

**MINUTES OF A
REGULAR MEETING
OF THE JACKSON COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
HELD ON
JUNE 15, 2021**

The Jackson County Board of Commissioners met in a Regular Session on June 15, 2021, 1:00 p.m., Justice and Administration Building, Room A201, 401 Grindstaff Cove Road, Sylva, North Carolina.

Present: Brian McMahan, Chairman
Boyce Deitz, Vice Chair
Mark Jones, Commissioner
Tom Stribling, Commissioner
Gayle Woody, Commissioner

Don Adams, County Manager
Heather C. Baker, County Attorney
Angela M. Winchester, Clerk to Board

Chairman McMahan called the meeting to order. He recognized former Representative Joe Sam Queen in attendance. It was always great to see Representative Queen as he was a great friend to the county. He requested that he come forward to give a point of distinction.

Representative Queen requested that Joe Hamilton come forward. They all knew that Mr. Hamilton was not only a fine family man, but he was one of the county's most distinguished public servants. Mr. Hamilton served his country honorably in the Marine Corps and spent years helping folks get their driver's license as an Examiner. For a generation, he had been serving with equity and fairness as Jackson County's Register of Deeds, where his distinctive style was to treat all citizens with genuine dignity and respect.

On behalf of Roy Cooper, Honorable Governor of North Carolina, it was his distinct pleasure to present to Mr. Hamilton, North Carolina's highest civilian honor, the Order of the Long Leaf Pine with the rank of Ambassador Extraordinaire.

Mr. Hamilton stated his appreciation as this was a big honor for him. He enjoyed his work and loved what he did. He loved meeting and talking with people and he had an excellent staff that worked with him.

(1) **AGENDA**: Commissioner Woody moved to approve the agenda. Commissioner Deitz seconded the Motion. Motion carried.

(2) **MINUTES**: Commissioner Woody moved to approve the minutes of a Special Budget Work Session of May 24, 2021; a Special Budget Work Session of May 25, 2021; a Special Budget Work Session of June 1, 2021; a Public Hearing (FY 2021-22 Budget) of June 1, 2021; and a Regular Meeting of June 01, 2021, as presented. Commissioner Jones seconded the Motion. Motion carried.

(3) **CHAIRMAN'S REPORT**: None.

(4) **COMMISSIONER REPORTS**:

(a) Commissioner Stribling reported that he received a lot of good feedback on the 2A Resolution from a lot of people.

(b) Commissioner Woody congratulated Mike Fitzgerald, who retired from Mayor of Dillsboro. She and Commissioner Deitz attended a nice reception for him. Mayor Fitzgerald had served the community well and they wished him the best in his future.

(5) COUNTY MANAGER REPORT: Mr. Adams reported:

(a) April and May Zoning and Building Permits: He provided a report that listed the zoning district (if applicable), the owner/business name, the work permitted and the location of the project where the permit was issued. The Planning Department issued four commercial zoning permits and one renovation/addition zoning permit in April. Code Enforcement issued five commercial permits and two renovation/addition permit in April. The Planning Department issued five commercial zoning permits and two renovation/addition zoning permits in May. Code Enforcement issued one commercial permit and five renovation/addition permits in May.

(b) Construction Projects:

- Animal Rescue Center/Green Energy Park: The project was 15% complete with a substantial completion projected to be February 2022. Underground water/sewer and electrical conduit lines were installed, the main floor had been poured and smaller retaining walls had been installed. The contractor would be working on the large retaining wall and the walking trails in the next couple of months. Storm sewer could start when the retaining walls were complete.
- Blue Ridge School Water and Sewer Project: The project was almost complete with a projected substantial completion date of June 25th. The CDBG contract ended on July 9th.
- Fairview Concession Stand Project: The replacement project had started and final design was being completed. The project should be ready to send out to bid by the end of July. It was anticipated that construction would begin in September.
- The Request for Qualifications for Architectural Services related to the Justice Administration Center would be released in July.

(6) INFORMAL COMMENTS BY THE PUBLIC: None.

(7) CONSENT AGENDA:

(a) Darlene Fox, Finance Director, presented the Finance Report for May, 2021 and five Budget Ordinance Amendments for fiscal year ending June 30, 2021, for approval.

(b) Brandi Henson, Tax Collector, presented the Tax Collector and Refund Reports for May, 2021, for approval.

Motion: Commissioner Jones moved to approve the Consent Agenda. Commissioner Woody seconded the Motion. Motion carried by unanimous vote.

(8) AGRICULTURAL ADVISORY BOARD ORDINANCE AMENDMENT: Ms. Baker stated this was an item discussed at the work session. This was a request from the Agricultural Advisory Board to amend the ordinance to remove the term limits. This ordinance did not require a public hearing, but the Board chose to move forward to set a public hearing.

Motion: Commissioner Deitz moved to set a public hearing on July 20th at 12:55 p.m. Commissioner Stribling seconded the Motion. Motion carried by unanimous vote.

(9) NCACC VOTING DELEGATE DESIGNATION: Mr. Adams stated that the NCACC Annual Conference was scheduled on August 14th in New Hanover County. The Board would need to select a representative to the conference.

Motion: Chairman McMahan moved to appoint Commissioner Woody to serve as Jackson County's voting delegate at the Annual Conference. Commissioner Stribling seconded the motion. Motion carried by unanimous vote.

(10) FY2021-22 BUDGET ORDINANCE: Mr. Adams presented the proposed Fiscal Year 2021-22 Annual Budget for the county and stated it was in the amount of \$71,666,678. The proposal constituted an approximate decrease of 2.20% (\$1,569,352) under the FY20-21 amended budget. The budget was balanced and prepared in accordance with the Local Government Budget and Fiscal Control Act, presenting appropriations by categories of expense and revenues by source. All proposals within the general fund were based upon a budget with a tax rate of \$0.36 per \$100 of value. The revenue neutral rate was \$0.3447 per \$100.

A public hearing was held on June 1st with public comment.

Chairman McMahan thanked Mr. Adams, Ms. Fox and all of the staff that worked on the budget. He also thanked the Board as they had many meetings and discussed the budget in depth. There were always changes, but he did appreciate all the hard work to get to where they were that day.

Motion: *Chairman McMahan moved to adopt the FY2021-22 Budget Ordinance, along with all fee schedules, as presented. Commissioner Woody seconded the Motion. Motion carried by unanimous vote.*

(11) NORTH CAROLINA PUBLIC EMPLOYEE DEFERRED COMPENSATION PLAN “NC DEFERRED COMP” RESOLUTION R21-19: Ms. Fox presented Resolution R21-19 for consideration. The resolution created a 457 deferred compensation plan for the county. The current plan was administered through Nationwide. The state plan allowed transfers from the 457 to the retirement system if the employees desired to do so, which was the main advantage to having this plan.

Motion: *Commissioner Jones moved to approve Resolution R21-19, as presented. Commissioner Stribling seconded the Motion. Motion carried by unanimous vote.*

(12) RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF NCACC PRESIDENTIAL INITIATIVE TO PROMOTE FOOD SYSTEM RESILIENCY R21-20: Commissioner Woody stated that every two years the NCACC adopted an initiative. The former two years the initiative was about at risk youth. HIGHTS, a program in the county, was cited as one of the exemplary programs in the state.

Dr. Kelli Brown, Chancellor of WCU, would convene the nonprofits in the fall so they could make sure they were meeting the needs of those in the community and not duplicating services. They were already addressing this, but she felt the resolution formalized the process.

Motion: *Commissioner Woody moved to adopt Resolution R21-20, as presented. Commissioner Deitz seconded the Motion. Motion carried by unanimous vote.*

(13) PRESS CONFERENCE: None.

(14) CLOSED SESSION:

Motion: *Commissioner Stribling moved that the Board go into closed session pursuant to G.S.143-318.11(a)(3) Legal, G.S.143-318.11(a)(5) Real Property, G.S.143 318.11(a)(6) Personnel and G.S.143-318.11(a)(7) Criminal Investigations. Commissioner Woody seconded the Motion. Motion carried.*

Chairman McMahan called the regular meeting back to order and stated that no action was taken in closed session except the approval of the minutes. There was one item left on the agenda and he requested to also amend the agenda to add two additional items.

(15) AGENDA: Chairman McMahan requested to add two items: Tax Assessor Appointment and Health Department Construction Contract Extension. Commissioner Woody moved to approve the amended agenda. Commissioner Deitz seconded the Motion. Motion carried.

(16) JULY MEETING SCHEDULE: Mr. Adams stated that this item was discussed at the work session and it was requested to cancel the July 6th regular meeting. The next work session would be July 13th and the next regular meeting would be July 20th.

Motion: *Commissioner Jones moved to cancel the July 6th regular meeting. Commissioner Woody seconded the Motion. Motion carried by unanimous vote.*

(17) TAX ASSESSOR APPOINTMENT: Mr. Adams stated that pursuant to G.S. 105-294(a), the appointment of the County Tax Assessor was to occur before the first Commissioners' Board meeting in July, for a term of two or four years. The initial appointment for Tabitha Ashe, Tax Assessor was made for two years. Ms. Ashe was a Certified Assessor and had completed all courses necessary to qualify for this position. It was recommended that the Board appoint Ms. Ashe to a four-year appointment.

Chairman McMahan thanked Ms. Ashe for all the hard work that she had done.

Motion: *Commissioner Deitz moved to appoint Tabitha Ashe as Tax Assessor for a four-year term. Commissioner Stribling seconded the Motion. Motion carried by unanimous vote.*

(18) HEALTH DEPARTMENT CONSTRUCTION CONTRACT EXTENSION: Chairman McMahan stated that the Health Department renovation project was completed in December, 2020. Staff had moved in and was utilizing the facility. Last year, a pandemic year, was full of challenges. There was a need for them to extend the Substantial Completion Date of the contract with Western Builders to be December 14, 2020.

Motion: *Chairman McMahan moved to change the Substantial Completion Date to December 14, 2020. Commissioner Woody seconded the Motion. Motion carried by unanimous vote.*

There being no further business, Commissioner Woody moved to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Jones seconded the Motion. Motion carried and the meeting adjourned at 2:55 p.m.

Attest:

Approved:

Angela M. Winchester, Clerk to Board

Brian Thomas McMahan, Chairman