

Regular Meeting
Monday, July 7, 2014
Chowan County Public Safety Center
305 West Freemason Street
6:00pm

Minutes

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

Commissioner Ellis Lawrence was absent.

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 Bonner then offered the invocation.

Approval of Agenda

Commissioner Smith moved to approve the agenda as submitted. Chairman Nixon asked for all in favor, the motion passed unanimously (6-0).

Public Comment

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

There was none.

ITS Director Introduction

County Manager Kevin Howard introduced John Wendling, the County's IT Director.

3. Consent Agenda

Chairman Nixon then presented the consent agenda.

a. Minutes

Attached are the minutes of the June 10, 2014 and June 16, 2014 meetings for the Board's review and consideration.

b. Tax Refund/Release and Collectors Report

Brown, H.	\$1072.18	Debt Set-off refund
Bass, A.	\$130.66	Debt Set-off refund
Brown, P.	\$102.33	Debt Set-off refund
Palmer, T.	\$304.26	Official Payments billing error
Decker, F.	\$262.96	SITUS Florida
Copeland, L.	\$165.84	Taxes already paid
EAN Hold.	\$135.68	U Drive-it vehicle not taxed per senate bill 1076
Fisk, R.	\$124.33	Boat taxed in Portsmouth VA

Board Clerk Susanne Stallings noted a correction to the minutes.

Commissioner Mitchener moved to approve the minutes as amended. Chairman Nixon asked for all in favor, the motion passed unanimously (6-0).

Commissioner Winborne asked for clarification on the U Drive-it release. Mr. Howard noted this is a rental vehicle.

Commissioner Smith moved to approve the Tax Refund/Release and Collectors report. Chairman Nixon asked for all in favor, the motion passed unanimously (6-0).

Board Appointments

Tourism Development Authority

Chairman Nixon noted that the Board is asked to consider the appointment of one vacant seat, Seat #6 Promotion (Applicant must be involved in the promotion of tourism and/or events in Chowan County).

Commissioner Winborne moved to appoint Adele Jones. Chairman Nixon asked for all in favor, the motion passed unanimously (6-0).

Chairman Nixon noted that the Board is asked to consider the reappointment of two members who have served one staggered term Seat 2 Collection and Seat 7 Promotion.

Commissioner Winborne moved to advertise Seats 2 and 7 and consider reappointment or filling the seats at the August meeting. Chairman Nixon asked for all in favor, the motion passed unanimously (6-0).

Shepard Pruden Board of Trustees

Chairman Nixon noted that the Board is asked to consider filling a vacancy on the Library Board.

Commissioner Smith nominated Matthew Markova. Chairman Nixon asked for all in favor, the motion passed unanimously (6-0).

Southern Chowan Fire Substation Study Committee

Chairman Nixon noted that at the last meeting, the Board agreed to form a study committee to research the implementation of a fire substation in southern Chowan County. He stated he would like to nominate Commissioner Mitchener, Commissioner Winborne, the County Manager, and Town Fire Chief to serve on the committee.

Commissioner Winborne recommended that the Centerhill Fire Chief also serve on the committee.

Commissioner Kehayes asked for clarification on the task of the committee.

Chairman Nixon stated this committee would serve as an advisory committee to the full Board. He stated he hoped this committee would evaluate the need for a fire station in the southern part of the county. He stated he hoped the committee would look at the fire tax per district and make a recommendation to the full board on the need, location and funding for the fire station.

Commissioner Kehayes stated he would like to serve on this committee.

Chairman Nixon stated that in order to have equal representation that he would also nominate Commissioner Smith.

Board Clerk Susanne Stallings noted that by having four Commissioners on the committee this would constitute a quorum of Commissioners serving and all meetings would have to be advertised and treated as a meeting of the full board.

Chairman Nixon stated that the Clerk will schedule the first meeting of the committee and advertise it accordingly. He moved to appoint Commissioner Mitchener, Commissioner Winborne, the County Manager, Town Fire Chief, Centerhill Fire Chief, Commissioner Kehayes and Commissioner Smith to the committee. He asked for all in favor, the motion passed unanimously (6-0).

Employee/Retiree Health Insurance

Chairman Nixon noted that at the last meeting, the Board requested that staff provide the Board with research on how other Counties are handling the cost for employee and retiree health insurance. He noted that a spreadsheet compiled by the North Carolina Association of County Commissioners has been provided to the Board. He asked if the County's health insurance representative could attend a future meeting and bring forth her recommendation on how the County should proceed for new hires. He then recommended that the manager meet with Ms. Nixon (Pierce Group Benefits) and bring back a recommendation later to the full Board. He stated that his main focus is on new hires. He noted the State of North Carolina is now requiring all employees to pay towards this benefit however he would like to only look at new hires at this time. He stated this was only information gathering for future planning purposes.

Address Display Ordinance

Commissioner Smith has requested that this ordinance be discussed by the Board. He stated that he has been contacted by emergency personnel with concerns regarding the ordinance that was

adopted over twenty years ago requiring homeowners to properly display their address. He stated that he wanted to bring the matter before the full Board and to bring awareness to the public that there is an ordinance on the books with this requirement. He recommended that the manager and clerk work with the press to put out a press release and public awareness campaign about the ordinance.

Commissioner Winborne stated that he felt this was a great idea and supported Commissioner Smith in getting a campaign going to remind the public.

Extension of Offer to Purchase Contract

Mr. Howard stated that the Board will consider an extension of the Offer to Purchase Contract between SAGA Construction and Chowan County with regards to the former County Office Building/ Hotel Hinton.

Commissioner Smith and Commissioner Winborne asked if SAGA is paying the earnest monies each month.

Mr. Howard stated yes they are paying this to Preservation North Carolina (PNC).

Chairman Nixon noted that PNC is holding the monies in escrow.

Commissioner Winborne asked about the progress.

Mr. Howards stated that SAGA continues to move forward in requesting its permits.

Chairman Nixon noted some of the hold-up has been the County's work with the insurance company to abate the problems resulting from the January/February water leaks.

Commissioner Smith recommended that the Manager check on the status of the demolition permit on file with the Town's preservation commission.

Commissioner Mitchener noted that the State preservation tax credits are in jeopardy at the General Assembly.

Chairman Nixon stated he was told the developer was still seeking federal tax credits.

Commissioner Mitchener moved to extend the contract until December 31, 2014 under the same terms as the existing contract (payments).

Chairman Nixon asked for all in favor, the motion passed unanimously (6-0).

External Board/Committee Report

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

Commissioner Winborne provided an update on the Animal Shelter Advisory Board. He discussed flooding at the shelter and recommended that the County Manager meet with Scott Alons to determine if there is anything that can be done for drainage at the site.

Mr. Howard stated he has met with Mr. Alons and that he is working now with Environmental Health.

Commissioner Mitchener provided information on the State Historic Tax Credits.

Chairman Nixon asked about the status of Pembroke Creek.

Mr. Howard stated that he will ask the Recreation Director to provide the Board with an update.

Manager's Report

County Manager Kevin Howard provided the following updates:

- Northern Chowan Community Center, still working with contractor, has been told by the contractor that the building should be ready in the next couple of weeks.

Timely and Important Matters

Archeological Dig at 1767 Courthouse Green

Mr. Howard noted that recently Piedmont Natural Gas installed a gas line across the Courthouse Green. He stated that residents contacted his office with concerns over the land being disturbed by the digging for the gas line. He noted that after meeting with Piedmont, they have agreed to pay for an archeological dig/study. He stated the cost is approximately \$9,855.94. He stated that Piedmont has provided the county with the funds to pay for the dig.

Commissioner Winborne stated his concern with ownership of any materials located during the dig.

Commissioner Smith asked what items were located when the sonar scan was provided.

Mr. Howard stated that no specific items were identified.

The Board discussed the possibility of items being located and by consensus agreed that they would like the contract amended to note that any artifacts located would become property of Chowan County.

Commissioner Kehayes moved to approve the contract after it is reviewed and amended by the County Attorney to include the recommended language regarding the ownership of any artifacts. Chairman Nixon asked for all in favor, the motion passed unanimously (6-0).

Chairman Nixon recommended the contract be emailed to the Board.

Planning/Enterprise Committee

Commissioner Winborne stated he would like to schedule a meeting of the Planning/Enterprise Committee soon. He stated a priority is to review the capital projects/needs list. He added that he would like for the Board to begin working on long range planning.

Chairman Nixon stated he would like to have a retreat to work on a long range plan.

School Capital Requests

Commissioner Bonner asked about the progress from the liaison committee meeting.

Chairman Nixon stated the School liaison committee met recently. He stated he expressed his concern regarding the capital projects. He stated that he discussed that some of the debt from school projects would be paid off in the next 6-7 years. He stated that the school may look at doing an addition to the current property and his concern was the window replacement. He noted that the window replacement relates to standards for using the cafeteria as an emergency shelter. He stated he requested that if the school were to replace the windows to replace them with white windows rather than the brown aluminum windows. He stated that the committee toured the cafeteria and the gymnasium and discussed the Commissioner's concerns with constituent complaints regarding the condition of the locker rooms and HVAC in the gym at the High School. He stated the meeting went well and the committee discussed future planning for school needs. He stated that the Board needs to give the School authority to move forward with the approved capital projects so that they can be completed during the summer months (approval of the Tier I projects).

Chairman Nixon stated the committee recommends the approval of the project but to note the windows being replaced should be uniform with the rest of the windows and be white (not brown).

Chairman Nixon asked for all in favor, the motion passed unanimously (6-0).

Hurricane

Chairman Nixon stated he participated in a Control Group meeting in preparation for Hurricane Arthur. He stated that he recommends the manager develop a plan for housing animals in the event of a disaster. He recommended that staff also schedule a training for call takers prior to any future events.

Windows in PSC lobby

Commissioner Smith recommended that Maintenance put up blinds in the north facing window as soon as possible.

4th of July

Commissioner Mitchener complimented the Sheriff's Office on the lighting provided during the 4th of July festivities.

Closed Session

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

The minutes of the closed session are sealed.

Commissioner Kehayes moved to come out of closed session. Vice Chairman Smith asked for all in favor, the motion passed unanimously (6-0).

Change in July meeting schedule

Commissioner Winborne moved to cancel the July 21, 2014 meeting. Chairman Nixon asked for all in favor, the motion passed unanimously (6-0).

Adjourn

Being no further business, Commissioner Bonner moved that the meeting be adjourned. Vice Chairman Smith asked for all in favor, the motion passed unanimously (6-0).

D. Keith Nixon, Chairman

Susanne Stallings, Clerk