

POLK COUNTY  
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS' REGULAR MEETING  
January 11, 2016 – 7:00 P.M.  
R. Jay Foster Hall of Justice  
Womack Building  
Columbus, NC  
MINUTES

PRESENT: Chair Pack, Vice-Chair Holbert, Commissioner Bradley, Commissioner Gage and Commissioner Gasperson. Also in attendance were County Manager Pittman, County Attorney Berg, Clerk to the Board Fehrmann, media and citizens.

1. Call to Order – Chair Pack called the meeting to order.
2. Invocation – Chair Pack gave the invocation.
3. Pledge of Allegiance – Vice-Chair Holbert led the pledge.
4. Approval of Agenda – Commissioner Gage moved to approve the agenda, seconded by Vice-Chair Holbert and the motion carried unanimously.
5. Consent Agenda
  - A) December 7, 2015, public hearings and regular meeting minutes.
  - B) Tax Department December 2015 Property Tax Refund Requests - \$830.26

Vice-Chair Holbert moved to approve the consent agenda, seconded by Commissioner Gage and the motion carried unanimously.

6. Citizen Comments – Dennis Hill said that an 18-member Consolidated Human Services Agency Board is too large, and that there is no financial justification for creating the agency itself. Gottfried Schlembach said a certain group of neighborhood dogs bark incessantly throughout the night, behavior which interferes with a good night's sleep. County Manager Pittman was instructed to offer his assistance to Mr. Schlembach in resolving this issue.
7. Polk County Personnel Policy Revisions – The Board considered approving revisions recommended by staff/consultant as necessitated by the creation of the Consolidated Human Services Agency (CHSA). Patty Wagner, Human Resource Officer, presented the information. Commissioner Gasperson said changes to the personnel policy necessitated by the creation of the CHSA could set a precedent for future nepotism concerns; County Manager Pittman's wife currently works for the Department of Social Services (DSS) and, with the creation of the CHSA, DSS will now be under the County Manager's purview. County Manager Pittman said that, with his situation specifically in mind, the personnel policy revision concerning the nepotism issue was cogently written - should a conflict of interest situation arise between the County Manager and a county employee, the Chair of the Board of Commissioners, not the County Manager, will serve as arbiter. Vice-Chair Holbert moved to approve the Polk County Personnel Policy revisions, seconded by

Commissioner Gage and the motion carried 4-1 (Gasperson opposed). Commissioner Gage thanked staff for their hard work on the personnel policy revisions, and commended County Manager Pittman for bringing professionalism to many areas of Polk County Government's infrastructure.

8. Resolution Creating a Polk County Consolidated Human Services Agency (CHSA)  
 – The resolution creates a CHSA, an agency which will carry out the functions of the Department of Social Services, as well as those of other county human service agencies. A public hearing on the proposed CHSA was held on December 7, 2015. Commissioner Gage moved to approve the resolution creating a Polk County CHSA, seconded by Commissioner Bradley.

Commissioner Gasperson expressed the following concerns regarding the creation of a CHSA: The CHSA is not being mandated by the state; the CHSA will potentially result in unnecessary growth of county bureaucracy; financial analyses have not been performed to determine the additional cost to the county for the CHSA Director's salary, or on the potential overall cost savings of a CHSA. Commissioner Gasperson asked the Board to consider tabling the creation of a CHSA until at least the next budget cycle, and said ideally the issue should be tabled until after the 2016 Board of Commissioners' (BOC) election. Commissioner Gasperson then moved to table the resolution creating a CHSA, but the motion received no second and failed.

Commissioner Gage expressed his appreciation for all the hard work of County Manager Pittman and staff on this initiative. With the initial motion and second on the floor, the motion carried 4-1 (Gasperson opposed).

9. Appointment of CHSA Board – Commissioner Gage moved to appoint the following eighteen members to the CHSA Board:

3-Year Term: Linda Greensfelder, Psychologist  
 Steve Burney, Pharmacist  
 Dale McLean, Dentist  
 Bill Hay, Veterinarian  
 Anne Jacobe, Social Worker  
 John Kornmayer, Physician  
 Belynda Vesser, Psychiatrist

2-Year Term: Keith Holbert, Sitting Commissioner  
 Donald Hill, Law Enforcement (Sheriff)  
 Jane Armstrong, Consumer (Senior Services)  
 Yvette Szuster, Consumer (DSS/Special Needs Son)  
 Bevin Corbin, Consumer (Veteran's Administration)  
 Duncan Chapman, Consumer (PCTA)

1-Year Term: Pat Adcock, Member of the Public (Current DSS Board Member)  
 Muriel Lunsford, Member of the Public (Current DSS Board Member)

Debbie Arceneaux, Member of the Public (Current DSS Board Member)

Tim Brown, Member of the Public (Full Proof Ministries)

Eric Waddell, Member of the Public (Information Security/Technology)

Vice-Chair Holbert seconded the motion. Commissioner Gasperson said that although he appreciates volunteers, and is cognizant that his abstention counted as an affirmative vote, he would nonetheless abstain from voting on the appointments since he had voted against both the personnel policy revision and the resolution creating the CHSA. With a motion and second on the floor, the motion carried unanimously.

10. North Carolina State Health Plan Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) – The MOU will allow Polk County Government to join the state health plan effective March 1, 2016. The county will realize a significant savings in annual health care costs as a result of this transition. Commissioner Gage moved to formally ratify the MOU previously adopted by Board consensus via email correspondence on December 21, 2015, and further moved that the County Manager be authorized to sign all necessary documents associated with the transition to the state health plan, seconded by Vice-Chair Holbert. Commissioner Gasperson noted that the state legislation was specific wherein county retirees cannot participate in the state health plan - counties with existing covered retirees were not allowed to apply to participate in the plan. With a motion and a second on the floor, the motion passed unanimously.
11. Sheriff's Department Vehicles for Surplus – Commissioner Gage moved to approve the surplus of four Sheriff's Department Crown Victorias, seconded by Commissioner Bradley and the motion carried unanimously.
12. Sheriff's Department Vehicles Purchase Order (P.O.) – Vice-Chair Holbert moved to approve P.O. #18958 in the amount of \$87,355.22 for the purchase of three new Sheriff's Department vehicles (2016 Ford Explorers) as budgeted for FY 2015/16, seconded by Commissioner Bradley and the motion carried unanimously.
13. Department of Social Services (DSS)/Maximus Consulting Services Contract – Maximus Consulting Services is contracted by DSS to determine which services (and at which rate) are reimbursable by the state. Vice-Chair Holbert moved to approve the Maximus Consulting Services Contract, seconded by Commissioner Bradley and the motion carried unanimously.
14. Economic & Tourism Development Commission (ETDC) Membership – Commissioner Gasperson asked that this item be placed on the agenda for discussion. Commissioner Gasperson said existing ETDC members should be grandfathered in to the newly restructured ETDC, and not be required to reapply for appointment to a commission on which they already serve. County Attorney Berg said that by the BOC adoption of the "Resolution to Create and Establish the Polk County Economic and Tourism Development Commission" on November 16, 2015,

- the previous ETDC was effectively abolished. Commissioner Gasperson asked that current ETDC members be supported by the BOC if they reapply.
15. Manager's Report – 1) Road closures: A section of Hwy. 176 between Tryon and Saluda, initially closed on November 29, 2015, due to rock slides, will remain closed until February 29, 2016; Ponder Rd. will be closed until April 29, 2016, for bridge replacement. 2) NC Department of Transportation Secondary Road Construction Program: Construction in the amount of \$150,000 will begin spring 2016 on Robertson Rd.
  16. Volunteer Board for Vote – Claude Turner was appointed to the Recreation Advisory Board by unanimous vote.
  17. Volunteer Board for Review – Three applications for four Planning Board vacancies were reviewed.
  18. Commissioner Comments – The Commissioners thanked everyone for coming out. Vice-Chair Holbert and Commissioner Gage asked Commissioner Gasperson, the sole opponent of the proposed and ultimately withdrawn Inman-Campobello Water District water contract, if he had a plan to enable the county to provide the finances needed for the maintenance/repair of Lake Adger/Turner Shoals Dam.
  19. Adjournment – Vice-Chair Holbert moved to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Commissioner Gage and the motion carried unanimously.

ATTEST:

POLK COUNTY BOARD  
OF COMMISSIONERS

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Beth Fehrmann  
Clerk to the Board

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Tom E. Pack  
Chair