

Surry County Board of Commissioners
Meeting of May 6, 2019

The Surry County Board of Commissioners met at 6:00 p.m. on May 6, 2019. The meeting was held in the Commissioners' Meeting Room, Historic Courthouse, Dobson, N.C.

Board members present for the meeting were Chairman Van Tucker, Vice-Chairman Larry Johnson, Commissioner Bill Goins, Commissioner Eddie Harris, and Commissioner Mark Marion.

Others present for the meeting, at various times, were:

Chris Knopf, County Manager
Sandy Snow, Assistant County Manager
Rhonda Nixon, Budget & Performance Director
Susan Jarrell, Elections Director
Bryan Cave, Cooperative Extension Director
Tony Davis, Soil and Water Conservation District Director
Kim Bates, Planning Director
Don Mitchell, Facilities Director
Ed Woltz, County Attorney
Tammy Johnson, Assistant to the County Manager
News Media

Chairman Tucker called the meeting to order at 6:05 p.m., welcomed everyone and thanked them for their attendance. Commissioner Harris delivered the invocation and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Chairman Tucker requested the Board review and approve the agenda. Upon motion of Commissioner Goins, seconded by Commissioner Johnson, the Board unanimously voted to approve the May 6, 2019 agenda.

Chairman Tucker requested the Board consider the minutes of the April 9 and April 15, 2019 meetings as presented. Upon motion of Commissioner Marion, seconded by Commissioner Harris, the Board unanimously voted to approve the minutes as written.

Chairman Tucker requested the Board consider the consent agenda. Commissioner Johnson requested that the item, Flag Raising Request, be removed for further discussion at the Chairman's discretion.

Upon motion of Commissioner Goins, seconded by Commissioner Johnson, the Board unanimously voted to approve the consent agenda with the Flag Raising Request removed for further discussion.

Requests from the County Manager:

- Approve purchase of furniture for the District Attorney and USDA FSA offices in the amount of \$20,141.43, with funds coming from the Judicial Center (\$17,140.91) and Service Center (3,000.52) budgets.

Requests from the Assistant County Manager:

- Accept 908.50 hours of sick leave to be transferred back to Surry County for a rehired employee.
- Reclassify position #438006 from Administrative Assistant I, Grade 63, to a Law Enforcement Administrative Specialist, Grade 64, effective April 1, 2019.
- Add Budget Analyst to the Position Classification Plan at Grade 70, effective May 1, 2019, and reclassify position #741502 to a Budget Analyst position.
- Abolish position #515406 and position #515001 contingent upon final approval from the Office of State Personnel, and as requested by the Health Director.

Requests from the Finance Officer:

- Approve the contracts with Gould Killian CPA Group, P.A. for independent audit services for Surry County, Flat Rock/Bannertown Water & Sewer District, Mount Airy/Surry County Airport Authority, and the LGERS.
- Approve the amendment for the EMS MC contract dated May 17, 2017.

Attorney Ed Woltz entered the meeting at this time.

The Board recognized the Surry Central Girls Basketball Team, the East Surry High School JROTC, and the Sestercentennial Logo Winner from East Surry High School.

The Board presented Stephanie Conner and the Communications staff with a proclamation declaring April 15-19, 2019 as National Telecommunicators Week.

Chairman Tucker declared the meeting to be an open forum and invited members of the audience to address the Board on any matters of civic concern.

J.T. Henson spoke of concerns related to an article in the Mount Airy News stating that the County would be assisting the City of Mount Airy with costs for the Spencer's demolition.

The Board advised Mr. Henson that the information was incorrect.

Chuck Koubenec spoke about the educators' rally held in Raleigh on May 1, 2019 which in his opinion was political in nature and stated that politics already exists in school systems. Mr. Koubenec thanked the Board for their resolution supporting partisan school board elections.

Richard Merlo spoke in favor of partisan school board elections.

Walter Harris advised that voters need to know who they are voting for and commended the Board on their Partisan School Boards position.

Mark Jones advised that several positive letters about partisan school board elections have been printed in the newspaper and added that the educators' march in Raleigh last week makes his

organization more determined. Mr. Jones thanked the Board for their support.

There being no further public comments, Chairman Tucker closed the public forum.

Susan Jarrell, Elections Director, asked the Board for permission to purchase DS200 paper ballot tabulation voting equipment from Election Systems and Software. She explained that their direct record equipment, purchased in 2006, will be de-certified by the State on December 1, 2019. The estimated purchase is \$196,785 and funds are available in the 2018-19 budget.

Ms. Jarrell also asked for permission to purchase equipment to transition to a paper ballot system with funds available in their budget: voting booths (screens on tabletops/stand booths/ADA compliant booths) estimated at \$33,000; Balotar printing system for early voting sites estimated at \$28,732; and, a Unity computer to run the voting system estimated at \$1,200.

Ms. Jarrell stated that the County will need to purchase additional ADA compliant voting equipment by 2020 estimated at \$131,380, which will be included in their 2019-20 proposed budget. She added that the NC State Board of Elections has not certified any ADA compliant voting since 2006 and is hopeful they will certify the equipment soon.

Also in attendance to support Ms. Jarrell's request were Board of Elections members Dwayne Carter, Bill Hamlin and Don Isaacs.

Upon motion of Commissioner Goins, seconded by Commissioner Marion, the Board unanimously voted to grant permission for the Board of Elections to purchase the DS200 voting equipment in the amount of \$196,785 prior to the end of the budget year.

Chairman Tucker asked Commissioner Johnson for his comments regarding his request to pull the Flag Raising Request from the consent agenda for discussion.

Chairman Johnson stated that in regard to the consent agenda item regarding a request from the Sons of Confederate Veterans, JEB Stuart Camp #1598, to conduct a Memorial Flag Raising on Saturday, May 11, 2019 at the Historic Courthouse, he would only support the United States, State of North Carolina, and Surry County flags be flown at the Historic Courthouse. He added that this was his opinion to remain fair and consistent with all flag flying requests that come before the Board.

Following discussion by the Board, Commissioner Harris stated that this was a routine request that has been approved for the last 25 years to honor all veterans and made a motion to approve the request from the Sons of Confederate Veterans, JEB Stuart Camp #1598, to conduct a Memorial Flag Raising on Saturday, May 11, 2019 at the Historic Courthouse; seconded by Commissioner Marion. The motion passed as follows:

Ayes: Commissioner Goins, Commissioner Harris, Commissioner Marion, and Chairman Tucker.

Nays: Commissioner Johnson

The Board took a ten-minute break.

Bryan Cave, Cooperative Extension Director, and Tony Davis, Soil and Water Conservation Director, discussed a proposed farmers market building to be constructed at the former Sue's Restaurant site in the Surry County Service Center parking lot. The primary purpose would be a local farmers market and an education venue for agricultural clients such as 4-H, Master Gardeners, Cattlemen's Association, Family and Consumer Science clients, and Soil and Water clients. The County would also have access to the venue for wellness, health and nutrition, and other County related activities. Mr. Cave and Mr. Davis presented a bid from Samuel Johnson Construction, in the amount of \$88,000, for a 62'x90' open structure with a concrete floor and a roughed-in restroom. Mr. Cave and Mr. Davis advised that approximately \$45,000 of the funds have been secured and asked the Board to consider contributing the remaining balance. County Attorney Ed Woltz has reviewed the bid.

Upon motion of Commissioner Marion, seconded by Commissioner Goins, the Board unanimously voted to approve contributing up to \$44,000 from General Fund Contingency.

Chairman Tucker advised that Tom Hemmings notified the Manager's office stating that he would not be able to attend the meeting and asked to be placed on the May 20th agenda.

Chris Knopf, County Manager, asked Kim Bates, Planning Director, to discuss potential amendments to the Solid Waste chapter of the Code of Ordinances. Mr. Bates discussed a preliminary draft with amendments that would allow for strict enforcement and increased fines. Mr. Bates also presented a draft resolution for the Board to consider a zero tolerance policy towards litter in Surry County.

After discussion, it was agreed by the Board that Chairman Tucker and Commissioner Harris, members of the Litter Committee, would meet with Mr. Bates and the Fire Marshal, to work on the amendments, and bring back to a future meeting.

County Manager Chris Knopf advised the Board that they could consider taking action on the resolution. Upon motion of Commissioner Johnson, seconded by Commissioner Goins, the Board unanimously voted to approve the resolution as follows:

RESOLUTION SUPPORTING A ZERO TOLERANCE
FOR LITTER IN SURRY COUNTY

WHEREAS, the amount of litter and trash along the county's roads, in rivers, and in commercial and residential areas of Surry County is offensive; and

WHEREAS, the Surry County Board of Commissioners has been promoting a litter outreach and education campaign to make the county a beautiful place in which to live, work and play; and

WHEREAS, the Surry County Board of Commissioners has engaged county residents, elected officials, local agencies, and our public school systems to be a part of making Surry County an example for others to follow; and

WHEREAS, littering influences others to litter and creates a negative impression for residents and visitors; and

WHEREAS, Surry County will increase enforcement of this crime, raise awareness about the act of littering in the community and the schools, reduce the overall amount of litter, and will not tolerate this type of illegal activity through a policy of Zero Tolerance for Litter; and

WHEREAS, special attention will be given to vehicles hauling unsecured loads, acts of illegal dumping and motorists or pedestrians improperly tossing away items including cigarette butts; and

WHEREAS, Surry County will strive to be a leader in litter prevention and will take a proactive stance each day through enforcement, education in the schools, partnering opportunities within the community civic organizations as well as regional, state and national organizations.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of County Commissioners of Surry County, North Carolina, hereby supports a policy of Zero Tolerance for Litter and encourages all citizens to work together, stand firm against the act of littering, and to act responsibly for a cleaner community to preserve the natural beauty, quality of life and health of our community.

Chris Knopf, County Manager, asked Attorney Ed Woltz to discuss a deed and other information regarding the Mount Airy Board of Education. Attorney Woltz advised that as part of the bond issue, the Board passed a resolution, as did the schools, where schools are using bond funds to improve their campuses, convey those campuses to Surry County, and the County leases them back to the schools for the period of construction so the County can receive sales tax refunds.

Chris Knopf, County Manager, advised the Board that the Rural Infrastructure Grant has been awarded to Dr. Challie Minton. Mr. Knopf asked the Board for their consideration to accept the grant award, in the amount of \$100,000, to support the reuse of Dr. Minton's facility. The facility will provide a preventive care clinic and onsite lab testing and will create ten jobs.

Upon motion of Commissioner Goins, seconded by Commissioner Marion, the Board unanimously voted to accept the Rural Infrastructure Grant award.

Chris Knopf, County Manager, advised the Board that the City of Mount Airy will be holding a public hearing on May 20, 2019 on the proposed elimination of the Mount Airy Extraterritorial Zoning Jurisdiction. Mr. Knopf advised that the County needs to decide if it desires to hold a companion public hearing. No action was taken.

Chris Knopf, County Manager, discussed a request from the Mount Airy Board of Education to consider approving the reallocation of funds in the amount of \$17,000 to be taken from the remainder of the unused balance from the Jones Intermediate project. Mr. Knopf added that the requested funds are needed to analyze HVAC issues at Mount Airy High School.

Upon motion of Commissioner Johnson, seconded by Commissioner Goins, the Board unanimously voted to approve the reallocation of unused Jones Intermediate project funds in the amount of \$17,000 towards a project at Mount Airy High School.

Chris Knopf, County Manager, asked Don Mitchell, Facilities Director to discuss a request for repairs at the Fisher River Recycling Center. Mr. Mitchell advised that the retaining wall needs replacing, new compactor pads need to be poured and a new storm drain box and piping needs to be installed. Two quotes have been received with the lowest from Simcon General Contractors, in the amount of \$44,500. Mr. Mitchell stated that funds are available in the Public Works budget and asked the Board for consideration to approve.

Upon motion of Commissioner Goins, seconded by Commissioner Harris, the Board unanimously voted to accept the lowest quote from Simcon General Contractors in the amount of \$44,500.

Chris Knopf, County Manager, discussed a fleet leasing program with Enterprise. Mr. Knopf advised that Rhonda Nixon, Budget and Performance Director, has been considering a program to include County vehicles, proposed to be purchased in FY19-20. A cost savings would mostly be realized in Vehicle Maintenance and fuel economy areas.

Mr. Knopf added that references from other counties and municipalities have resulted in positive feedback, and the program has been taken before the Finance Committee. Mr. Knopf asked for the Board's consideration to approve, in order to build into the budget.

Upon motion of Commissioner Johnson, seconded by Commissioner Goins, the Board unanimously voted to approve the Enterprise Fleet Leasing program as recommended.

Chris Knopf, County Manager, asked the Board to consider amending his agenda to include an item regarding a compactor lease with James River Equipment.

Upon motion of Commissioner Marion, seconded by Commissioner Harris, the Board unanimously voted to approve the County Manager's request to amend his agenda to include an additional item.

Chris Knopf, County Manager, asked Attorney Woltz to discuss a request from James River Equipment related to the compactor lease for the Landfill.

Attorney Woltz discussed the request which addresses a guarantee that the compactor costs will be paid in full if the lease option application is denied by the lending institution. If the

lease option is not approved, the full bill would be due within 30 days of any lease denial. Attorney Woltz recommended that the Board consider taking action that the invoice would be paid, should the lease/financing options not be approved.

Upon motion of Chairman Tucker, seconded by Commissioner Harris, the Board unanimously voted to agree to the terms as presented by James River Equipment to pay the invoice should the lease/financing options not be approved.

Chris Knopf, County Manager, advised the Board of three informational items that were distributed at the beginning of the meeting: information requested at the last budget work session regarding Elkin School Taxing District history, copy of a resolution approved by the City of Mount Airy on Thursday, May 2, 2019, and a PNC Executive Summary for the 2019 Limited Obligation Bond Issuance from Sarah Bowen, Finance Officer.

Upon motion of Commissioner Johnson, seconded by Commissioner Marion, the Board unanimously voted to reappoint David Bledsoe and Andy Simpson to serve on the Agriculture Advisory Board (Voluntary Agriculture District Board).

Upon motion of Commissioner Harris, seconded by Commissioner Goins, the Board unanimously voted to approve to go into closed session to discuss personnel, economic development and legal matters.

The Board came out of closed session and resumed regular business.

Upon motion of Commissioner Goins, seconded by Commissioner Marion, the Board unanimously voted to approve but not release the closed session minutes from April 15, 2019.

Upon motion of Commissioner Johnson, seconded by Commissioner Harris, the Board unanimously voted to adjourn. The meeting ended at 9:45 p.m.

Tammy Johnson
Clerk to the Board

Sandy Snow
Deputy Clerk to the Board