

POLK COUNTY  
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS' REGULAR MEETING  
Monday, May 2, 2011, 7:00pm  
R. Jay Foster Hall of Justice, Womack Building  
Columbus, NC  
MINUTES

PRESENT: Chair Gasperson, Vice-Chair McDermott, Commissioner Owens, Commissioner Pack and Commissioner Walker. Also in attendance were County Manager Whitson, County Attorney Egan, Clerk to the Board Fehrmann, staff, media and citizens.

1. Call to Order – Chair Gasperson called the meeting to order.
2. Invocation – Commissioner Pack gave the invocation.
3. Pledge of Allegiance – Paul Sutherland, member of the House of Flags Board of Directors, led the pledge.
4. Approval of Minutes – Vice-Chair McDermott made a motion to approve the April 18, 2011, regular BOC and April 18, 2011, BOC/EDC work session meeting minutes, seconded by Commissioner Walker and the motion carried unanimously.
5. Approval of Agenda – County Manager Whitson added Agenda Item 5a. - Closed session for the purpose of N.C.G.S. 143-318.11(a)(6), Personnel, and Agenda Item 15c. – St. Luke's Hospital Certificate of Need. Commissioner Walker made a motion to approve the agenda as amended, seconded by Vice-Chair McDermott and the motion carried unanimously.
- 5a. Closed Session – Commissioner Walker made a motion to go into closed session for the purpose of N.C.G.S. 143-318.11(a)(6), Personnel, seconded by Vice-Chair McDermott and the motion carried unanimously. No action was taken. Commissioner Owens made a motion to return to open session, seconded by Commissioner Pack and the motion carried unanimously.
6. FY 2011/12 Budget Presentation – County Manager Whitson presented the FY 2011/12 balanced budget for review.

Citizen comments: Carl Caudle urged Commissioners to ensure Polk County Travel & Tourism needs are not neglected as a result of management decisions or budgetary constraints.

7. Mark III Medical Plan Projections & Options – County Manager Whitson reported that his employee poll revealed employees would rather pay a higher annual deductible than a higher annual premium. Mark Browder of Mark III gave a presentation on the projections and options for fiscal year 2011-2012.

Commissioners concurred that being self-insured is cost-effective for Polk County at this time. Commissioners also concurred that if a new plan is adopted, it would not go into effect until January 1, 2012.

8. Travel & Tourism Department – Vice-Chair McDermott made a motion to approve moving the Travel & Tourism Department within the purview of the Economic Development Department. Commissioner Walker revealed that she contracts annually with the Chamber of Commerce for solid waste/recycling services at the Blue Ridge BBQ festival; Commissioners agreed she did not need to recuse herself. With a motion on the floor, Commissioner Owens seconded.

Citizen Comments: Emily Clark asked the Board to consider keeping a Travel & Tourism director. Carl Caudle asked the Board to allow the Economic Development Commission to manage Travel & Tourism completely, and he complained about the County's \$9,000 donation from the Travel & Tourism budget to the Town of Columbus for the Fourth of July fireworks. Sarah Huff asked that the Travel & Tourism budget be closely monitored.

With a motion and a second on the floor, the motion carried unanimously.

9. Economic Development Department – The following individuals were recommended for the Economic Development Implementation Team: Ray Gasperson, Tom Pack, Sara Bell, Pete Bhakta, Geoff Carey, Max Crowe, Keith Holbert, Dennis Hill, Karen Jones, Bob Morgan and Ambrose Mills. Commissioner Owens made a motion to approve the aforementioned slate for the Economic Development Implementation Team, seconded by Vice-Chair McDermott and the motion carried unanimously.
10. EMS Ambulance – Commissioner Owens made a motion to approve the proposal from Northwestern Emergency Vehicles in the amount of \$79,820 for the new EMS ambulance, seconded by Commissioner Pack and the motion carried unanimously.
11. Memorandum of Agreement – Melissa Tambini, Director of Family Preservation Services of NC (FPS), said FPS has provided Polk County with community-based mental health services for almost five years. Currently operating out of the Jervey Palmer Building in Tryon, the County allows FPS to use the office space free of charge. County Manager Whitson said the Jervey Palmer Building will be vacated by 11/1/11, and FPS will be in need office space. The County has offered to purchase property at 94 White Dr. in Columbus for FPS's use. Of the \$110,000 purchase price, \$80,098 will be funded through unrestricted mental health money, and the remaining approximately \$30,000 will come out of the fund balance. FPS plans to spend approximately \$41,000 improving the building on White Dr. before moving into the new space. Vice-Chair McDermott made a motion to approve the Memorandum of Agreement between Polk County and Family Preservation Services of North Carolina, Inc., subject to the actual purchase of the property, seconded by Commissioner Walker.

Discussion ensued, and it was determined that there is no current memorandum of agreement or lease agreement between Polk County and FPS, and FPS would be amenable to relocating to another office if the space was sufficient/appropriate

Citizen Comments: Katharine Smith endorsed FPS and urged the Commissioners to provide space for them.

Vice-Chair McDermott amended her motion to read: To enter into the Memorandum of Agreement, between Polk County and Family Preservation Services of NC, Inc., seconded by Commissioner Walker and the motion carried 3-2 (Owens and Pack opposed).

12. Purchase of Real Property – Vice-Chair McDermott made a motion to enter into the purchase and sale agreement for property located at 94 White Dr., Columbus, NC, with the sale being between Polk County and Thermal Belt Outreach Ministries, and to purchase and close on the property, seconded by Commissioner Walker. Commissioner Owens asked County Manager Whitson if the \$80,000 was restricted, and the county manager said it was not. Commissioner Owens asked if the money could be used toward giving county employees a raise, and the County Manager said that it could.

County Manager Whitson said there is no extra space to house FPS at the new DSS facility. It was clarified that the DSS facility would not be an appropriate venue for FPS due to privacy concerns. Ms. Tambini said it is more cost effective to use the FPS contractors instead of local contractors because the FPS contractors have experience with this type of facility, and are more efficient.

Citizen Comments: Carol Newton, Thermal Belt Outreach Ministries Director, endorsed the purchase of the property.

With a motion and a second on the floor, the motion carried 3-2 (Owens and Pack opposed).

13. Commercial Lease Agreement – County Manager Whitson explained that the County will provide the building, outside maintenance and utilities for FPS for ten years, and FPS will provide \$40,000+ in improvements to the building and mental health services to the citizens of Polk County as well. Vice-Chair McDermott made a motion to enter into the commercial lease agreement between Polk County and Family Preservation Services of NC, Inc., seconded by Commissioner Walker and the motion carried 3-2 (Owens and Pack opposed).
14. Method For Appointing Volunteer Board Members – It was the consensus of the Board for the Clerk to announce how each Commissioner votes on each applicant in the future.

15. County Manager's Report – a) The meeting with District Attorney Jeff Hunt on April 26, 2011, was positive and progress is being made. b) Commissioner Owens made a motion to approve Budget Amendment #66 in the amount of \$8,972 to transfer program revenues from Temporary Shelter, Psychological Services and Administration to Project Challenge as approved by the State – No additional County funding, seconded by Commissioner Pack and the motion carried unanimously. c) St. Luke's Hospital Certificate of Need – Ken Shull, St. Luke's Hospital Executive Director, asked the Board to approve St. Luke's applying for a certificate of need for a hospital improvement project. Vice-Chair McDermott made a motion to hold a special meeting at 5:00pm on Tuesday, May 10, 2011, prior to the Budget Work Session, to consider the request by the hospital for certification by Polk County of the document preparatory to their submitting a certificate of need application to the State, seconded by Commissioner Owens, and the motion carried unanimously.
16. Volunteer Board for Vote – Stephen Brady was appointed to the Region C Workforce Development Board by unanimous vote.
17. Volunteer Boards for Review – Applications for the Council on Aging (1 application, 1 vacancy), Economic Development Commission (1 application, 3 vacancies [2 regular & 1 alternate]), and Region C Workforce Development (1 application, 1 vacancy) were reviewed.
18. Citizen Comments on Non-Agenda Items – There were no comments.
19. Commissioner Comments – Commissioner Owens thanked the Commissioners for a good meeting and thanked everyone for coming out. Vice-Chair McDermott, Commissioner Walker and Pack thanked everyone for coming out.
20. Closed Session – Commissioner Walker made a motion to go into closed session for the purpose of N.C.G.S. 143-318.11(a)(6), Personnel, seconded by Commissioner Owens and the motion carried unanimously. No action was taken.
21. Return to Open Session – Vice-Chair McDermott made a motion to return to open session, seconded by Commissioner Walker and the motion carried unanimously.
22. Adjournment - Commissioner Walker made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Commissioner Owens 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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Ray Gasperson  
Chair