he was a dedicated Commissioner and public servant.

Commissioner Kehayes stated his concern regarding the acoustics in the lobby meeting room. He stated he would like for staff to look into fixing the sound equipment.

Closed Session

Commissioner Smith moved that the Board go into closed session, in accordance with NCGS 143-318 (11) (a) (5, 6), contract negotiations and personnel. Chairman Nixon asked for all in favor, the motion passed unanimously (7-0).

The minutes of the closed session are sealed.

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

Capital Projects

The Board reviewed their ranking of the capital projects. The repairs at Swain and the Jail ranked highest among the Board members in priority.

The Board members agreed to allow the Maintenance Director and the Manager to obtain quotes for the repairs and provide the actual figures to the Board.

Commissioner Mitchener moved to appropriate \$100,000 from the fund balance to capital. Chairman Nixon asked for all in favor, the motion passed unanimously (7-0).

Adjourn

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

D. Keith Nixon, Chairman

Susanne Stallings, Clerk