

POLK COUNTY
Monday, November 15, 2010, 7:00 PM
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS' REGULAR MEETING
R. Jay Foster Hall of Justice, Womack Building
Columbus, N.C.
MINUTES

1. Call to Order/Welcome – Chairperson Walker called the meeting to order.
2. Invocation – Commissioner Melton gave the invocation.
3. Pledge of Allegiance – Commissioner Watson led the pledge.
4. Approval of Minutes – Commissioner Watson made a motion to approve the November 1, 2010, Regular Board of Commissioners' meeting minutes, seconded by Commissioner Melton and the motion carried unanimously.
5. Approval of Agenda – County Manager Whitson asked that Agenda Item 16.E be added – Appointment to the NCACC Veterans Outreach & Services Task Force. Commissioner Watson made a motion to approve the agenda as amended, seconded by Commissioner McDermott and the motion carried unanimously.
6. Recognition - The Board recognized Mr. Tom Hix, retired County Attorney, for his years of service to Polk County and presented him with a commemorative plaque. Chairperson Walker read the following in honor of Mr. Hix: "We are here tonight to recognize Tom Hix, Polk County's Attorney from 1999 – 2010. Just a little about Tom. Tom graduated from the University of Richmond and the University of Alabama Law School. He then went on to become the District Attorney for Henderson County and was one of the youngest elected District Court Judges for the 29th District. He later became the Chief Court Judge for the 29th District. In the mid-90's, Tom went into private practice for Henderson, Rutherford and Polk Counties. He served Polk County as the County Attorney from 1999 – 2010. On behalf of the Polk County Board of Commissioners and the employees of Polk County, we thank you, Tom, and wish you the very best for years to come."
7. Recycling Committee - Mark Byington of the Recycling Advisory Board said municipal solid waste is generally comprised of 25% organic waste. The upcoming Compost Forum will focus on ways of diverting organic materials from the landfill. The event will be held on November 30, 2010, at 6:30pm at the Polk Campus of ICC.
8. Gould Killian CPA Group, P.S. – Dan Yelton and Cary Luhn presented the audit report, a copy of which is on file in the County Manager's office. Vice-

Chairperson Gasperson made a motion to accept the audit report, seconded by Commissioner McDermott and the motion carried unanimously.

9. Pay Off Of Loan – County Manager Whitson said the County is borrowing money to finance the new Human Services Facility, and the Federal and State governments will reimburse the County 61% of the interest. He recommended paying off the \$4M BB&T loan balance of \$2.136M subsequent to closing on the Human Services Facility loan. By paying this loan off the County will realize a savings of \$362,000. According to the audit report the County's fund balance will be 33.9% at the end of this fiscal year. After paying the loan off the fund balance will be 24%, which is considered average by the State for Polk County's size. County Manager Whitson said the auditors so no reason not to pay the loan off. Commissioner McDermott said she has heard at NCACC meetings that there remains some concern, given the State's budgetary problems, that the State may be looking to see which Counties have a high percentage of fund balance in order to take some of the money. With that in mind, she recommended using some of the fund balance to pay off the loan. County Manager Whitson said it is his understanding that the State can access funds in Counties with fund balances over 15%. Commissioner Watson asked how much the County would be left with to cover shortfalls in other areas, such as the schools, and County Manager Whitson said with the remaining 24% fund balance there should be approximately \$2M left to cover shortfalls. Commissioner Melton asked what steps the County Manager plans to take to prevent the State from coming in and taking money out of the County's fund balance. County Manager Whitson said there is loan for \$4.1M that the County could possibly pay off, but that would take the fund balance below 15% and he is hesitant to do that. Vice-Chairperson Gasperson said it makes good fiscal sense to pay off the \$2.136M loan, particularly going into the budget process. Commissioner Melton said if the County has a 24% fund balance then the next Board could decide to cut taxes. Commissioner Watson made a motion to take \$1,957,013.00 out of fund balance to pay off the \$4M BB&T loan, contingent upon closing on the loan for the Human Services Facility, seconded by Vice-Chairperson Gasperson and the motion carried unanimously.
10. Employee Christmas Bonus – County Manager Whitson said the audit report was good and the fund balance is healthy, and all this is due to the employees of Polk County. Traditionally Polk County has given \$250.00 Christmas bonuses, but the County has not been able to do that for the past two years. County Manager Whitson recommended the Commissioners approve an employee Christmas bonus this year of \$100.00 for full-time employees and \$50.00 for significant part-time employees. The total cost to the County will be \$15,600.00 for County employees and the \$3,400.00 for DSS employees. The County will be reimbursed for approximately 60% of the DSS bonus. Commissioner Watson made a motion to approve the employee Christmas bonus, seconded by Commissioner Melton and the motion carried unanimously.

11. Tax Refund Request – Tax Collector Melissa Bowlin made the October refund request in the amount of \$4,730.84. Commissioner Melton made a motion to approve the refund request, seconded by Commissioner McDermott and the motion carried unanimously.
12. Adult Day Care Site Repair Update – County Manager Whitson said the cost to repair the erosion problems caused by the recent storm will be \$4,080.00, and County Engineer Dave Odom recommends proceeding with this as soon as possible to take advantage of the last few warm days. Commissioner Watson made a motion to approve the site repair (see Item 17, BA#2), seconded by Vice-Chairperson Gasperson and the motion carried unanimously.
13. Polk County Department of Social Services – Lou Parton of DSS presented the 2009 - 2010 Annual Report, a copy of which is on file in the County Manager's office.
14. Offer to Purchase Property – County Manager Whitson said a \$1,500.00 offer has been made on a foreclosed property (approx. 1/3 acre) located in Tryon and owned by the County. The County acquired the property for approximately \$2,500.00 several years ago and, according to County Attorney Egan, the property cannot be sold for less than that amount. The County Manager asked the Board to approve the sale of the property for no less than \$2,500.00, and to go forward with the upset bid process. Commissioner Watson made a motion to approve that the County Manager use his discretion and sell this property, seconded by Commissioner McDermott and the motion carried unanimously.
15. A Model Code Of Ethics For North Carolina Local Elected Officials – A copy of the ethics code is on file in the County Manager's office. Commissioner McDermott made a motion to approve the revised model code of ethics for Polk County elected officials, seconded by Vice-Chairperson Gasperson and the motion carried unanimously.
16. County Manager's Report – (a) County Manager Whitson said Western Highlands has asked to appear before the Board regarding the Medicaid Waiver. Each County in the LME has to have BOC approval for the waiver, and it was determined that Western Highlands will appear before the Board at the first meeting in February. (b) County Manager Whitson announced that he has been elected Western Highlands LME Board Chairman for the second year in a row. (c) County Manager Whitson discussed the Western Highlands Area Authority's Fiscal Monitoring Report for the 2011 fiscal year 1st quarter, ending September 30, 2010, Section 3(a) G.S. 122C-117(c). (d) County Manager Whitson reported that Sheriff Donald Hill has requested the following adjustment in salary grades: adjust Chief Deputy from a Grade 25 to a Grade 27; adjust Captain of Patrol from a Grade 24 to a Grade 26; adjust Lieutenant of Patrol from a Grade 22 to a Grade 24. Commissioner McDermott made a motion to approve the grade adjustments,

seconded by Vice-Chairperson Gasperson, and the motion carried unanimously. (e) County Manager Whitson announced that he has been appointed to the NCACC Veterans Outreach & Services Task Force under the leadership of Gaston County Commissioner Donnie Loftis.

17. Budget Amendments - BA #2 Maintenance Department \$4,080 from Contingency, to increase maintenance/ground repair for the Adult Day Care site. Commissioner Watson made a motion to approve the budget amendment, seconded by Commissioner Melton and the motion carried unanimously. BA #3 Personnel/DSS \$19,000, to increase personnel and DSS salaries for Christmas bonuses (\$100 for FT/\$50 for PT) to be handed out at the employee Christmas party. Vice-Chairperson Gasperson made a motion to approve BA #3, seconded by Commissioner McDermott and the motion carried unanimously.
18. Board Vacancies (Vote) – Commissioner McDermott made a motion to appoint Nadine Naujoks to the Council on Aging, seconded by Commissioner Watson and the motion carried unanimously. Commissioner Watson made a motion to reappoint Beth Cannon to the Appearance Commission, seconded by Commissioner Melton and the motion carried unanimously.
19. Release of Closed Session Minutes – Commissioner Melton made a motion to release the closed session minutes of resolved and completed matters of business, seconded by Commissioner Watson and the motion carried unanimously.
20. Citizen Comments on Non-Agenda Items – Keith Holbert thanked Commissioners Watson and Melton for their service from 2006 to 2010, and thanked Chairperson Walker, Vice-Chairperson Gasperson and Commissioner McDermott for their service from 2008 to 2010. Mr. Holbert also said that, as high vote getter, he looks forward to Mr. Ted Owens taking over as Chairman at the next BOC meeting.
21. Commissioner Comments – Commissioner McDermott thanked the Board for an excellent meeting and thanked members of the audience for attending. Vice-Chairperson Gasperson also thanked his fellow Commissioners for a great meeting and thanked the audience for coming out. Commissioner Watson thanked the audience for attending and said it was a good meeting.
22. Closed Session – G.S. 143-138.11(a)(6) Personnel. Commissioner Watson made a motion to go into closed session, seconded by Commissioner McDermott and the motion carried unanimously.
23. Return to Open Session – The Board returned to open session. No action was taken on closed session matters.

24. Adjourn – Vice-Chairperson Gasperson made a motion to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Commissioner Watson and the motion carried unanimously.

ATTEST: POLK COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

Anne Britton
Clerk to the Board

Cindy Walker
Chairperson

Beth Fehrmann
Administrative Assistant