

MINUTES

LENOIR COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

November 03, 2014

The Lenoir County Board of Commissioners met in open session at 9:00 a.m. on Monday, November 03, 2014, in the Board of Commissioners' Main Meeting Room in the Lenoir County Courthouse at 130 S. Queen St., Kinston, NC.

Members present: Chairman Craig Hill, Vice-Chairman Jackie Brown and Commissioners, Roland Best, Mac Daughety, Eric Rouse, and Linda Sutton.

Members Absent: Reuben Davis

Also present were: Michael W. Jarman, County Manager, Tommy Hollowell, Assistant County Manager, Vickie F. King, Clerk to the Board, Bob Griffin, County Attorney, members of the general public and news media.

Chairman Hill called the meeting to order at approximately 9:00 a.m. Ms. Brown offered the Invocation and Mr. Best led the audience in the Pledge of Allegiance.

A motion was made by Ms. Brown and a second by Mr. Best to excuse Commissioner Reuben Davis from the meeting.

PUBLIC INFORMATION:

Tammy Kelly, Cooperative Extension Director, addressed the Board. A lot of things have been going on at Cooperative Extension. I sent Mr. Jarman a copy of a Resolution that Surry County adopted regarding revisions Cooperative Extension offices across the State are sending to the State Cooperative Extension Headquarters. I tailored the Resolution to what I felt Lenoir County meant to us, since every county is different and each has different support levels. A little over a year ago, we started meeting with a vision committee. The committee wanted to listen to the public to see what they had to say about Cooperative Extension, and how they should move forward. The listening sessions were attended by a committee comprised of Cooperative Extension folks and some Advisory Council members. I felt a lot of this was funds driven. Ms. Kelly shared information from a map showing on one side how the state currently looks (disparate staffing allocation). However, the State wants it to look like the map on the right (more equitable service access). Their mission is to make every county office look the same. Every county would have to share 50% of the cost of each position, which Lenoir County has been doing for a long time. The plan is for every county to have 1 Ag. agent, 1 secretarial support staff person, 1 4H agent, and 1/2 a Family Consumer Science agent, that will work two counties. I have had a couple of secretaries retire, so because of that, I do not have to let anyone go. As of January 2, 2015, Administrative Assistants possibly will be rified. When I first started working in Lenoir County, I had 22 people on staff, which was wonderful, although a lot of them were funded by grants. I have filled our Ag. position, which is only a 1/2 position, because I share them with Jones County.

The one position that is not funded is administration, which is my current position. The State is calling for administration to be picked up by a program area. I am not so sure how that is going to work. In response to this plan, Surry County sent a Resolution to the State of North Carolina and Mr. Jarman asked me to prepare one that would fit Lenoir County. Essentially we are losing two secretary positions and one Administrative position. I fall under administration. I do a lot of community resource development, which is grant writing and a lot of local foods programs. We will lose the SHIIP program, which has saved seniors approximately \$500,000 a year in medical expenses. Although we get some grant money for the program, it is not enough to pay a person to do the job. My plan down the road is to contract with someone with grant money to handle that portion of the program; however, it will not be State supported.

Mr. Jarman stated, before Ms. Kelly reads the Resolution, I would like to make a couple of comments, because I feel really strong about the situation. I disagree with the "one size fits all approach," because some counties are more rural than others. When you are sharing with Jones County, that's fine, but when you are sharing 50/50 and you look at our crop production, we have much more than Jones County. With the SHIIP program, a great program for our seniors, it will be going away. We are not going to supplant the State budget. Ms. Kelly has had to deal with me and she will probably tell you it's been frustrating. They started this a while back and I have looked at it over and over and said to Ms. Kelly, she needs to find a way to do it, because we are not going to supplant the State budget. Ms. Kelly has been great at either finding grant money or other ways to get the job done. Dealing with all of those types of things, I felt having a Resolution in place would be appropriate. Although they are doing this for the dollars, it could be more equitable, so your communities that are hugely dependent on agriculture could be treated a little differently. I asked Ms. Kelly to come before the Board and share this information, so we can support our farms and community.

Ms. Sutton stated, she serves on the State Extension Advisory Council and this is one of those situations that you have to be careful what you ask for. There are not a lot of counties that are paying 50%, so Lenoir County was blessed to be in that position. We as a group have supported the vision, but the one thing that has bothered everyone the most has been the Administrative part. Ms. Kelly has done a phenomenal job making sure we get grants and other funding to take the place of monies that are cut. The State is not considering the amount of time each volunteer sacrifices to help the elderly in our County with programs like SHIIP.

Mr. Jarman stated, it takes Ms. Kelly's staff to organize such events.

Ms. Kelly read the Resolution Supporting Current Staffing Levels at the North Carolina Cooperative Extension Office in Lenoir County.

Upon a motion made by Ms. Brown and a second by Mr. Daughety, the Resolution Supporting Current Staffing Levels at the North Carolina Cooperative Extension Office in Lenoir County was unanimously approved.

Mr. Hill stated, it is important that every organization looks at their staffing, their vision, and their plan. When a plan comes before us that is not fair or balanced, it puts us in an unusual situation having to challenge the vision coming from a State organization.

Ms. Kelly stated, what is the most difficult for me to realize is that all counties are never going to be the same, due to support money contributed by the counties and because of the make-up of the general population of each.

Mr. Pope, Economic Development Director, addressed the Board. I want to bring you up to date and share some information regarding the Economic Development report card. I try to do this each year so the Board can see where the County is regarding industries and incentives. Last year Lenoir County reported 4,767 manufacturing jobs, and this year 5,938. These companies have generated over \$8 million in County revenues and we paid out about \$2.9 million in incentives, which show it's well worth the incentives paid.

Ms. Sutton stated, this shows we are getting our money's worth and sometimes people can't understand long range plans.

Mr. Pope stated, during FY 2013-2014 Economic Development, made seven announcements; Pactiv, Strata Solar, Associated Materials Inc., Horseware, Smithfield, Neuse Sports Shop, and Dupont, which totaled 431 announced jobs and \$98.7 million invested in Lenoir County. Since I took the helm of Economic Development in 2005, there have been 34 announced projects, 4800 jobs created, and 1 billion 389 million dollars in investments. Lately we have been working on other projects, such as Section C of the Harvey Parkway. The Economic Development website has been cleaned up. We are now on Face Book, Twitter, and LinkedIn. We recently held the C-100 Annual celebration at the Farmer' Market. Manufacturer's Day, held in October, is expected to grow next year. Unemployment is at 7.8%, the lowest it's been since 2008. We continue to hear folks talk about no opportunities and nothing to do in Lenoir County. We are working with the Governor's Office and a program with Lenoir Community College called NC Works. We have 35 manufacturers in Lenoir County, who total over 6,500 employees just in manufacturing. We are going out through this program, talking to folks and so far everyone has vacancies posted that they are looking to fill. Our community needs to know there are opportunities out there; however, the question is, what do the people want to do and how far are they willing to go? The following are a few of the comments I am hearing from the manufacturers, reasons why people do not get hired or stay on the job: The #1 problem is no experience in maintenance followed by; not being able to pass drug tests; not interested in promotions due to conflicts with their social services benefits; peer pressure; inability to use a ruler; people calling in on the first day of hunting season; social economic status; and individuals not telling the truth regarding criminal history. These are just a few of the manufacturers' concerns and many of the manufacturers are looking to hire folks. We need to look at what we are doing in our education system. Stem has come a long way and we are trying to put that in place in more schools, because the bar has to be raised.

Mr. Rouse asked Mr. Pope what he meant by "impacting their social services benefits"? Mr. Pope stated they can only work so many hours before they start losing their benefits. Mr. Rouse stated, basically they are making more money on social programs than they can at a job. Mr. Pope stated they can actually make more with the industry, but they are afraid to work those hours, because it's going to mess up their social services benefits.

Mr. Pope stated, the employers want them to work more.

Mr. Rouse stated, the actual benefits the government is paying them holds them back instead of increasing their hours of work.

Mr. Pope stated, the benefits are a guaranteed thing from the Government and they are afraid that working more hours and getting a raise in pay is going to jeopardize those benefits.

Ms. Brown stated, if they work more than what they are classified to do, they would have to pay that money back to the government.

Ms. Sutton asked does that include retirees?

Mr. Pope stated, just the employees on the plant floor.

Mr. Pope stated, we are trying to move folks up to take higher paying jobs and they won't do it.

Mr. Rouse stated, it might be time to cut back on social programs to push them up the ladder.

Mr. Hill stated, there are several things happening, one is fear of the unknown. Another is the people who are a second generation of dependency on programs. Another is fear of making that change. We have to make sure the manufacturers are educating their folks as well. The manufacturers have a responsibility as well to say to the employees, we need you here and if you can't be here there are consequences, so it's a two edged sword. I think an able body needs to work. They need to be trained, educated, and understand that the responsibility is both public and private.

Mr. Jarman stated, we need to know the whole picture, look at the specifics and study every situation. We should invite Susan Moore from DSS to address the Board on this subject. DSS has changed a lot of their programs. They may be on one program for two years and think it's great, and then they find out they are going to be taken off it. Let's allow Ms. Moore to come and respond with the facts. At that point, we need to be expressing our concerns to higher levels.

Mr. Rouse asked Mr. Jarman if it is true that you agree we should decrease social programs?

Mr. Jarman stated, I have no problem with saying we need to fix it, but I think DSS has done something with some of the programs already. They have sunsets and they can only do it for 24 months ect. I would like to know the facts before we take it and run with it. We need to know the truth and study both sides of the situation.

Ms. Sutton stated, an example of some of the changes DSS has made is with the Day Care Program. In the past, the parent did not have to pay anything, but now before they receive services for day care, they have to pay a portion up front.

Mr. Pope stated, the things that have really hit home are that some companies are not requiring college educations, they are only asking for high school diplomas or a GED.

With one company, when you get through production in the first entry level, they put you in a \$20-\$26 per hour job with benefits. There are jobs, but the people must want to work.

Mr. Jarman stated, I will get Ms. Moore to address this, and if it is indeed this way, we will focus our efforts on trying to move up the chain and change it. If it is not that way, we need to ask DSS to make sure people realize when they are qualifying for services, that the services will end at some point. So if they get a chance to change it on their own, they would need to do so.

Mr. Pope stated, the public/private partnership with Commerce is now underway. It started in October. We are working with a few of the partnerships on some projects. Also, last week the Secretary of Transportation, Anthony Fox, was in our community visiting Spirit, the GTP, and the Control tower, talking about transportation and the needs in our community.

Mr. Hill stated, it was a good Regional meeting. The Secretary was there, commissioners from other counties, and a lot of different people from across the area with about 8 or 9 different counties represented. They spoke about rail systems, infrastructure, and the need for roads.

Mr. Pope stated, Lenoir County is getting a lot of spot lights shined on it because of the good things that have happened here. We have done a lot of good things and the future looks bright. Look at Dupont's announcement last week. We would not be here without incentives, and like it or not, incentives work.

Ms. Sutton stated, I would love to see a Resolution done for Harold Thomas, because he has been very instrumental in getting Dupont to stay in the community, and with him retiring in December, it would let Dupont know how much we appreciate the hard work he has done in the community.

Mr. Jarman stated, Mr. Thomas has been pivotal in this community. We are also very appreciative of what Mr. Pope has done, because when you go to the Association of County Commissioners meetings and talk to those from others communities, you are not going to see these kinds of numbers in the other communities.

CONSENT AGENDA:

1. Budget Ordinance Amendment: General Fund: Emergency Management: \$500.00. Increase.
2. Budget Ordinance Amendment: General Fund: Health: (Adult Health-Maternal Health): \$679.00. Decrease.
3. Budget Ordinance Amendment: General Fund: Health:(Adult Health-STD/HIV): \$1,000.00. Increase.
4. Resolution Approving the Releases and Refunds to the Individuals Listed Herein.

Upon a motion by Ms. Brown and a second by Ms. Sutton, the consent agenda was unanimously approved.

PUBLIC HEARING/RESOLUTIONS:

Item No. 5A was a Public Hearing regarding the Community Transportation Program Grant. Upon a motion by Ms. Brown and a second by Ms. Sutton, the Board opened the Public Hearing at 9:37 a.m. Chris Harper, Transit Director, stated, the Public Hearing is regarding the Community Transportation Program. The Community Transportation Program has two components, one Administrative and the other Capital. The purpose of the Community Transportation Program (CTP) Grant is to enhance transportation in counties and to meet community transportation needs. The CTP FY 2015-2016 grant application includes approximately \$275,423 for administrative funding and \$196,870 for capital funding. Grant funding will cover 85% of salaries and fringes for four administrative employees and other administrative expenditures. This requires a 15% local match. Local funding will be secured through transit revenues. One of the biggest expenses in the program is for replacement vehicles. Other than replacing vehicles, we requested a security system for the Transit office, because the prior system has not worked for the past five years. With tickets, passengers coming in, and sometimes cash on hand, we felt the need for security in the building. I am hoping to also get the parking lot repaved with the grant funding. I am asking the Board for their support and approval of this grant request. Mr. Hill asked if there were any public comments. There were none. Upon a motion by Ms. Brown and a second by Mr. Daughety, the Public Hearing Closed at 9:46 a.m.

Item No. 5B was a Resolution Supporting the Community Transportation Program. Upon a motion made by Ms. Sutton and a second by Ms. Brown, Item No. 5B was unanimously approved.

Item No. 5C was a Resolution authorizing persons to execute the required documents for the Community Transportation Grant. Upon a motion made by Ms. Sutton and a second by Ms. Brown, Item No. 5C was unanimously approved.

BUDGET ORDINANCE AMENDMENTS/RESOLUTIONS:

Item No. 6 was a Resolution authorizing the replacement of damaged windows by Oliver Glass Company in the amount of \$5,511.00. Mike Wiggins, Maintenance Director, stated the original portion of the Courthouse is connected to the Annex by two glass curtain walls which have glass units that have become damaged or fogged-up. Maintenance has identified 7 glass units in the curtain walls, along with 9 units in the Multi-Purpose Building and the DSS Building that are in need of replacement. The glass has become unattractive and broken glass is a serious safety issue.

We have pressure washed the DSS building and have done some painting at the ABC store. Upon a motion by Mr. Best and a second by Ms. Sutton, Item No. 6 was unanimously approved.

Item No. 7 was a Budget Ordinance Amendment: General Fund: Health: Adult Health-Family Planning: \$4,940.00. Decrease. Joey Huff, Health Director, stated, this is Revision #3 to the Agreement Addendum, which reduces by approximately 4%, the funding for this activity due to a reduction in the Maternal and Child Health Block Grant. Upon a motion made by Mr. Rouse and a second by Ms. Brown, Item No. 7 was unanimously approved.

Item No. 8 was a Budget Ordinance Amendment: General Fund: Health: Adult Health-Health Promotions: \$10,576.00. Increase. Joey Huff, Health Director, stated, this budget amendment addendum Revision #1 increases funding by \$13,757, which shall be used to accomplish one of the following: Increase the number of interventions implemented; expand the reach of existing interventions by implementing them in at least one additional setting/locations; or provide training opportunities for staff and community partners to support successful implementation of interventions. Upon a motion made by Ms. Sutton and a second by Mr. Best, Item No. 8 was unanimously approved.

Mr. Huff stated, the Health Department's Fall Festival was a great success with over 100 individuals in attendance. Many from the community had the opportunity to mingle, eat, and have fun with neighbors. It was a good opportunity to share the different programs they offer at the Health Department.

Item No. 9 was a Resolution to approve the retrofitting of one 2003 Ford Ambulance by Dailco, for use when treating and transporting patients requiring specialized equipment that will require decontamination efforts, in the amount of \$4,300.00. Mr. Dail stated, sometimes the EMS Division is subject to transport patients that have highly contagious diseases and/or have been contaminated with a hazardous material. At the present time the EMS Division does not have a vehicle that is easily decontaminated.

All current vehicles would require an extended "down" time for decontamination, with the potential of a considerable amount of wasted equipment as a result of the exposure to the identified contaminate. By retrofitting, it would make clean up easier by just using a clorox/water solution. Upon a motion made by Ms. Sutton and a second by Ms. Brown, Item No. 9 was unanimously approved.

Item No. 10 was a Resolution approving the purchase of a 2014 Ford F250 4x4 Truck from Capital Ford of Wilmington in the amount of \$30,101.00. Roger Dail, EMS Director, stated, the Lenoir County Emergency Services Department Fire Division assigns the Fire Marshal a vehicle for use in responding to assist Fire Department personnel in the investigation of suspicious fires, illegal fire activity, and assist the emergency management division in the investigation of natural and man-made disasters. Upon a motion made by Ms. Sutton and a second by Ms. Brown, Item No. 10 was unanimously approved.

Mr. Rouse asked Mr. Dail was this money included within his original budget? Mr. Dail stated, yes. Mr. Jarman explained it was in a separate fund for vehicle replacement, and was included in that budget. Mr. Jarman stated, Mr. Dail was not getting rid of the old vehicle. It would be passed on to another department. Mr. Dail stated, the old vehicle has over 200,000 miles on it.

Item No. 11 was a Resolution approving appointments of citizens to boards, commissions, etc. Since this was the first appearance of the only listed appointee, no action was taken at this time.

CURRENT VACANCIES: Lenoir County Health Board – (1) Optometrist

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Mr. Hill asked if anyone from the public wished to address the Board?

Mr. John Nix, co-owner of Matrix East Surveyors, thanked the Board for allowing him to speak. Mr. Nix stated, his company is coming up on their 14th anniversary. I currently have 8 employees, and one of the things that concerns me is the times of the commissioners' meetings. Every time I have to come to a commissioners' meeting, I have to make special concessions, and I am taking a financial hit to attend. I think a lot of people would like to be involved, but they can't afford to lose time from work. I heard Mr. Pope say Lenoir County has 35 manufacturers. Wouldn't it be nice for some of those representatives to be able to attend the meetings. Meeting at 10:00am and 4:00pm are just not good times for the meetings. I will continue to come to the meetings and propose that the time be changed to make it more accessible for citizens of Lenoir County, like himself. I came to the Board a few weeks ago with a proposal to move the meetings to Tuesday evenings at 6pm, 6:30pm, 5:30pm or whatever time the Board set to make it more available and accessible for citizens. Also a Town Hall style meeting maybe quarterly would be helpful. I am representing a lot of people who are afraid to say things. It is important to a lot of citizens, as well as myself, that the meeting times be changed. As a reminder, I am here as a citizen and feel it is my duty to be a part of my local government.

Mr. Hill stated, I appreciate your diligence. The Board is looking into your request. We are exploring those options and looking at the information on the times of meetings all around us; however, the Board normally adopts the calendar for our meetings in January and that would be a very good time, if the Board was going to make any changes to address this issue. If they decide to make a change, that will give everybody an opportunity to make adjustments in their schedules. We are looking into it. Mr. Jarman has already shared information with me regarding meeting times, so we will continue to move forward.

Ms. Sutton stated, the meeting being put on TV was one of the steps taken so the public could get exposure. So this Board has tried to do something to involve citizens.

Mr. Nix replied to Ms. Sutton, I think that's great that we have the TV, but there is nothing like getting involved, one on one, to make somebody feel like they are a part of their county and government.

Mr. Hill stated, again it's on the forefront of our thoughts, and when it's time for us to adopt our calendar, we will look into it.

Item No. 12 was items from the County Manager. Mike Jarman, County Manager, asked the Board to take a look on the back of the County Manager's Information Page. At the last meeting the Board requested the clerk to compile a summary of actions taken. It basically looks like the main agenda page, but you can see the results on the right. If it is satisfactory, is the document what the Board is seeking, or if you want additional information added?

Mr. Hill stated, the sheet helps and again this is another action taken to help the public understand more easily what action the Board has taken. Most of the time the public is not going to take the time to look through all the meeting minutes, and having a snapshot of what has been done is something that will help.

Ms. Sutton stated, what's important is what action the Board took. Sometimes people pick up only a portion of what was discussed.

Ms. Brown stated, she sits on the Public Education Steering Committee for the NCACC and they met on October 7, 2014. What the Board has before them are the goals the Steering Committee is going to present at the conference.

Ms. Brown stated, President Ronnie Beal, who is the new president of NCACC, has appointed me to serve on the task force for Mental Health. If anyone has any comments or suggestions for me, please give them to me before they meet on December 2nd.

Mr. Hill stated, Tuesday is an important day and we have people sitting here that will be a part of the election. Election Day is an important time for our citizens and I hope everyone will exercise their right to vote.

Mr. Hill made a motion to move into closed session.

CLOSED SESSION

Upon a motion by Ms. Brown and a second by Ms. Sutton a closed session was entered into at approximately 9:55 a. m. with the following cited: Number Four (4):

To discuss matters relating to the location or expansion of industries or other businesses in the area served by Lenoir County.

Upon a motion by Ms. Brown and a second by Mr. Best and unanimous approval, the Board moved out of closed session at approximately 10:10 a.m. The meeting re-convened in open session at approximately 10:13 a.m.

MINUTES – CLOSED SESSION
LENOIR COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

NOVEMBER 3, 2014

Upon a motion by Ms. Brown and a second by Ms. Sutton a closed session was entered into at approximately 9:55 a. m. with the following cited: Number Four (4):

To discuss matters relating to the location or expansion of industries or other businesses in the area served by Lenoir County.

Members present: Chairman Craig Hill, Vice-Chairman Jackie Brown and Commissioners, Roland Best, Mac Daughety, Eric Rouse, and Linda Sutton.

Members Absent: Reuben Davis

Also present were: Michael W. Jarman, County Manager, Tommy Hollowell, Assistant County Manager, Vickie F. King, Clerk to the Board, Bob Griffin, County Attorney.

Mr. Pope stated, he was getting close to an announcement for Project Macbeth. They will create 60 jobs with an investment of \$24 million. Our incentives are \$750,000 over a 5 or 10 year period, and I should know by today or tomorrow if the project is ready to be announced. The state was extremely slow with their response regarding our incentives. We had a lot of conversations and detailed discussions pertaining to Tier 1 communities.

Mr. Jarman stated, Mr. Pope did a good job in presenting his case in Raleigh.

Mr. Rouse stated, if the Board did not know the specifics or individuals involved with projects, how are we to know which representatives to approach for help?

Mr. Jarman stated, the focus should be placed on the procedures, and not on the individuals.

Mr. Daughety stated, the dynamics in North Carolina are changing and the Legislators are aware of that. The population in Eastern North Carolina is changing, and the Metropolitan areas like Wake County have an agenda. Many have seen Eastern North Carolina being left alone. From my point of view it's a political issue because the metropolitan areas will eventually dominate.

Mr. Pope stated, he has received a letter of intent for Project Lucille to purchase the old Kinta building near DuPont. The County would not be responsible for the fix up of the building. Their third party appraiser said the building must appraise at the discussed figure prior to the purchase. Once approved by the Board the funds from the sale of the building will go back for Economic Development.

Upon a motion by Ms. Brown and a second by Mr. Best and unanimous approval, the Board moved out of closed session at approximately 10:10 a.m.

Back in open session at 10:13 a.m.

Mr. Hill stated, we are back in open session. Mr. Hill stated, the Board went into closed session to discuss a potential industry in Lenoir County. No action was taken. Mr. Hill asked if there were any additional comments? There were none.

Upon a motion made by Mr. Daughety and a second by Mr. Best, the meeting was adjourned.

Meeting Adjourned at 10:20 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Vickie F. King
Clerk to the Board

Reviewed By



Michael W. Jarman
County Manager