

POLK COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS  
February 17, 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, media and citizens.

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

5. Consent Agenda

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

- A. February 3, 2020 regular meeting minutes.
- B. Vaya Health Quarterly Report.
- C. Tax Refund Request
- D. Declare Emergency Management 2004 Ford Ranger as surplus to be sold electronically through Govdeals.

6. Citizen Comment(s)

Twenty-three citizens spoke supporting John Vining's idea to create a Kudzu Eradication Board with members from the County and Towns to create a unified effort to control kudzu. Commissioner Gasperson, and Vice-Chairman Melton both said they would be interested in serving on this Board if it were to be created.

Vice-Chairman Melton moved to have John Vining come back to the March 16th Board of Commissioners meeting to discuss the details of his initiative, seconded by Commissioner Beiler and the motion carried unanimously. One citizen presented the County with a book he wrote about his life in a traveling singing group, and one citizen spoke about the importance of the Mental Health Advisory Council.

7. Resolution Celebrating the 100th Anniversary of the passage of The 19th Amendment to the Constitution of the United States and the founding of the League of Women Voters.

Chairman Yoder requested this item be added to the agenda. Rachel Poller, President, Ernie Mowell, Vice-President, and Lee Luebbe, Past-President of the Hendersonville League of Women Voters of North Carolina (LWVNC) spoke about their organization and Vice-President Mowell read the Resolution Celebrating the 100th Anniversary of the passage of The 19th Amendment to the Constitution of the United States and the founding of the League of Women Voters for consideration.

Commissioner Gasperson also recognized the 200th anniversary of Susan B. Anthony's birthday February 15, 1820. He said Ms. Anthony was a leader of the women's suffrage movement who unfortunately passed away fourteen years prior to The 19th Amendment being passed.

Commissioner Gasperson moved to approve the Resolution Celebrating the 100th Anniversary of the passage of The 19th Amendment to the Constitution of the United States and the founding of the League of Women Voters, seconded by Vice-Chairman Melton and the motion carried unanimously.

8. Annual Appearance Commission Beautification Awards.

Joe Cooper, Chairman of the Polk County Appearance Commission presented the following beautification awards:

1. Green Blades Garden Club for the Park on Trade in Tryon. Green Blades Garden Club past President Margie Pankey received the award.

2. The Town of Tryon for the public gathering place in Tryon known as the Rogers Park Amphitheater. Tryon Councilman Bill Ingham received the award.

3. The Town of Columbus/Veterans Park for the Charters of Freedom monument. Columbus Councilman Robert Williamson received the award.

9. Mental Health Update.

Don Killian RHA – Mobile Crisis Supervisor and Chair of the Polk County Mental Health Advisory Partner Council gave the update. He said the partners have been working with citizens and community stakeholders to increase awareness and education opportunities, such as the Crisis Intervention Training (CIT) for law enforcement officers, supporting the annual Suicide Awareness Walk, and Mental Health Emergency first aid training. He said the Mental Health Emergency first aid training was such a success that they hope to offer it again this Spring.

10. Transportation Title VI Program Plan for Approval.

Joshua Kennedy Health and Human Services Agency (HHS) Director presented the Annual Title VI non-discrimination policy for approval (the plan was reviewed at the January 21, 2020 BOC meeting).

Vice-Chairman Melton moved to adopt the Polk County Transportation Title VI Plan, seconded by Commissioner Moore and the motion carried unanimously.

11. Mission Critical Partners - NC 911 Grant Application Support and Program Management Proposal.

Manager Pittman introduced Philip Penny Business Specialist with Mission Critical Partners, LLC (MCP). Mr. Penny said he appreciated the opportunity to offer Polk County consultative support for a 2020 grant application to the North Carolina 911 Board. He explained the grant application will be for a new 911 facility at the old Polk County Jail location, and would include a technology refresh to prepare for emerging Next Generation 911. Manager Pittman said it is anticipated for the project to be funded through the NC 911 Board who receives funding from the surcharges on cell phone bills. He said the proposed services from MCP would include a two-phased approach of program management services to the County for overall coordination of grant submission, technology refresh, public safety answering point space needs assessment, as well as serving as the Subgrantee for grant management upon an award. Manager Pittman said there is a high likelihood a Dogwood Trust grant will fund phase one, but he is asking for a budget amendment to have the funds appropriated in case the grant is not received.

Vice-Chairman Melton moved to approve that the County Manager negotiate the contract with MCP as proposed, seconded by Commissioner Beiler and the motion carried unanimously.

Vice-Chairman Melton moved to approve a budget amendment in the amount of \$24,816 for phase one of the project if grant funding is not available, seconded by Commissioner Beiler and the motion carried unanimously.

12. 2019 Delinquent Taxes Report.

Melissa Bowlin, Tax Administrator told the Board the 2019 tax collection rate as January 31, 2020 was 88.21% leaving \$1,777,241.99 in unpaid 2019 real property taxes.

Vice-Chairman Melton asked if the amount of uncollected taxes was normal and if it was one owner, or several different owners. Ms. Bowlin said it is a normal amount for uncollected real property taxes, and there were a few large property owners on the list, but it is mostly made up of several different property owners. Commissioner Moore moved to charge Ms. Bowlin to advertise and collect the 2019 unpaid taxes by any and all means, seconded by Vice-Chairman Melton and the motion carried unanimously.

13. Isothermal Community College (ICC) NC HWY 108 Right of Way Purchase Offer from NCDOT.

Attorney Berg explained Polk County is required to release their possibility of reverter to allow Isothermal Community College (ICC) to sell a portion of their property for \$39,700 to the North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT). She said the 1982 deed between the County and ICC stated the property was to only to be used for educational purposes. Since the property was conveyed with certain conditions, the land will revert back to the grantor automatically if those conditions are not met, unless the grantor (Polk County) releases them.

Vice-Chairman Melton moved to approve the Chairman to sign the deed releasing the right of way, seconded by Commissioner Gasperson and the motion carried unanimously.

Vice-Chairman Melton moved to approve NCDOT purchasing of the right of way from ICC for the agreed upon amount, seconded by Commissioner Beiler and the motion carried unanimously.

14. Resolution to Support the Designation of US 74 between I-26 and I-85 to a Future Interstate Quality Corridor.

Manager Pittman presented the resolution for consideration.

Commissioner Gasperson moved to approve Resolution to Support the Designation of US 74 between I-26 and I-85 to a Future Interstate Quality Corridor, seconded by Commissioner Beiler and the motion carried unanimously.

15. Commissioner Comment(s)

Vice-Chairman Melton said last week's torrential rains flooded the daycare center in Lynn, and they have no flood insurance. This is one of the only operating daycares in the county and Columbus First Baptist has offered them space to keep caring for children in the county. He thanked all the emergency services that helped to evacuate the children and teachers, and all the county offices and inspectors for helping to get the center open and functioning at the new location.

Commissioner Beiler thanked everyone for coming to the meeting, and he appreciated all the sharing about what they feel is important.

Commissioner Moore thanked everyone for coming, and thanked the citizens for sharing their concerns. He showed two pictures of road damage from the storms on Highway 108 near the Polk County Middle School and expressed concern for the buses that travel that road daily. Manager Pittman said he would send the pictures and information to NCDOT.

Commissioner Gasperson said tonight's meeting was democracy in action. He said it was a pleasure to be involved in a meeting like this.

Chairman Yoder agreed with all the Commissioners statements and thanked everyone for coming and giving input.

16. Closed Session

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

17. Adjournment

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

Attest:

POLK COUNTY BOARD OF  
COMMISSIONERS

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Ange High  
Clerk to the Board

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Myron Yoder  
Chairman