

POLK COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
Public Hearing & Regular Meeting
November 18, 2019 - 7:00 PM
R. Jay Foster Hall of Justice Womack Building Columbus, NC
Columbus, NC
MINUTES

PRESENT: Chairman Melton, Vice-Chairman Yoder, Commissioner Beiler, Commissioner Gasperson, and Commissioner Moore. Also in attendance were County Manager Pittman, Attorney Berg, Clerk to the Board High, media and citizens.

1. Public Hearing

- A. Chairman Melton called the public hearing to order. The purpose of the public hearing was to take public comments on proposed new road names, GRAYSON WAY, WILDERNESS COVE TR , JUMPING SPRINGS DR, PIN OAK TR, and LEGACY LN. The public hearing was properly advertised in the Tryon Daily Bulletin.
- B. Citizen Comments - There were none.
- C. Commissioner Comments - There were none.
- D. Commissioner Moore moved to adjourn the public hearing, seconded by Commissioner Beiler and the motion carried unanimously.

2. Call the Regular Meeting to Order

Chairman Melton.

3. Invocation - Chairman Melton.

4. Pledge of Allegiance - Commissioner Moore.

5. Approval of Agenda

- A. Commissioner Beiler moved to approve agenda as written, seconded by Commissioner Moore and the motion carried unanimously.

6. Consent Agenda

Vice-Chairman Yoder moved to approve the consent agenda, seconded by Commissioner Beiler and the motion carried unanimously.

- A. Approve the November 4, 2019 regular meeting minutes.

- B. Tax refund requests through October 31, 2019 in the amount of \$7,527.26.
- C. Vaya Health Quarterly Report ending October 31, 2019.

7. Citizen Comment(s)

Four citizens spoke about the need for kudzu and other invasive species eradication and control. One citizen spoke against the Hwy. 108 Scenic Byway application. Four citizens spoke in support of the Hwy. 108 Scenic Byway application, and thanked the people of the community that funded this project. Two citizens spoke about more notification and public involvement at Commissioner meetings.

8. Advanced Service Award & Advanced Law Enforcement Certificate Presentation to Sheriff Wright - Chairman Melton.

Chairman Melton stated this award and certificate program was started by the North Carolina Department of Justice (NCDOJ) in order to recognize the level of competence of law enforcement officers serving government agencies within the state, to foster increased interest in college education and professional law enforcement training programs, and to attract highly qualified individuals into a law enforcement career. This program is a method by which dedicated officers may receive statewide and nationwide recognition for education, professional training, and on-the-job experience. Polk County's Sheriff Timothy Wright has received the Advanced Law Enforcement Award & Certificate from the State, and the Board recognized his achievement and presented him with the certificates.

9. NC HWY 108 Right of Way Purchase Offer.

Jacob Day North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) reviewed the location of the right of way and discussed the details of the map. He said the offer of \$36,100 was for the land only. He said the NCDOT will work with the hospital to move their entrance sign, and they will pay them directly the cost to move or replace the sign, including any electrical work needed.

Commissioner Gasperson moved to approve the NCDOT offer to purchase a portion of the HWY 108 right of way owned by Polk County for the amount of \$36,100, seconded by Commissioner Moore and the motion carried unanimously.

10. Scenic By-way Application Approval.

Clay Griffith Acme Preservation Services presented the study list application for the Scenic Byway route, a copy of which is hereby incorporated by reference into these minutes, He explained the application is the first phase presenting a proposed route to the Scenic Byway division, of the North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT). He said if it meets their criteria, and is

accepted, there will be a second phase to be completed by August 2020.

Vice-Chairman Yoder moved to approve the Scenic Byway application submission to NCDOT, seconded by Commissioner Beiler and the motion carried unanimously.

11. Acceptance of the Drug Free Communities (DFC) Grant.

Kimberly McDonald Polk Substance Abuse Coalition (PSAC) Coordinator was unable to attend the meeting. Joshua Kennedy Health and Human Services Director presented the grant information. He explained this is a federal award through the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMSHA). The Polk Substance Abuse Coalition (PSAC) has been awarded a 5-year grant for \$125,000 for each year, with potential to renew for an additional 5 years. Polk County will be the fiscal agent, and PSAC will be the operator of the grant. The grant is a one for one match grant, but the match can be in-kind., and our grant application outlines our match as in-kind. Mr. Kennedy further stated this grant was awarded on the first submission try, which is unusual. He said this speaks to the work the community has put into addressing substance misuse through various work groups and committees. In addition, this grant culminates several years' worth of community work through various iterations of activities supported by PSAC, the health coalition, the opioid forums, local agencies and businesses, and most importantly the community at large.

He also provided special thanks to partners Kim McDonald and Donna Bruce for helping to write and coordinate the information for the grant.

Commissioner Gasperson moved to approve acceptance of the DFC grant, seconded by Commissioner Moore and the motion carried unanimously.

12. Create a new grant funded position "DFC Program and Youth Coordinator" under the Health and Human Services Agency (HHS) - Joshua Kennedy HHS Director.

Mr. Kennedy explained additional personnel is necessary to administer the grant, and he grant will fund a youth program coordinator as a full-time temporary employee of the county. The coordinators responsibilities will include guiding and empowering youth to develop and implement strategies to address substance misuse. They will also help maintain the PSAC committee and enhance and develop the community infrastructure to address emerging trends in substance misuse. Mr. Kennedy said the temporary position will be fully funded by the grant, and will continue as long as Polk County receives the grant funds.

Commissioner Moore moved to approve new temporary position to be funded by the awarded DFC grant, seconded by Commissioner Beiler and the motion carried unanimously.

13. Thermal Belt Habitat for Humanity Lease for Review - Manager Pittman.

Manager Pittman said Thermal Belt Habitat for Humanity approached him requesting storage space in a County owned building located on Locust Street in Columbus. He said the proposal is in the packet and a lease agreement will be presented to the Commissioners at their next regular meeting for consideration.

14. Animal Control Ordinance Amendments for Vote.

Attorney Berg explained the red lined version of the ordinance with all the changes was included in the packet. She said the updates included definitions, language of new laws or law changes, and other basic changes to enhance the overall welfare for animals. Commissioner Gasperson questioned if municipalities were included to follow the County's Animal Control Ordinance. Patti Lovelace Animal Control Officer said she believes they are. Attorney Berg said the municipalities should have passed a resolution adopting the County's ordinance, and the Clerk will investigate to see if Columbus, Tryon, and Saluda have done so. She said if they have not, they will need to if they would like the County to enforce our ordinance within their jurisdiction. The Commissioners questioned some of the other changes and Manager Pittman explained that the County always had the statutory authority, but now it is spelled out in the ordinance.

Commissioner Gasperson moved to approve the amended Animal Control Ordinance, seconded by Vice-Chairman Yoder and the motion carried unanimously.

15. Proposed New Road Names - GRAYSON WAY (Private road – off SR1311) Township: Cooper Gap (Sunny View) WILDERNESS COVE TR – (Private road - off SR1151) Township: Saluda (Green River Cove) JUMPING SPRINGS DR – (Private road – off SR1540) Township: Green Creek PIN OAK TR – (Private road – off SR1137) Township: Columbus LEGACY LN – (Private road – off SR1122 Township: Saluda (Howard Gap)

Commissioner Moore moved to approve the new road names as presented, seconded by Commissioner Beiler and the motion carried unanimously.

16. School Capital Sales Tax Set-a-side Funding.

Sandra Hughes Finance Director presented the sales tax information. She explained, in the past, there were debt service payments due for the School capital projects that the County paid directly to the bank, but now that the debts are paid off, the funds will be sent directly to the Schools to use for needed capital projects. Mrs. Hughes said the projected sales tax revenue for the schools is \$512,000 and the County will send the money to the School system as it is requested up to the projected amount. She explained if there is any difference in the projection and actual it will be trued up in next years budget. She said included in the packet is the first request in the amount of \$277,946 for various capital projects for School property.

Commissioner Gasperson moved to transfer \$277,946, a portion of the budget for sales tax school capital set-aside to the School Department for immediate capital needs, seconded by Vice-Chairman Yoder and the motion carried unanimously.

17. Volunteer Board Application(s)

- A. Applications for Review - Carolyn Ashburn Appearance Commission; Rickie McFalls, Ronnie Smith, James Stott Columbus Fire Tax District; John Blanton, Bruce Collins, Paul Stacy Green Creek Fire Tax District.

18. Commissioner Comment(s)

Chairman Melton stated on December 2, 2019 Vice-Chairman Yoder, Commissioner Gasperson, and Commissioner Moore will all file to run again. He said people should remember that the candidates are married men with children, and there is no need for mean hateful speech towards any politician. He said he will not allow any citizen to criticize a Commissioner.

Commissioner Gasperson thanked everyone for coming and appreciated the citizen comments. He said he received the census survey, and encourages everyone to complete it. He said with more and more things needing to be done online, and more people working remotely these things can be very difficult for rural communities like Polk County that have unreliable or no internet service. He said this issue is continuing to grow and impact our citizens and economic development, and he thinks the Commissioners may want to explore the possibility of having a broadband committee to focus on the digital divide in the County.

Vice-Chairman Yoder said it was a good meeting, honoring our law enforcement, discussing kudzu eradication, making Polk County a great place for people to come in and visit with a scenic byway, supporting the education system and the youth of our County, and taking care of animals.

Commissioner Beiler said he was thankful for what the Chairman said, and commended the Sheriff for his achievements. He thanked everyone for coming to the meeting, and told Ms. Justice, reporter for the Tryon Daily Bulletin, that he appreciates what she does.

Commissioner Moore said it was a great meeting. He appreciates the public participation with everyone working together for the betterment of Polk County.

19. Closed Session - Attorney Client Privilege.

- A. Commissioner Moore moved to go into closed session for the purpose of attorney client privilege, seconded by Vice-Chairman Yoder and the motion carried unanimously.
- B. Commissioner Gasperson moved to return to open session, seconded by Commissioner Beiler and the motion carried unanimously.

20. Adjournment

Commissioner Moore moved to adjourn the meeting, seconded by
Commissioner Beiler and the motion carried unanimously.

Attest:

POLK COUNTY BOARD OF
COMMISSIONERS

Ange High
Clerk to the Board

Tommy W. Melton
Chairman