

Regular Meeting  
Tuesday, January 20, 2015  
**Chowan County Public Safety Center**  
**305 West Freemason St.**  
**Edenton, NC**  
**5:30pm**

**Minutes**

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

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

**Regular Meeting**

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

**Approval of Agenda**

Chairman Smith noted that item 8 on the agenda “EMS Fiscal update” would need to be rescheduled until the February 2, 2015 meeting.

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

**Public Comment**

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

There was none.

**Consent Agenda**

Chairman Smith then presented the consent agenda.

**a. Minutes**

Attached are the minutes of the January 5, 2015 meeting for the Board’s review and consideration.

Ms. Stallings noted the corrections to the minutes.

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

**b. Tax Collector Report December 2014**

Commissioner Bonner moved to accept the Tax Collector report.

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

c. **Budget Amendments**

**BA1415-025**

Account Code	Description	Old	+ or (-)	New
<b>LIBRARY LIGHTING</b>				
11-3432-410-00	Sate & County Jail Fees	(2,500.00)	(13,600.00)	(16,100.00)
11-4320-696-00	Contr Svcs - Regional / County Jail	11,070.00	13,600.00	24,670.00
<b>Balanced:</b>		<b>8,570.00</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>8,570.00</b>
<b>Justification:</b>				
<i>Budgeting additional Jail Revenues to offset additional Jail Expenses</i>				

Commissioner Nixon stated his concern with the budget amendment that budgets are not typically increased until later in the fiscal year.

Mr. Carawan noted that this budget line is currently in the hole.

Commissioner Nixon discussed the use of other lines in the budget such as Central Services or Juvenile Services.

Mr. Carawan stated the Sheriff has indicated those monies will most likely be spent.

Chairman Smith asked what the pleasure of the Board was.

Commissioner Nixon stated he would like to hold the amendment and allow time for the Sheriff to answer questions about the use of these monies.

**NCDOT – Enhancement Funding**

Pat Mansfield with NC DOT requested that the County consider an opportunity to utilize enhancement funding for the revitalization of the flower beds at the Highway 17 interchanges. She stated the current bed conditions have deteriorated. She stated that the agreement would allow DOT to fix the beds and maintain them for three years. After that time the County would be responsible for future maintenance. She stated that based on the current agreement already in place, the beds either need to be repaired or removed and that would be at the expense of the County.

Chairman Smith noted that the Board had expressed concern over the maintenance of the beds indefinitely after the 3 years.

Commissioner Bonner asked if the contract could be amended for a shorter time period.

Ms. Mansfield stated the agreement would state “in perpetuity” (forever).

Commissioner Mitchener stated he would like to see enhancements done to the Queen Street interchange at Highway 17. He stated this exit is highly visible and felt it would be a great location for plantings. He stated he felt the area could be spruced up with colorful plantings.

Ms. Mansfield stated the County has the option to remove a planting and install it at a different location such as the Queen Street interchange. She agreed that interchange would be a great location.

Chairman Smith noted that the Voluntary Ag District Board looked into placing signage at that location, and it was not allowed.

Commissioner Kehayes stated that some visual aids on the locations being discussed would help him more with his decision making.

Commissioner Mitchener asked if Ms. Mansfield could develop a proposal in 60 to 90 days.

Ms. Mansfield stated she could develop a proposal. She stated that if the County accepts the new agreement, she would establish a committee to develop a plan for the plantings.

Commissioner Nixon stated he felt the TDA could look into this project. He stated he would like to have a traffic count at the various interchanges. He stated that he wished that these funds could also be used for other roads such as the Sound Bridge area.

Ms. Mansfield stated she could provide traffic counts to the Board and noted that these planting monies are often specific to certain highways.

Commissioner Nixon stated he would discuss this project with the TDA Board.

Mr. Howard noted the contract would have to be between DOT and the County.

Commissioner Nixon asked if there is an out to the contract.

Ms. Mansfield stated yes, that in order to get out of the contract, the County would have to return the site back to original turf.

Commissioner Nixon asked if the Board by consensus would allow him to discuss this with the TDA Board and bring back to the next meeting.

Ms. Mansfield stated she would need direction from the Board on what they would like to see. She noted that the County may have records on where a previous contractor was paid approximately \$300-\$500 per month.

Commissioner Nixon moved to table the request until February 1, 2015 to allow Ms. Mansfield time to provide traffic counts, for him to obtain opinions from the TDA Board members and to get information on cost estimates. He noted that he would recommend the Board identify the funding sources and vote on the matter in February.

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

**DSS Annual Report**

DSS Director Clifton Hardison provided the Board with the annual report from DSS a copy of the PowerPoint is in the meeting file labeled January 20, 2015.

The Board discussed total monies distributed in the County by DSS and various programs and services offered. The Board thanked Mr. Hardison for the update.

### **Hydrilla Update**

Steve Karl of 219 East Queen Street stated he was present with members of the Environmental Group to support Scott Alons and the work for Hydrilla treatment in Chowan County.

Soil and Water Conservation Technician Scott Alons provided the Board with an update on Hydrilla treatment. A copy of the PowerPoint is in the meeting file labeled January 20, 2015.

Chairman Smith thanked Mr. Alons and the group for their research and volunteerism.

Chairman Smith asked if Mr. Alons plans to go back next year and do the same work as the current year.

Mr. Alons stated he would like to expand the survey to the creeks.

Mr. Karl stated he would like to come back in the future and present information from their group.

Chairman Smith stated that conversations with legislators have centered on having the waterways designated under the Department of Transportation.

The Board discussed the YouTube video that was put together by the NC Sea Grant.

Chairman Smith asked the clerk to forward the link of the YouTube video to the neighboring counties on the coast and ask that it be shared with legislators and Economic Developers in those Counties.

### **Appointment Procedure**

The Board discussed options for appointment of Residents to various Boards and Commissions.

County Manager Kevin Howard shared that after his survey of counties most handle applications by one of the following processes:

- Simple application process (accept applications, make appointment)
- Interview process, simple process (accept applications, entire Board interviews)
- Interview by committee process (accept applications and interviews are conducted by committees)

Commissioner Nixon moved to ask staff to bring back a list of all Boards and Committees that are appointed by the Board of Commissioners and provide their recommendation on which committees would require more thorough review and interviews.

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

### **Land Donation from Habitat for Humanity**

The Board reviewed an offer of land donation from Habitat for Humanity.

The Board discussed the property and reviewed the maps showing streets that are currently not built.

Commissioner Nixon asked if there was a current need for the property.

Mr. Howard stated no.

John Sams was present representing Habitat for Humanity. He stated the property was discussed about donating to the County because Habitat will now be taxed for the property. He noted that it appears there will be some time before the streets around the property will be paved.

The Board took no action on the request.

### **Tipping Fee Waiver**

The Board was asked to consider a request to extend the tipping fee waiver for tornado storm debris until April 30, 2015 for the interfaith group that is helping the tornado victims.

Commissioner Bonner moved to extend the waiver until April 30, 2015.

Commissioner Nixon stated he was concerned with the length of the waiver. He asked if staff could gather information regarding the current status of tipping fees.

Chairman Smith stated he would like for the group to come back to a future meeting and report what has been done and what is left.

Commissioner Bonner asked to rescind his motion.

Commissioner Nixon stated he would recommend extending the waiver until February 28, 2015.

Commissioner Bonner moved to extend the tipping fee waiver until February 28, 2015.

Commissioner Lawrence stated he would have approved a waiver until April if that is what is needed. He noted that many of the storm victims are just not receiving funding to begin repairs.

Commissioner Nixon stated he would talk with the Solid Waste Director to determine what the cost has been to the County and review the Solid Waste Fund balance.

Chairman Smith asked for all in favor of the motion to extend the waiver until February 28, 2015, the motion passed unanimously (7-0).

### **Removal of Underground Storage Tank at the Hotel Hinton**

Mr. Howard stated that the Board is asked to consider the request presented at the January 5, 2015 meeting or removal of the underground storage tank at the Hotel Hinton. He stated he has checked into other funding sources, and there are none available. He stated the program is the only cost savings for removal of the tank. He noted this expense would be funded with the insurance proceeds.

Commissioner Nixon asked what the maximum cost to the County would be.

Mr. Howard stated the cost of the program (\$7,380) and \$25,000 for the removal would be the maximum cost.

Commissioner Nixon moved to go with the Manager's recommendation to pay to enter the State Tank Removal Program.

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

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

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

Commissioner Kehayes gave an update from the Legislative Goals Conference.

Commissioner Kehayes noted he would be further investigating programs that are paid through Chowan County Bottle Tax to East Carolina Behavioral Health and report it back to the Board.

### **Historic Tax Credit Resolution**

Commissioner Mitchener provided the Board with a draft resolution in support of reinstatement of the NC Historic Preservation Tax Credit Program.

Commissioner Nixon stated he felt this was important. He noted that he felt other Counties and Preservation North Carolina may have resolutions circulating.

Mr. Howard noted that the Governor proposes this being a grant program not a tax program.

Commissioner Kehayes stated his support of the resolution.

Chairman Smith recommended Commissioner Mitchener meet with the Clerk and draft a resolution to come back to the Board.

Commissioner Nixon gave an update from the Albemarle Commission Board of Directors.

### **Manager's Report**

County Manager Kevin Howard stated that the yellow truck that was declared surplus did not sell on Gov Deals. He noted it was listed twice. He stated that staff has found a problem with the radiator. He stated the Maintenance Director has indicated he would like to fix the truck and use it in the Recreation Department to haul items.

There was no objection from the Board.

### **Timely and Important Matters**

Commissioner Winborne thanked Mr. Carawan for the financial report. He asked if there are any problems that he is aware of in the budget.

Mr. Carawan stated he hoped the Board would discuss the EMS at the next meeting.

Commissioner Winborne asked if the Manager would send a weekly report to the Board.

Chairman Smith stated the meetings at Pinehurst were educational.

**Closed Session**

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

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Jeffery Smith, Chairman

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Susanne Stallings, Clerk