

October 2, 2023

The Washington County Board of Commissioners met in a regular meeting on Monday, October 2, 2023, at 6:00 PM in the Commissioners' Room, 116 Adams Street, Plymouth, NC. Commissioners Tracey A. Johnson, Ann C. Keyes, Carol V. Phelps, John C. Spruill and Julius Walker, Jr. were present. Also present were County Manager/County Attorney Curtis Potter, Clerk to the Board Julie J. Bennett and County Finance Officer Missy Dixon.

Chair Walker called the meeting to order. Mr. Lloyd Jones, Roper citizen, gave the invocation and Commissioner Phelps led the pledge of allegiance.

ADDITIONS/DELETIONS: Change # of resolution of 2023-026 to 2023-033.

CONSENT AGENDA:

- a) RESO 2023-023 To Direct the Expenditure of Opioid Settlement Funds
- b) RESO 2023-027 Operation Green Light
- c) RESO 2023-028 Increase in PK-12 School Project Change Order Authority
- d) RESO 2023-029 Surplus Real Property—134 Daisy Lane
- e) RESO 2023-030 Surplus Real Property—90 Cumberland Drive
- f) RESO 2023-031 Surplus Real Property—203 West Avenue
- g) RESO 2023-032 Surplus Real Property—403 Hortontown Road
- h) SCADA System Bids

Commissioner Keyes made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda. Commissioner Phelps seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

PUBLIC FORUM: Ms. Sandra Floyd, 30 Golden Lane, Roper, told the Board that the Animal Shelter director is injured and unable to perform his duties, so basically the shelter is closed. She thought there was something in the works for him to have an assistant. The Animal Shelter shouldn't have to rely on volunteers.

DEPARTMENTAL INFORMATION UPDATE: EMS: Ms. Jennifer O'Neal, EMS Director gave a presentation to the Board. *[This presentation will be attached to these minutes and herein incorporated by such reference.]*

Commissioner Keyes said she has seen EMS in action. She commended Ms. O'Neal and her Deputy Director Ward for going above and beyond. She said that all EMS staff go above and beyond.

Commissioner Johnson thanked Ms. O'Neal for all EMS does.

Commissioner Spruill asked when EMS would be fully staffed. Ms. O'Neal said hopefully in three weeks. Commissioner Spruill asked if Transport was supporting itself. Ms. O'Neal said yes for the most part. They are usually waiting for reimbursement from Medicare. Mr. Potter stated the numbers for the past few years.

Commissioner Spruill said EMS continues to lose money. What is the main cause of that, he asked. Ms. O'Neal said he would be hard pressed to find a county that didn't lose money. Washington County tries to reclaim losses through Debt Set-Off.

Chair Walker thanked Ms. O'Neal and her staff for what they are doing for the citizens of Washington County.

DSS CHILD SUPPORT PROGRAM STAFFING: Mr. Clifton Hardison, DSS Director, spoke to the Board and made a presentation to the Board. *[This presentation will be attached to these minutes and herein incorporated by such reference.]*

Commissioner Johnson asked does this include children that they don't have anywhere to place them. Mr. Hardison and Ms. Swett both replied that is a separate program.

Commissioner Keyes said she worked in that department years ago, so she supports DSS.

Commissioner Johnson said what you are saying is that you would like to go out and hire outside contractors for this service.

Mr. Potter asked the Commissioners to authorize staff to work with DSS to bring back a solution to the Board.

EMERGENCY MANGEMENT BUILDING/GOVERNMENT CENTER: Mr. Curtis Potter, CM/CA spoke to the Board.

Mr. Potter said the Emergency Management Building Government Center is the 2nd largest capital project we have. There is \$3.2M SCIF funding and \$1M local funding for a joint EM and aviation terminal. This has moved slowly due to the PK12 school project. We are now trying to catch up on this project; however, we are running into roadblocks from the aviation side. We may need to go at this from a different side.

Mr. Potter asked the Board to authorize staff to work with advisory Facilities Committee to look for alternative sites to be able to move forward with this. Staff has talked to Commissioners Spruill and Keyes at length. Would like to bring back something at a future Commissioners' meeting.

EMPLOYEE APPRECIATION EVENTS & SCHEDULE: Ms. Julie Bennett, Clerk to the Board spoke to the Commissioners.

The Clerk to the Board discussed the upcoming employee appreciation event schedule recommended by the Employee Appreciation Committee summarized as follows:

1. Fall Fling Employee Appreciation Event: October 20th, 2023, 12PM to 3PM (*change to 5PM)
 - a. Catered lunch meal
2. Holiday Meal - Employee Appreciation Event: December 15, 2023
 - a. Either a breakfast from 930AM to 12PM; or
 - b. Lunch from 12PM to 230PM

Ms. Bennett asked that the Board authorize staff to conduct the proposed employee appreciation events according to the schedule indicated, and to close all non-essential government offices to permit employees to participate during regularly scheduled work hours.

Mr. Potter said that the Department Head survey showed that the Fall Fling was well received and asked for the Board to authorize the Fall Fling on October 20, 2023, from 12:00 noon – 5:00 PM at Flower’s Park in Plymouth.

Mr. Potter also asked the Board if they would agree to an Employee Christmas Breakfast this year from 9:30 am – 11:30 am. This event will still be held at the Plymouth Church of Christ Family Learning Center. The Service Awards will be presented, as usual, at this employee event.

Commissioner Keyes made a motion to approve the Employee Appreciation Committee events and closing of offices as presented. Commissioner Johnson seconded; motion carried unanimously.

BOARDS & COMMITTEES:

SENIOR CENTER ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Ms. Bennett noted that the Senior Center Director has requested that the Board of Commissioners appoint the following citizens to serve on the Senior Center Advisory Committee.

Sandra Purrington
Janet Norman
Ora Rowson
Geraldine Davenport
Karen Clay-Respass
Marva Redd

All have agreed to serve.

Commissioner Keyes made a motion to approve the appointments as listed above to the Senior Center Advisory Committee. Commissioner Phelps seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

FINANCE OFFICER’S REPORT: Ms. Dixon went over the budget transfers and budget amendments that were in the Commissioners’ Agenda Package. *[The Budget Amendments /Budget Transfers will be attached to these minutes and herein incorporated by such reference.]*

Commissioner Spruill made a motion to approve BT# 2023-157, # 2023-158, #2023-159, #2023-159, #2023-160, #2023-161, #2023-162, #2023-163, BA# 2023-164, #2023-165, #2023-166 as presented. Commissioner Phelps seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Ms. Dixon gave a handout to Commissioners which shows the initial adopted budget and any changes the Finance Officer has made and what the budget looks like now. She can add this

report to her monthly reports if the Commissioners would like to have it. The consensus of the Board was for it to be included in the agenda package each month.

OTHER ITEMS BY CHAIR, COMMISSIONERS, COUNTY MANAGER/ COUNTY ATTORNEY OR CLERK:

Commissioner Phelps thanked Mr. Potter for keeping the Board straight.

Commissioner Keyes said she continues to attend NCACC meetings.

Ms. Bennett mentioned that “parade season” will soon be upon us and she will keep the Commissioners informed as to what they are invited to participate in.

Mr. Potter mentioned the Faith in Blue event on October 7th and also a listening party on October 23rd @ 4H Center , Columbia, NC @ 5:30 – 7:30 pm.

Commissioner Spruill asked about the joint Town meetings with Roper and Creswell. Ms. Bennett said she reached out to both mayors and clerks and has only heard from Creswell. Mr. Potter said he is working with the Roper Mayor on another issues and will mention it to her.

Commissioner Spruill made a motion to go into Closed Session. Commissioner Keyes seconded; motion carried unanimously.

Back in Open Session, Mr. Potter said he will be working on a policy regarding exempt employees and overtime. He will bring it back to the next meeting.

Ms. Bennett said she will make sure to have the correct resolution numbers in the minutes for the resolutions that were in the Consent Agenda tonight. She apologized for any confusion.

Commissioner Spruill made a motion to adjourn. Commissioner Keyes seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Julius Walker, Jr.
Chair

Julie J. Bennett, MMC, NCMCC
Clerk to the Board