

POLK COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS' REGULAR MEETING
August 22, 2016 – 7:00 P.M.
R. Jay Foster Hall of Justice
Womack Building
Columbus, NC
MINTUES

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

1. Call to Order – Chair Gage called the meeting to order.
2. Invocation – Commissioner Bradley gave the invocation.
3. Pledge of Allegiance – Commissioner Gasperson led the pledge.
4. Appointment of the Temporary Acting Clerk to the Board – Vice-Chair Holbert moved to appoint Administrative Assistant Yvette Szuster as the Temporary Acting Clerk to the Board for the current meeting, seconded by Commissioner Owens and the motion carried unanimously.
5. Approval of Agenda – County Attorney Berg asked that a closed session for the purpose of attorney-client privilege, G.S. 143-318.11(a)(3), be added as Agenda Item # 16.a. Commissioner Owens moved to approve the agenda as amended, seconded by Vice-Chair Holbert and the motion carried unanimously.
6. Consent Agenda
 - A) Approval of the August 8, 2016, regular meeting minutes.
 - B) Approval of a Tax Department ownership correction refund request in the amount of \$227.33.
 - C) Approval of the Polk County Transportation Department FY 2016-2017 Rural Operating Assistance Program Application.Vice-Chair Holbert moved to approve the consent agenda, seconded by Commissioner Bradley and the motion carried unanimously.
7. Citizen Comments – There were none.
8. Proclamation in Appreciation of Retired St. Luke's Hospital CEO Ken A. Shull – Commissioner Owens read the following statement prior to reading the proclamation and asked that it be included in the minutes verbatim:

“When I was on the hospital board in the early 1990s, due to many reasons – not the least of them were the changes in the Medicaid way of paying – I really felt the chances for St. Luke's Hospital's survival were very slim. However, after changes were made and the person by the name of Ken Shull was brought in to oversee the operation of the hospital, it did not only survive, it is now in the black. I know Ken

has had the support of a board that has varied experiences and expertise, and good competent employees. But I also know that it takes a leader with knowledge, experience, vision, and tenacity to take a near failing operation to a successful one, and Ken Shull has done that for St. Luke's Hospital. Thank you, Ken, for your outstanding work. But all of you know that behind every successful man there is a better woman, and we are honored tonight to have with us Ken's wife, Heidi."

Commissioner Owens moved to approve the proclamation, seconded by Chair Gage and the motion carried unanimously. Mr. Shull said he was honored by the proclamation as well as grateful for his tenure at St. Luke's Hospital.

9. Award of Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting for Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 2015 – The certificate, which is the highest form of recognition in the area of governmental accounting and financial reporting, was presented to Finance Director Sandra Hughes by Chair Gage. Chair Gage and his fellow Commissioners commended Ms. Hughes and her staff for their outstanding job performance. The county has received this award for twenty consecutive years.

10. 2017 Revaluation Schedule of Values & Public Hearing Request – Robert Haskins of Wampler Eanes Appraisal Group submitted the Schedule of Values (SOV). The SOV is a set of standards and rules specifically formulated by the Wampler Eanes Appraisal Group for appraising property in Polk County. The SOV has been created following study of the current real estate market and is the schedule which will be used to set the new county property values. Utilization of these standards and rules will assure all property will be appraised in a uniform, accurate, and consistent manner.

Mr. Haskins said the field reviews are 99% complete. Some properties will be revisited by appraisal and county staff to ensure appraisal accuracy. Mr. Haskins said property values in some areas of the county are down from the previous revaluation conducted eight years ago, notably Bright's Creek and Lake Adger. The property markets are strong inside the Town of Saluda and in a currently undefined area around the Tryon International Equestrian Center (TIEC). Mr. Haskins is in the process of studying the property market surrounding TIEC to determine if specific neighborhoods surrounding the facility need to be designated - be it with either higher or lower property values – to ensure a fair and equitable appraisal; an area in Pea Ridge is currently being evaluated for this purpose.

Commissioner Owens moved to schedule a public hearing on September 19, 2016, at 6:30 P.M. in the R. Jay Foster Hall of Justice, Womack Building, seconded by Chair Gage and the motion carried unanimously. It was the consensus of the Board that Mr. Haskins begin the public hearing with an overview of a typical residential property appraisal process.

11. 2016 Law Enforcement Center Schedule – County Manager Pittman gave an overview of the anticipated Law Enforcement Center Schedule.

12. Rutherford-Polk-McDowell (RPM) Health District Board Appointment – Chair Gage moved to appoint Commissioner Gasperson to the RPM Health District Board to fill the position recently vacated by Chair Gage, seconded by Commissioner Bradley and the motion carried unanimously.
13. Manager's Report – A) The Environmental Site Assessment on the 21.79 acre Polk County Complex parcel was favorable. B) The Appraisal Report on the 21.79 acre Polk County Complex site reflected a market value of \$2,080,000, or \$100,068 per acre. 10% of the site is undevelopable due to the location of a creek on the parcel. C) Commissioner Gasperson moved to charge the Planning Board with making a recommendation to include Special Schools (NC State Extension Office) as a permitted use in the RE1 Zoning District for the potential relocation of the Cooperative Extension Offices to the old Adult Day Facility behind the Meeting Place, seconded by Commissioner Owens and the motion carried unanimously. D) The 2016 NCACC Annual Conference was very informative, with topics including state lottery fund distribution, local government use of social media, data informed decision making, the North Carolina foster care program, and economic development. Commissioner Gasperson was recognized during the conference for reaching the Master level in the Local Elected Leaders Academy, which is a partnership with the UNC School of Government, the NCACC, and the NC League of Municipalities.
14. Volunteer Boards for Vote – Commissioner Owens moved to reappoint Stephen King, Brandon Lee Knox, Anny Maunder, Ashley Pobanz and Margo Savage as Animal Cruelty Investigators, seconded by Commissioner Gasperson and the motion carried unanimously.
15. Volunteer Boards for Review – Two applications for four Animal Cruelty Investigator vacancies were reviewed. One application for one Juvenile Crime Prevention Council vacancy was reviewed.
16. Commissioner Comments – The Commissioners thanked everyone for coming out.
- 16.a Closed Session – Commissioner Owens moved to enter into closed session for the purpose of attorney-client privilege, G.S. 143-318.11(a)(3), seconded by Chair Gage and the motion carried unanimously. Commissioner Owens moved to return to open session, seconded by Chair Gage and the motion carried unanimously. Chair Gage moved to authorize County Manager Pittman to sign an assignment of real estate contract to assign the contract between Island Creek Holdings, LLC, for the purchase of the detention facility tract to Route 74 Hwy 108, LLC, NC, and to further approve the modification to the contract for the purchase of real property to extend the deadline for closing to October 31, 2016, and to further authorize County Manager Pittman to execute that document as well, seconded by Vice-Chair Holbert and the motion carried unanimously. Chair Gage moved to approve the settlement of a property tax appeal brought by Mr. Christopher Nelson for Lot 4 in the Bright's Creek subdivision to a value equal to 20% over the taxpayer's appraised value resulting in a value of \$70,200, seconded by Commissioner Owens and the motion carried unanimously.

17. Adjournment – Commissioner Owens moved to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Vice-Chair Holbert and the motion carried unanimously.

ATTEST:

POLK COUNTY BOARD
OF COMMISSIONERS

Beth Fehrmann
Clerk to the Board

Michael V. Gage
Chair