

Surry County Board of Commissioners
Meeting of April 20, 2020

The Surry County Board of Commissioners met at 6:00 p.m., April 20, 2020. The meeting was held in the Commissioners' Meeting Room, Historic Courthouse, Dobson, N.C., virtually via Zoom and conference call and broadcast via YouTube on the County website.

Board members present in-person for the meeting were Chairman Larry Johnson, Vice-Chairman Mark Marion and Commissioner Bill Goins. Commissioner Eddie Harris was present via conference call and Commissioner Van Tucker was present via Zoom.

Others present in-person for the meeting, at various times, were:
Chris Knopf, County Manager
Sandy Snow, Assistant County Manager
Don Mitchell, Facilities Management Director
Ed Woltz, County Attorney
Martha Brintle, MIS Director
Nathan Walls, Assistant to the County Manager

Chairman Johnson called the meeting to order. Commissioner Marion delivered the invocation and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Ed Woltz, County Attorney, presented a revised version of the Board's Rules and Procedures. In the revisions, he made it clear that conference call and virtual participants can vote and that meetings can be held in this manner. Mr. Woltz also said that participants who participate virtually can also be counted in a quorum. He also included language to cover a technical glitch or call drop during a vote; if this happens during a meeting, the Board member's vote will be recorded as an abstaining vote.

Upon motion of Commissioner Goins, seconded by Commissioner Marion, the Board voted unanimously to approve the revised Board Rules and Procedures draft received on April 20, 2020.

Chairman Johnson requested the Board review and approve the agenda. Upon motion of Commissioner Tucker, seconded by Commissioner Goins, the Board voted unanimously to approve the April 20, 2020 agenda.

Chairman Johnson requested the Board consider the minutes of the March 16, 2020 meeting as presented. Upon motion of Commissioner Goins, seconded by Chairman Johnson, the Board voted unanimously to approve the minutes as written.

Chairman Johnson requested the Board consider the consent agenda. Upon motion of Commissioner Marion, seconded by Commissioner Goins, the Board voted unanimously to approve the consent agenda as follows:

Requests from the County Manager:

- Approve the following proclamation:

PROCLAMATION
BY THE SURRY COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
CELEBRATING THE 250TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE
ESTABLISHMENT OF SURRY COUNTY

WHEREAS, in 1770, several citizens of Rowan County petitioned the colonial legislature to establish a new courthouse because of increased settlement in the northern portion of the county; and

WHEREAS, in April 1771, the colonial legislature approved the formation of Surry County from Rowan County; and

WHEREAS, Surry County was named after the English County of Surrey, which was the birthplace of royal governor William Tryon; and

WHEREAS, the original borders of Surry County included present day Stokes, Yadkin and Forsyth counties; and

WHEREAS, Stokes, Yadkin and Forsyth counties have adopted similar proclamations celebrating Surry County's 250th anniversary; and

WHEREAS, the year 2020-2021 is the Sestercentennial of the formation of Surry County; and

WHEREAS, Surry County will be celebrating the Sestercentennial from May 2020 until May 2021 with special events and activities.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Surry County Board of Commissioners acknowledges this significant milestone and celebrates the rich history of Surry County.

- **Approve the following resolution:**

RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF THE EXTENSION AND RENAMING OF THE
HANGING ROCK SCENIC BYWAY

WHEREAS, Surry County is home to Pilot Mountain State Park, North Carolina's most recognizable natural landmark; and

WHEREAS, adjoining counties Alleghany, Stokes and Wilkes are home to unique geographic formations Hanging Rock State Park and Stone Mountain State Park; and

WHEREAS, these four adjoining counties boast seven unique and scenic rivers, all located near these three state parks; and

WHEREAS, these 10 natural resources provide an abundance of recreational opportunities such as: Hiking, paddling, rock climbing, fishing, fauna, bird watching/nature observation, mountain biking, camping and breathtaking vistas; and,

WHEREAS, the existing Hanging Rock Scenic Byway, located along NC Highway 89, currently connects the Mount Airy area to Hanging Rock State Park and could be extended and renamed to provide connectivity to Pilot Mountain State Park and Stone Mountain State Park; and

WHEREAS, portions of U.S. Highway 21, NC Highway 89, NC Highway 268, Business 21 and Business 268 in Surry County would be nominated to be included in the extension of the Hanging Rock Scenic Byway; and

WHEREAS, dedicated connectivity between these three state parks via a Byway would acknowledge the region's recreational significance.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, the Surry County Board of Commissioners supports the extension and renaming of the Hanging Rock Scenic Byway to connect these three state parks and seven scenic rivers through the appropriate nomination processes to the North Carolina Department of Transportation.

- **Approve the following from the Tax Department:**

1. Total releases for the month ending 3/31/2020 in the amount of \$1,406.40.
2. Total refunds for the month ending 3/31/2020 in the amount of \$14,247.12.
3. Total NCVTS tag and tax refunds for the month ending 3/31/2020 in the amount of \$1,115.96.
4. Total real and personal property discoveries for the month ending 3/31/2020 in the amount of \$10,243.79.
5. Total motor vehicle discoveries for the month ending 3/31/2020 in the amount of \$0.
6. Total EMS, EMD and EMS-MC additions for the month ending 3/31/2020 in the amount of \$98,823.78.
7. Total EMS, EMD and EMS-MC refunds for the month ending 3/31/2020 in the amount of \$787.73.
8. Total EMS, EMD and EMS-MC releases for the month ending 3/31/2020 in the amount of \$842.37.
9. Total EMS, EMD and EMS-MC collections for the month ending 3/31/2020 in the amount of \$37,349.76.

- Approve a request for furniture in the Superior Court Judges' Offices, totaling \$7,491.12.

Requests from the Assistant County Manager:

- Approve an additional fee of \$10,000 for services provided by Bill Powell, LT Consulting.
- Approve the replacement of a radio tower at C-Com at an amount not to exceed \$10,750.

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

There being no comments, Chairman Johnson closed the open forum.

Ed Woltz, County Attorney, presented a Deed of Easement with Silkworm Properties to allow property owner Gary Thomas to put a gate up along County property on Hamilton Way.

Commissioner Tucker said Mr. Thomas has been a perfect gentleman in discussions with staff and the Board. He said he was prepared to make a motion in favor of approval.

Commissioner Harris said he would second the motion.

After Chairman Johnson asked for any other comments from the Board, none were made.

Upon motion of Commissioner Tucker, seconded by Commissioner Harris, the Board voted unanimously to approve the Deed of Easement with Silkworm Properties.

Chris Knopf, County Manager, recommended calendar and program changes for the Board's consideration, to include:

- Cancellation of May 4 regular Board meeting
- Cancellation of April 21 and 28 budget work sessions
- Cancellation of Surry County Parks & Recreation's Summer Day Camp
- Scheduling a May 14 budget work session

Upon motion of Commissioner Marion, seconded by Commissioner

Goins, the Board voted unanimously to approve the recommended calendar and program changes.

Don Mitchell, Facilities Management Director, presented a \$1,000 offer he had received for a property at 120 Crosswinds Lane in Mount Airy.

Chairman Johnson asked if the offer was from an adjoining landowner, to which Mr. Mitchell responded yes. Mr. Mitchell also said he had mailed letters to all adjoining property owners. Mr. Woltz confirmed a question from Commissioner Harris, stating that the successful bidder will pay advertising costs.

Upon motion of Chairman Johnson, seconded by Commissioner Goins, the Board voted unanimously to surplus Parcel #5031-11-76-4548 at 120 Crosswinds Lane in Mount Airy and accept the \$1,000 offer, subject to upset bid and subject to the successful bidder reimbursing advertising costs to the County.

Don Mitchell, Facilities Management Director, presented a \$3,300 offer he had received for a property at 118 Koala Lane in Mount Airy.

Upon motion of Chairman Johnson, seconded by Commissioner Goins, the Board voted unanimously to surplus Parcel #4082-00-13-5405 at 118 Koala Lane in Mount Airy and accept the \$3,300 offer, subject to upset bid and subject to the successful bidder reimbursing advertising costs to the County.

Chris Knopf, County Manager, presented a request from Mount Airy Indoor Soccer and Elkin Workforce Unlimited to waive lease payments. Mount Airy Indoor Soccer requested three months of rent be waived and Elkin Workforce Unlimited requested waiving or reducing April's rent.

Mr. Knopf said he consulted with Ed Woltz, County Attorney, who said the County can't waive the rent but can defer the rent payments by revising the lease agreements with amendments. Mr. Woltz recommended allowing the tenants to defer the payments until their lack of revenues is resolved and move their required monthly payments to the end of the lease.

Mr. Woltz also discussed a new lease agreement for Mount Airy Indoor Soccer, which would drop their monthly payments to \$300 since Mount Airy Indoor Soccer would take over maintenance of the facility.

Commissioner Tucker discussed how COVID-19 has impacted all County tenants and residents. He said he would rather study the impacts more and table this item until a later date. He said we should discuss deferments with other tenants, as well.

Commissioner Harris said the tenants who made this request may not agree to deferments and other tenants need to be spoken with first.

The other Board members agreed to solicit additional information from County tenants before deciding. Chairman Johnson asked staff to discuss the deferments with Mount Airy Indoor Soccer and Elkin Workforce Unlimited and speak with other tenants who the County has not heard from. Mr. Woltz recommended that staff compile a list of all tenants to speak with.

Chris Knopf, County Manager, presented a request from Mark Willis, Opioid Response Director, to apply for a grant from the U.S.

Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, Bureau of Justice Assistance, Comprehensive Opioid, Stimulant, Substance Abuse Site-based Program (COSSAP). The COSSAP's purpose is to provide financial and technical assistance to develop, implement or expand comprehensive efforts to identify, respond to, treat and support those impacted by illicit opioids, stimulants and other drugs of abuse.

The grant is 100 percent funded with no County match. The maximum total for the award is \$600,000 between October 1, 2020 to September 31, 2023.

Mr. Knopf said the grant would fund a data analyst position and transportation for patients to opioid treatment. The transportation funding was to originally be funded by the County's General Fund, but because of impacts from COVID-19, Mr. Willis is understanding of the funding coming from the COSSAP if approved. Mr. Knopf also said that if the grant is approved, the grant will be brought back to the County Board for acceptance.

Upon motion of Commissioner Goins, seconded by Commissioner Harris, the Board voted unanimously to approve the application for the COSSAP.

Chris Knopf, County Manager, presented a request from Mount Airy City Schools to reallocate special capital funding from savings realized from FY19-20 projects. Remaining funding comes from these projects: Flooring at Jones and Mount Airy Middle schools, HVAC at Jones school, flashing and drainage at Mount Airy Middle School and Tharrington Primary School restrooms and cafeteria. Mount Airy City Schools requested that the leftover funds be transferred to these projects: Mount Airy High School HVAC, Tharrington Primary School paving and security doors, a middle school/high school track and tennis court and Jones school security doors.

Mr. Knopf said that the State is projecting a 10 to 25 percent sales tax revenue loss through the end of calendar year 2020, with a possible leveling out to occur in January 2021. He said if that is true, the school funds that are being requested would have to be subsidized from the County's General Fund.

Chairman Johnson said that Mount Airy City Schools had requested \$350,000 recently at a Board meeting and at the Board Retreat.

Commissioner Tucker said we are on a different track now because of COVID-19 impacts. He said unless Mount Airy City Schools has an emergency, the County Board needs to take pause on this request.

Commissioner Harris applauded Mount Airy City Schools for their cost savings and bringing this to the County Board for review but said Mount Airy City Schools should request the funds again in the upcoming fiscal year budget. Commissioners Goins and Marion agreed.

The Board took no action.

Don Mitchell, Facilities Management Director, presented a request to approve a fence project on Hamby Road between the Government Center and the Service Center. The project would cover the removal of the existing fence and installation of a new fence, which would be 6-foot tall and 540-foot long.

Mr. Mitchell's department has available funds to pay for the project. He said he has already received one price quote and is

working to obtain another. The already received price quote is for \$9,450.

Upon motion of Commissioner Goins, seconded by Commissioner Marion, the Board voted unanimously to approve the fence project with a budget not to exceed \$9,450.

Nathan Walls, Assistant to the County Manager and Clerk to the Board, presented board and commission appointments and reappointments.

Upon motion of Commissioner Harris, seconded by Commissioner Goins, the Board voted unanimously to reappoint Mark Johnson and Travis Love and appoint Preston Cave to the Agricultural Advisory Board for the Voluntary Agriculture District.

Upon motion of Commissioner Marion, seconded by Commissioner Goins, the Board voted unanimously to reappoint Carmen Long, Tom Bachman, JoAnn Ahrens and Daniel White to the Surry Aging Planning Committee.

Upon motion of Commissioner Harris, seconded by Commissioner Tucker, the Board voted unanimously to reappoint Tony Davis to the Animal Control Committee for the standard two-year term.

Upon motion of Chairman Johnson, seconded by Commissioner Marion, the Board voted unanimously to reappoint Andrew Wright to the Piedmont Triad Regional Council Workforce Development Board.

Mr. Walls said that an appointment is needed for the Partners Behavioral Health Management Board by the end of June. Commissioner Goins said he would seek a new member.

Chris Knopf, County Manager, requested an amendment to the agenda and asked that the Board approve a National Day of Prayer Proclamation from Rev. D.M. Dalton so that Rev. Dalton would be able to read it on the radio on May 7, 2020 or at a public event, if Governor Cooper lifts mass gathering restrictions.

Upon motion of Commissioner Marion, seconded by Commissioner Goins, the Board voted unanimously to amend the agenda and approve the National Day of Prayer Proclamation.

Chris Knopf, County Manager, thanked Martha Brintle, MIS staff and the Sheriff's Office for their orchestration of and assistance with the night's virtual meeting.

Board members thanked staff for their hard work, sent out well wishes for everyone to stay safe and healthy and said they look forward to meeting again on May 14 for the budget work session.

Upon motion of Commissioner Goins, seconded by Commissioner Marion, the Board voted unanimously to adjourn. The meeting ended at 7:16 p.m.

Nathan Walls
Clerk to the Board