

POLK COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
January 21, 2020 - 7:00 PM
R. Jay Foster Hall of Justice Womack Building Columbus, NC
Columbus, NC
MINUTES

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

1. Call to Order - Chairman Yoder.
2. Invocation - Chairman Yoder.
3. Pledge of Allegiance - Commissioner Beiler.
4. Approval of Agenda
 - A. Vice-Chairman Melton moved to approve the agenda as written, seconded by Commissioner Moore and the motion carried unanimously.
5. Consent Agenda

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

 - A. Approve December 16, 2019 regular meeting minutes.
 - B. Approve January 6, 2020 regular meeting minutes.
 - C. Review Transportation Title VI Program Plan.
 - D. Declare Sheriff vehicles as surplus to be sold electronically through Govdeals.
 - E. Appoint Commissioner Gasperson to serve as the Commissioner ex-officio representative on the Mental Health Advisory Board.
 - F. Budget Amendment to appropriate \$49,630 from general fund balance to 911 Communications.
6. Citizen Comment(s)

There were no citizen comments.

7. StormReady Certificate of Recognition.

Trisha Palmer, Warning Coordination Meteorologist at the National Weather Service in Greenville-Spartanburg South Carolina, explained StormReady is a voluntary program through the National Weather Service focusing on communication, mitigation, and community preparedness to save lives and property during storm events. Ms. Palmer presented Bobby Arledge, Polk County's Emergency Management Director with the StormReady Certificate of Recognition for Polk County. Mr. Arledge said he had been working to complete the requirements to achieve this recognition for the past several months. He said the program is all about getting the community involved and increasing communication about storm events and preparedness.

8. NC Geological Survey - Landslide Map Update.

Richard (Rick) M. Wooten, P.G. Senior Geologist, North Carolina Geological Survey, Division of Energy, Minerals and Land Resources, Dept. of Environmental Quality gave a presentation a copy of which is hereby incorporated by reference into these minutes. He introduced Jesse Hill who is working on the landslide mapping team, and said they have contracted with Appalachian Landslide Consultants, PLLC to help complete the field work for this project. He said they anticipate completing the field work by early summer, and completing the project, mapping, paperwork, and modeling by the end of the calendar year. Commissioner Gasperson questioned how the properties with land movement will be identified. Mr. Wooten said when the GIS data is given to the county, they can incorporate other identifiers such as parcel numbers. Manager Pittman said they could possibly create a landslide mapping layer on the GIS which would include parcel numbers like we have for flood maps. Commissioner Gasperson also questioned the impact this could make on property values. Attorney Berg said during the revaluation, topography features are factored into the assessment. Mr. Wooten said the North Carolina Geological Survey has contracted with the National Environmental Modeling and Analysis Center at UNC-Asheville to develop a web map viewer for the landslide data, and the map can be searched by street address to see where properties are relative to landslide features.

Chairman Yoder asked if they are detecting more movement. Mr. Wooten said there has been no large-scale movement in the Pacolet valley since the main event in May 2018. Some areas in the Cove Creek and Green River areas that moved in May 2018 moved again in the April 2019 storm. Large landslides like the one at Howard Gap have shown slow movement on the order of two inches. The Commissioners asked for another update in three months.

9. Kudzu Control Public Training Opportunities.

Scott Welborn, Cooperative Extension Director, said the cooperative extension office will be offering pesticide training focusing on kudzu control. He said the first session will be held on February 25, 2020 from 9:00 am to 11:00 am for professional pesticide applicators. The second session will be on April 28,

2020 from 10:00 am to 11:00 am and will be less technical for private homeowners. He said both sessions are free of charge and are both open to the public. Vice-Chairman Melton asked about the use of goats to control kudzu, and would that make a good business. Mr. Welborn said goats can be an effective, but temporary fix in controlling kudzu. He said there are people in nearby counties that rent goats for kudzu control, and he could connect anyone interested in starting that type of business with them. Mr. Welborn said each property is different and requires an individualized plan. He said he would be willing to come out to anyone's property and give an assessment, and help in figuring out a plan to control it on their property. Chairman Yoder said we can't fund kudzu control for citizens, but we can help with education and provide opportunities to teach them how to control it themselves.

10. Kudzu Control Information.

Commissioner Beiler requested Jay Harden, owner of Avery Creek Nursery, to talk to the Board about kudzu control. Mr. Harden gave a presentation, a copy which is hereby incorporated by reference into these minutes. He discussed the different options available to control kudzu, mechanical, chemical, and biological/grazing. He said a combination of the different methods is the most effective way to stay in control. Commissioner Beiler asked what kind of chemicals should be used. Mr. Harden said there are variables, such as location, that would be used to determine the best options. He said if the kudzu is near water you would have to use something labeled for aquatic use, and in all cases, each control practice should be tailored for each individual property. Manager Pittman asked when the kudzu is removed, what is put back in its place to maintain erosion control. Mr. Welborn, Cooperative Extension Director, said native plants should be put back, but since chemicals leave residue for several years, typically grasses are the only thing that will grow. They all agreed it is not a quick or one step process. To get rid of kudzu you must have a plan and be a good steward of the land for future use. Chairman Yoder said his slogan "Plan what happens today, so tomorrow doesn't just happen."

11. Soil And Water Update.

Commissioner Moore requested Kelly Gay, Soil & Water Conservation District Administrator, to give an update on Soil and Water programs throughout the County. Ms. Gay said she received a \$2,000 grant to conduct a workshop on pasture management. She said the workshop had 60 participants, and she received great feedback. She said she will be looking for more grants to provide more programs for the citizens, and one of her main goals is to have the public realize they do not have to be experts on everything, there are resources in the County to help them like Soil and Water and Cooperative Extension. Vice-Chairman Melton told Ms. Gay she was doing a great job, and he too wants the citizens to know these resources are available. Commissioner Gasperson ask Ms. Gay to keep the Board informed on upcoming workshops.

12. Volunteer Board Application(s)

- A. The Commissioners reviewed the following applications - Kirk Bowden Board of Equalization and Review; Moriah Heaney Economic and Tourism

Development Commission; Chauncey Barber, Marshall McGuinn, and Bruce Odel Sunny View Fire Tax Commission; Lee Barker, Edward Daniel, Alexander Hagerty, Jr., John Rose, Michael Whitt Planning Board.

13. Commissioner Comment(s)

The Commissioners thanked everyone for coming to the meeting, and they appreciated all the information shared. Commissioner Moore reminded everyone that Polk County recently turned 165 years old, and invited them to a celebration at the Polk County Historical Society scheduled for January 25, 2020.

14. Closed Session

- A. Commissioner Moore moved to go into closed session for the purpose of attorney client privilege and property acquisition, seconded by Commissioner Beiler and the motion carried unanimously.

- B. Vice-Chairman Melton moved to return to open session, seconded by Commissioner Moore and the motion carried unanimously.

15. Adjournment

Vice-Chairman Melton moved to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Commissioner Moore and the motion carried unanimously.

Attest:

POLK COUNTY BOARD OF
COMMISSIONERS

Ange High
Clerk to the Board

Myron Yoder
Chairman