



Historic Preservation Commission

Regular Meeting

<http://www.townofboone.net/>

~ Agenda ~

Jane Shook
828-268-6960

Tuesday, April 13, 2021

3:00 PM

WebEx

The meeting will be held remotely using WebEx, a video conferencing software. For information on how to watch, listen and/or participate in the meeting, please see the WebEx Video Conferencing information at the end of this agenda.

- I. Call to Order**
- II. Adoption of Agenda**
- III. Discussion of Scheduled & Potential Special Meetings**
- IV. Approval of Minutes**

February 2021 Meeting Minutes

March 9, 2021 Meeting Minutes

- V. Public Comment**
- VI. Hardin House (aka Turner House)**

Emailed dated March 22, 2021

Turner House Closed Session Minutes

WT0056 Oscar and Suma Hardin House (1926)

Watauga County Commissioners Meeting Minutes for 2018, 2019, 2020 & 2021

- VII. Downtown Projects Update**

Downtown Projects Presentation

VIII. Downtown Boone Local Historic District Designation Report, State Response Letter

State Historic Preservation Office Letter dated March 9, 2021

Email dated 04-08-2021 from Chairperson Plaag with his response to the SHPO Designation Report Letter

IX. Revised Downtown Boone Local Historic District Designation Report

Boone Local Historic District Designation

X. Downtown Boone Design Standards Including Rooftop Additions

Draft Rooftop Additions Language

https://gisviewer.townofboone.net/webdocs/CAC_HPC_WorkProducts/HPC_DowntownLocalHistoricDistrictDesignGuidelines.pdf

XI. COA Application

XII. Junaluska Local Historical Marker Dedication - Road Closure & Invitations

XIII. Town Cemeteries Standards

XIV. Inventory of Town of Boone Cemeteries

XV. Update on Boone Cemetery Footstone Information for Markers

Footstone Information

XVI. Town Website

XVII. Town Streets Project

North Street Report

Depot Street Report

XVIII. Boone 150 Committee**XIX. Informal Discussion****XX. Adjournment**

TO WATCH THE MEETING: Anyone can view the Historic Preservation Commission meeting live at:
<https://townofboone.viebit.com/index.php>

Note: To preserve bandwidth and ensure an orderly meeting, individuals who wish only to view the meeting but not speak at it should view the livestream at this link. Only individuals who wish to speak should use the WebEx link described below.

TO PARTICIPATE IN THE MEETING: Individuals who wish to participate in Public Comment may do so through WEbEx, a video conferencing software, either online (by computer or smartphone) or by telephone. To do so, please email Jane Shook at jane.shook@townofboone.net or call 828-268-6960 and you will be provided with an email invitation to the meeting. All requests for participation must be completed by 2 p.m. on the day of the meeting.

**TOWN OF BOONE
HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES
FEBRUARY 9, 2021
3:00 PM**

Historic Preservation Commission Members in Attendance: Chairperson Eric Plaag, Vice-Chairperson Phoebe Pollitt, Bettie Bond and Chuck Watkins

Council Liaisons: Rennie Brantz

Town Staff in Attendance: Jane Shook-Director of Planning and Inspections, Christy Turner-Senior Planner and Marlene Crosby-Board Secretary, Matt McGregor-Planning and Inspections Department Intern

Others Present: Lane Moody-Downtown Boone Development Coordinator and Mark Freed, Director of Cultural Resources

Call to Order

Chairperson Eric Plaag called the meeting of the Boone Historic Preservation Commission, held via WebEx, a video conferencing software to order on Tuesday, February 9, 2021 at 3:01 p.m.

Adoption of Agenda

Member Watkins made a motion, seconded by Member Bond to adopt the agenda as written with the following agenda items to be added after the District Designation Report: Town Streets, Boone Cemetery Educational Panels and Town Website.

Vote:

Aye – All

Nay – None

The motion passed.

Chairperson Plaag polled the HPC members as follows: Member Bond, Member Watkins and Chairperson Plaag.

Discussion ensued on replacing Former Council Liaison Loretta Clawson's position on the Town Council and ultimately the HPC Council Liaison position. Chairperson Plaag said the deadline for applications to be submitted for the said Council position has passed. He asked could the HPC expect that the new member of Council would be joining the HPC as the second representative for the March 2021 HPC meeting. Council Liaison Brantz confirmed that eventually the HPC would have another Council Liaison attending the HPC meetings.

Discussion ensued on recruiting new HPC members. Chairperson Plaag talked about what constitutes a quorum, because now the Council Liaisons on the HPC do not count towards a quorum at this time. He encouraged the HPC members to continue to look for potential HPC members that have the required knowledge and experience to serve on the HPC. He noted there are three open seats on the HPC roster at this time.

Approval of Minutes

Member Bond made a motion, seconded by Member Watkins to approve the January 26, 2021 meeting minutes as amended.

Vote:

Aye - All

Nay - None

The motion passed.

Chairperson Plaag polled the HPC members as follows: Member Bond, Member Watkins and Chairperson Plaag.

Discussion ensued on the motion made at the January 26, 2021 HPC meeting regarding the closing of the Downtown streets for the Junaluska Marker unveiling on June 19, 2021 at 5:30 p.m. near the Watauga County Library. Ms. Turner asked the HPC to review the said motion and vote for clarity. Chairperson Plaag confirmed that the HPC was requesting a soft closure at King Street headed north on North Depot Street. Chairperson Plaag also confirmed that a hard closure at the median between the North and South sections of Queen Street, meaning no through traffic at that point.

Vice-Chairperson Pollitt joined the meeting at approximately 3:15 p.m.

Cemetery Deeds

Chairperson Plaag talked about a deed transaction that occurred in 1946 where a RF Greene and his wife Pearl Hodges Greene conveyed to Mamie H. Smith under deed book page 60 and page 618 where a parcel that probably incorporated the boundaries of the cemetery as part of the parcel, but then at the end accepted the cemetery portion from that tract. He said the deed reads as follows: "from this tract is accepted a lot known as the Hayes, Greene, and Bryan Cemetery the size of the tract was 64 x 64 and on an extreme top of a hill". He said that neither he nor Vice-Chairperson Pollitt could find a predecessor deed that makes an exception for the cemetery.

Chairperson Plaag said he nor Vice-Chairperson Pollitt could not find a proceeding deed where RF Greene obtains the parcel with dimensions that are the same as this transaction to Mamie H. Smith. He said there are a couple of earlier transactions that are near it. He said that one of those parcels appears to be an abutting parcel to this parcel. He said there was also a lot of activity in this general vicinity from the breakup of the Judge LL Greene lands in 1912. Chairperson Plaag said he was able to find the inventory of all of the parcels for it. He said there was a survey done and it appears that the survey was not recorded and the map was not recorded with the town. He said the map did exist and it was generally referred to as the LD Low survey of the Judge LL Greene lands. He said that LD Low did record a description of the parcels and not one of those parcels references the cemetery. He said we do not know how RF Greene obtained this. He said one of the assumptions that he thought both he and Vice-Chairperson Pollitt made is that they were looking for RF Greene to have been the buyer of this land. He said he looked for Pearl Hodges, as the grantee for one of these parcels that may have contained the cemetery. He said Pearl Hodges bought a lot of land in various places prior to her marriage to RF Greene. He said unfortunately, while some of her purchases were portions that LL Greene had auctioned in 1912. There was no deed for Pearl Hodges that references the cemetery and none that obviously seems to line up with this particular parcel. He said he learned that RF Greene and Pearl Hodges Greene were the preceding owners before Mamie Smith. He said he thought that the town's solution, if they wanted to take over the cemetery, would be to go to the RF Greene and Pearl Hodges Greene heirs and ask for a quitclaim deed that would allow the Town to take over the cemetery. He talked about making a recommendation to Council for the Town to take responsibility for ownership and maintenance of the cemetery.

Discussion ensued on the maintaining of the cemetery. Chairperson Plaag talked about the Town possibly running the risk of opening up responsibility for several other cemeteries in the Town that are not owned by anyone. He said the maintaining of the cemetery is the Council and Town Manager's decision. Chairperson Plaag said there is a legitimate public health interest, historic preservation question about the cemetery for the town to consider. He talked about potential accidents that can occur from loose headstones at a cemetery, when they are not maintained.

Chairperson Plaag said he thinks the HPC has done everything they can do in terms of the deed research. He asked Ms. Turner if the Council had given additional direction to the HPC on the cemetery. Ms. Turner said that Council had also asked the HPC to work with Town Attorney, Ms. Allison Meade, when the owner was found to discuss possible regulations on private cemeteries. Ms. Turner asked if the HPC wanted to go to Council first and let the Council know the results of their research on the cemetery and get Council direction, before they start creating cemetery regulations. Chairperson Plaag said he would present to Council the entire deed history of the cemetery and that the HPC could not find a clear predecessor deed and the HPC believes a quitclaim deed could be done with the descendants of the cemetery and he would pose the questions that the HPC talked about in this meeting regarding the cemetery.

Discussion ensued on regulations for private cemeteries. Chairperson Plaag noted that he did not know what regulations the Town could impose on a private cemetery that it does not control. He said that he believes there is a way that you can talk about land use, and maybe come up with UDO regulations for land use regulations for private cemeteries. Chairperson Plaag noted that he did not know what the limit is that the Town can impose on individuals in terms of maintaining the historical components of a site, unless we do landmark designations for all of those cemeteries.

Chairperson Plaag said he would need to talk to the SHPO regarding cemeteries becoming local historic landmarks. He said there might be historic component there that they are destroying if you allow them to remain unprotected. He said that he agreed with Member Bond on asking Council for direction on the cemeteries. He suggested presenting to Council the information they have which includes the suggestion to try to get a quitclaim deed from the descendants of RF Greene and Pearl Hodges Greene. He said additional research would need to be done to find out if it is even eligible as a local historic landmark.

Chairperson Plaag talked about acquiring historic cemeteries by quitclaim deeds or other mechanisms rather than researching them one at a time as requested by a single citizen. Chairperson Plaag suggested deferring to Council and the Town Attorney, Ms. Allison Meade on what should be done in this situation. The HPC agreed with Chairperson Plaag.

Ms. Turner pointed out to the HPC members that they would need to approve Chairperson Plaag to present to Council the information discussed at this HPC meeting. Chairperson Plaag asked for a motion for the HPC to authorize him to present to Council an informational report along with some questions the HPC has talked about as a way of framing a discussion for Council regarding the next steps for the HPC on said topic.

Motion and Vote:

Vice-Chairperson Pollitt made a motion, seconded by Member Bond to approve Chairperson Plaag to attend the March 2021 Council meeting to present an informational report along with some questions the Historic Preservation Commission discussed to help frame a discussion for Council regarding the

next steps for the Historic Preservation Commission on the Council's request to research the owner of the Hayes, Bryan, Greene Cemetery.

Vote:

Aye – All

Nay – None

The motion passed.

Chairperson Plaag polled the members as follows: Member Bond, Member Watkins, Vice-Chairperson Pollitt and Chairperson Plaag.

Certificate of Appropriateness Applications

Member Bond began discussion on the COA application process. She voiced her concern on the proposed COA application regarding the detail of it and suggested that the HPC try to reduce the amount of detail in it. Ms. Turner told Member Bond that the application process needs to be detailed so that a well-informed decision can be made.

Chairperson Plaag said he felt like the application process for the Chapel Hill application process had a lot of detail in it. Ms. Turner agreed with Chairperson Plaag on said application. Chairperson Plaag said that he does not think it is a good idea or fair to put on the applicant, the responsibility for identifying which sections of the design guidelines apply to their project. Ms. Turner added that the Planning Staff helps the applicant complete their application and helps them identify the section of the ordinance that they need for their proposed variance. Chairperson Plaag confirmed that it would be the HPC's job and not the applicant's job to read the application and be sure that what they are requesting is in compliance.

Chairperson Plaag noted that the Hendersonville application did not capture enough information. He further noted that Burlington application, basically asks for the applicant information and it separates out the major and the minor work and basically says which one the applicant is doing and then under the major work items it asks for the things that they need to submit for major work as listed on packet page 41, 42 and 43.

Ms. Turner said the applicant should submit a complete package with the UDO requirements already addressed. She said if they are not addressed, the Staff sends them a review letter that tells them that they need to include the missing items. She said that the applicant could submit the missing items in time for the public hearing.

Discussion ensued on the Chapel Hill application form. Chairperson Plaag and Ms. Turner agreed that the Chapel Hill application content could be reduced down. Chairperson Plaag the HPC what they thought should be changed on it.

Member Bond referred to page 52 of the meeting packet and noted on the application where it says the applicant must agree to refrain from speaking with or contacting a member of the Historic Preservation Commission about an application. She said she thought this information should be moved towards the top of the application form. Ms. Turner said that the Staff covers this topic in the pre-application meetings. Ms. Turner agreed that this information could be moved closer to the top of the application.

Chairperson Plaag scrolled slowly through the Chapel Hill application. Ms. Turner pointed out that the following items are necessary on an application: project description, personal information, property information.

Ms. Turner said that size, scale and lot placement may not be necessary on an application because the applicant is not going to know that information unless they employ an attorney and or surveyor, which sometimes, they do have a surveyor. Chairperson Plaag confirmed that item D on the application could be removed. Ms. Turner said an architect is usually needed for an elevation drawing.

Chairperson Plaag suggested that the HPC send the COA application information back to Staff to review the HPC's reactions to the COA applications and maybe design a form that captures what we think is essential to the process without overwhelming the applicant. Ms. Turner said that would be all right and she would try to have a draft application prepared by the next HPC meeting.

Chairperson Plaag called for a brief recess at approximately 4:11 p.m. At 4:19 p.m., he reconvened the meeting.

Public Comment

Chairperson Plaag opened the floor for public comment.

Ms. Lane Moody, Downtown Boone Development Coordinator joined the meeting at 4:20 p.m. She said that she had been talking with the Downtown Boone Development Association. She said they have been working on the Main Street work plan that they have to do for our state accreditation. She said they also talked about one of their goals is to take the time to understand the Historic Design Guidelines for when they are rolled out, so they can help communicate the purpose of them to the community.

Ms. Shook joined the meeting and explained that all points during this discussion with the Historic Preservation Commission, Community Appearance Commission, and with the Town Council was needed for the dissemination of the work products, before the public hearing process occurs. Ms. Shook said that in a few weeks there is probably going to be a coordination of those events. Ms. Shook said the goal all along was to share that information and keep everybody in the loop as we go through the process. She said that she expects on Friday, at the annual Planning Retreat, there will be discussion on the scheduling for future meetings, which will not be to adopt, but for public input meetings to gather feedback before the Staff move's forward with the kind of process to adopt. She said there should be sufficient time built into the process for review and comment.

Chairperson Plaag closed the floor for public comment.

District Designation Report

Chairperson Plaag noted that the packet included an updated version of the District Designation report. He said he went through the main areas and made some proposed changes but they were not substantive changes. He said the bigger area of change was to address both in the historical narrative and in the individual property descriptions what transpired with the status of the Hardin House or Turner house. He said that he tried to be as non-confrontational as he could be about the decision process, which is buried in a footnote. He said he thought that it was important to say what the sequence of events was, since this is essentially an historical document. He said he make a correction to some old language in the said draft report about the sequence of how district standards will be established. He said he corrected it to just to make it clear that District Designation report will rely on the Secretary of the Interior Standards, until a more definitive set of standards is reviewed and approved by the HPC and Council. Chairperson Plaag said originally, we talked about having the standards roll out at the same time as the designation. He said it was his understanding that we are now in a place where essentially, we will rely on the Secretary of Interior Standards with designation,

and then have the public comment process for the actual specific standards. He said we have time for that dialogue.

Chairperson Plaag opened the floor for questions or comments on the proposed changes that he had made to the draft District Designation Report.

Member Bond said she would like for the HPC to think of the Hardin House as the Hardin House and not the Hardin/Turner House because it was the Hardin House name that has the historical significance. She also said that Mr. Turner bought the house but he never lived there, he only had his law office there. Chairperson Plaag agreed with Member Bond and he noted that in the draft District Designation report the aforementioned house would be referred to as the Hardin House.

Chairperson Plaag explained the reason why we had adopted Hardin/Turner house terminology. Chairperson Plaag said no matter how many times he has said to the Watauga County Commissioners, and to Mr. Deron Geouque, the Watauga County Manager that the appropriate historic name for it is the Hardin House; they always call it the Turner house. He said his reason for blending the two names is for a public information benefit, as opposed to the appropriate terminology for an historic property.

Chairperson Plaag said the reason for making these proposed changes is so that we can send to Council up-to-date draft District Designation Report that reflects all of the discussions. He said fortunately, the district boundary did not change during all of those discussions we had over the last few months. He said that he wanted to be able to present the Council with a draft District Designation Report for the Town Attorney, Ms. Allison Meade and Council. He pointed out that there is going to be a new Council member who will need be to review it. He said as begin the designation process in the next couple of months, they would have had a chance to review it.

Chairperson Plaag said that he has not had time prior to today's meeting to make similar changes in the Downtown Survey Report, which has never officially been finalized by Council. He said with the HPC's permission, he would go through the Downtown Survey Report and essentially amend the historical report to contain the same changes like has been done in the historical section of the draft District Designation report. He said he would also update the entry for the Hardin House to reflect similar information as to what he added to the entry in the draft District Designation report.

Chairperson Plaag said that he would like to ask the HPC to make a motion to recommend to Council that they accept and pursue the draft District Designation Report based upon the draft District Designation Report that was voted on at the February 2021 Historic Preservation Commission meeting. In addition, that Council would accept the revised Downtown Survey Report based upon the same revisions that he will make to that document prior to the Council's next meeting, so that they can review both the Downtown Survey Report and the draft District Designation report at the same Council meeting. Chairperson Plaag asked the HPC, if they had any questions on what he proposed for a motion.

Motion and Vote:

Chairperson Plaag said that he would like to ask the HPC to make a motion to recommend to Council that they accept and pursue the draft District Designation Report based upon the draft District Designation Report that was voted on at the February 2021 Historic Preservation Commission meeting. In addition, that Council would accept the revised Downtown Survey Report based upon the same revisions that he will make to that document prior to the Council's next meeting, so that they can review both the Downtown Survey Report and the draft District Designation report at the same Council meeting.

Vote:

Aye – All

Nay – None

The motion passed.

Chairperson Plaag polled the HPC members as follows: Member Bond, Member Watkins, Vice-Chairperson Pollitt and Chairperson Plaag

Chairperson Plaag confirmed with Ms. Turner that the draft Designation Report is already included in the Planning Retreat packet for their meeting on Friday, February 12, 2021. He said he would have time to make those same changes in the Downtown Survey Report as he made to the draft District Designation Report. He said he would submit the updated Downtown Survey Report to Staff on Thursday.

Ms. Shook noted that we are not giving Council the actual paper copies for the updated draft documents for Friday, February 12, 2021 but she will upload the updated links to those draft documents and let Council know that they are available online, and the Staff will go over the proposed changes with them. Ms. Shook said since the Staff has the topic of the draft documents on the Planning Retreat agenda action can be taken on them at the Planning Retreat on Friday. Ms. Shook noted that most of the afternoon of said meeting would be dedicated to discussion of the Downtown related projects.

Town Streets

Chairperson Plaag provided two websites: Chronicling America at the Library of Congress and DigitalInc.org to help the HPC members with their online research. He explained how each website works and that he would upload the information to the same Google Drive as the other HPC information.

Vice-Chairperson Pollitt talked about possibly changing Tremont Street to another name that has historical meaning

Boone Cemetery Educational Panels

Ms. Turner began discussion on this agenda item noting that the Town Manager, Mr. John Ward had asked the HPC before they started a new project, if they would look at creating educational panels for the Boone Cemetery located on Howard Street. Ms. Turner said recently there has been some people skiing and sledding in the said cemetery. She said the request is for the HPC to create educational panels placed at the entrance of the said cemetery may help to cut back on these types of activities in the said cemetery.

Chairperson Plaag confirmed that the education panels would be similar to the Civil War Trails Panels that you see on the side of the highways. Ms. Turner said yes.

Discussion ensued on a budget for the Boone Cemetery Educational Panels. Chairperson Plaag asked Ms. Turner if Mr. Ward has given a budget for the educational panels. Ms. Shook said Mr. Ward did not give a budget amount. She suggested that an assessment be made on the amount of panels that would be needed and the size of the panels. She said with that information the Staff could discuss how much they would cost and the HPC can make a final recommendation based upon what the HPC's highest desire would be. She said if price was too high that discussion could occur to scale them down.

Chairperson Plaag asked the HPC for their next meeting to think about the educational panels and what might think should go on the separate panels along with panel themes and possible placement of the panels.

Town Website

Chairperson Plaag said that after talking with Town Staff, he would be transferring the website to Ms. Shook who will then have full control over it. He said the Town would have the billing responsibility for it. He said he would work with Town Staff on logistics behind the scenes to integrate it with other aspects of the Town website. Ms. Shook said that Mr. Ward had told her that the Town is close to making a higher end position that would be responsible for the town website. He said the goal is to be able to present the website to both Town Staff and eventually Council as a way of doing Town subsites going forward.

Informal Discussion or Other Matters

Chairperson Plaag suggested the following agenda items for the next HPC meeting on March 9, 2021: COA Application, Boone Cemetery Interpretative Educational Panels, District Designation Report Town Streets and the Town Website.

Discussion ensued on the agenda items for the next HPC meeting. Chairperson Plaag set a deadline of one week before the next HPC meeting for any outstanding drafts that have not been submitted for the Town Streets project. He asked the HPC to email the said drafts to him and copy Ms. Turner and Ms. Marlene Crosby, Board Secretary by March 2, 2021, so they can be placed into the HPC meeting packet.

Chairperson Plaag confirmed with Ms. Turner that the HPC could continue with the Town Streets project while working on the cemetery educational panels. Ms. Turner said the cemetery educational panels topic should be added to the HPC's task list.

Chairperson Plaag asked the Staff if they would have an update on the process for the District Designation Report. Ms. Shook said yes, there should be an update by that time. Chairperson Plaag said he would give an update on the said report at the next meeting.

Chairperson Plaag said he might have an update on the Town website, but he was not sure. He asked Ms. Turner, if the Staff had other agenda items to add to the next HPC meeting. Ms. Turner said that Chairperson Plaag had covered all of the agenda items for the next meeting.

Adjournment

Member Bond made a motion, seconded by Member Watkins to adjourn the meeting at 5:05 p.m.

Vote:

Aye – All

Nay – None

The motion passed.

Chairperson Plaag polled the HPC members as follows:

Member Bond, Vice-Chairperson Pollitt, Member Watkins and Chairperson Plaag.

Eric Plaag, Chairperson

Marlene Crosby, Board Secretary

**TOWN OF BOONE
HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES
MARCH 9, 2021
3:00 PM**

Historic Preservation Commission Members in Attendance:

Chairperson Eric Plaag, Vice-Chairperson Phoebe Pollitt, Bettie Bond and Chuck Watkins

Council Liaisons: Rennie Brantz and Virginia Roseman

Town Staff in Attendance:

Jane Shook-Director of Planning and Inspections, Christy Turner-Senior Planner and Marlene Crosby-Board Secretary

Others Present: Mark Freed, Director of Cultural Resources

Call to Order

Chairperson Eric Plaag called the meeting of the Boone Historic Preservation Commission, held via WebEx, a video conferencing software to order on Tuesday, March 9, 2021 at 3:03 p.m.

Adoption of Agenda

Member Bond made a motion, seconded by Member Watkins to approve the agenda as amended. Chairperson Plaag requested to merge the Civil War Trails Markers with the Boone Historic Cemetery Interpretative Educational Panels agenda item.

Vote:

Aye – All

Nay – None

The motion passed.

Chairperson Plaag polled the HPC members as follows:

Member Bond, Member Watkins and Chairperson Plaag

Public Comment

No individuals requested the opportunity to speak during public comment.

Junaluska Local Historic Marker Dedication – Road Closure

Ms. Christy Turner, Senior Planner talked about the responses she had received from the Town of Boone Public Works Department and Police Department regarding the proposed road closures. She said both departments approved the proposed road closures suggested by the HPC for the marker dedication. She said both of the Town departments had asked if the HPC could discuss scaling down the proposed road closures because both departments were

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concerned about potentially blocking access to the funeral home. She confirmed that the Public Works Department could put up substantial barriers to block the roads for safety purposes.

Discussion ensued on changing the proposed road closures. Chairperson Plaag asked if the issue that the Town departments are having is with going to the funeral home or with leaving the funeral home. Ms. Turner said the issue is both because we do not know what might be occurring at the funeral home during the time of the proposed road closure. She suggested contacting the funeral home and asking if they could work with the Town on the proposed road closures of 4:30 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. on Saturday, June 19, 2021.

Chairperson Plaag suggested that the HPC propose a recommendation to close the lower section of North Depot Street and the westbound lane of Queen Street at North Depot Street from the Watauga County Library to the Austin and Barnes Funeral Home driveway. He noted that this proposed recommendation would not allow the northbound traffic on Depot Street to turn left onto Queen Street for said proposed time. There was a consensus of the HPC on Chairperson Plaag's suggestion for the proposed road closures for said marker dedication.

Certificate of Appropriateness Application

Ms. Turner explained that the Planning Staff has almost completed the draft Certificate of Appropriateness application and they will try to have it completed in the next couple of weeks. Chairperson Plaag requested that the Planning Staff email what they have completed so far on the draft COA application to the HPC prior to the next HPC meeting, so they can review it and be prepared to comment on it at that meeting.

Ms. Turner explained that the HPC would need to go through the Quasi-Judicial training prior to attending Town meetings concerning COA cases. She said the Planning Staff would begin to work on coordinating said training with the Town Attorney.

Council Liaison Roseman joined the meeting at approximately 3:17 p.m.

Chairperson Plaag noted that there is a future case for the Linney House that will involve the COA process.

Chairperson Plaag explained that the Quasi-Judicial process could offer applicants the option of day or evening meetings that do not conflict with other scheduled Town meetings. He suggested putting this said information on the COA application because it could give the applicant some flexibility to have day or evening meeting options. Ms. Turner pointed out that the Planning Staff would also have to coordinate with the Town Attorney on the meeting date and time.

Ms. Turner reminded the HPC about the deadlines that are required for the advertising of a Town meeting and the posting of the property on COA cases.

Boone Historic Cemetery Interpretative Educational Panels

Chairperson Plaag gave a brief history of the Boone Historic Cemetery noting some of the activities that have gone on in the east section of the cemetery such as sunbathing, skiing and dog walking. He noted that the Town of Boone has owned said cemetery since 2015 located off Howard Street near the Appalachian State University campus. He explained that at the last HPC meeting, Mr. Ward had asked the HPC to begin discussions on the educational panel's agenda item. Chairperson Plaag explained that the educational panels would make the public aware of the history of the cemetery.

Chairperson Plaag suggested making pocket brochures that would explain the history of the cemetery and why it is a divided cemetery as well as why the three Union Soldiers are buried there. Member Bond suggested placing bar codes on the signs, so the public can see the map of the cemetery and be able to read about the history of it on their smart phones rather than using pocket brochures.

Ms. Turner pointed out that the Town of Boone GIS Department has already mapped the cemetery and the maps contain who is buried there. Chairperson Plaag noted that the GIS Department is waiting on him to complete the research on the cemetery and the GIS Department can add it to the mapping that has already been completed.

Member Watkins suggested making the said panels weatherproofed and fun to read to prevent informational overload, the panels should contain the reasons why the cemetery is a sacred space and why the cemetery is in the middle of Boone. He also suggested installing poop-bag stations.

Council Liaison Roseman noted that she likes the idea of explaining the history of the east and west sections of the cemetery. Chairperson Plaag explained that sometime back, there was a fence in the cemetery that divided the two sections of the cemetery; but the fence has been removed.

Discussion ensued on possibly getting Civil War Trails Markers. Chairperson Plaag talked about speaking with Mr. Drew Gruber, Executive Director of the Civil War Trails Program. Chairperson Plaag explained that Mr. Gruber had contacted him regarding the wording on some older civil war markers in our area. Mr. Gruber told Chairperson Plaag that he would like his help with reviewing the Camp Mast marker to see if it could use some edits to the wording on it.

Mr. Gruber also asked Chairperson Plaag, if he knew of any other sites that should be commemorated in Watauga County. Chairperson Plaag told Mr. Gruber about the Union graves at the Boone Cemetery and the James Council house where the shooting started when Stoneman's Raid came into Boone. Chairperson Plaag noted that the James Council house used to sit where the Downtown Post Office is today.

Chairperson Plaag said that the Civil War Markers have to be placed on public property and the Downtown Post Office is owned by the Town of Boone. Mr. Gruber liked the location of a marker at the Downtown Post Office because it would be viewed a lot by the public.

Chairperson Plaag said Mr. Gruber was interested in the Union Graves at the Boone Cemetery, Jones Council House and the Blalock's which are outside of Downtown Boone in Watauga County.

Chairperson Plaag said the Blalocks have a Civil War Marker assigned to them and it is being re-examined. He said that Mr. Gruber was intrigued with doing a Civil War Marker in Blowing Rock because this is the area that the Blalocks were from and where their more significant historical activity happened during the war. Chairperson Plaag said that he and the Watauga Historical Society would be working with Mr. Gruber on the Blalock site.

Chairperson Plaag noted that he would be speaking again with Mr. Gruber after he speaks with the Watauga Historical Society on some suggestions on where to put the Civil War Markers in Watauga County. Chairperson Plaag said that Mr. Gruber would send the suggestions to the TBA for their feedback.

Member Bond also suggested that recessed marble footstones be used in the cemetery and noted with the stones being recessed it would make the cemetery easier to maintain. Council Liaison Roseman agreed with Member Bond on the recessed marble footstones.

Discussion ensued on the funding for the markers. Member Bond noted that the Watauga Historical Society might could help with funding for the said marker locations. Chairperson Plaag said that due to the Covid-19 pandemic in 2020 that the Civil War Trails marker group has funding that they did not use that might be available to help fund the installation of new markers in the new areas in 2021. Ms. Turner asked Mr. Mark Freed, Town of Boone Cultural Resources Director to explain to the HPC an email that Mr. Freed had sent her regarding funding. Mr. Freed explained that there is funding in the Cultural Resources Department budget that could be allocated to the Boone Cemetery to help purchase the recessed marble footstones. Mr. Freed noted that he would consult with Mr. John Ward, Boone Town Manager about said funds.

Member Bond offered to contact the Austin and Barnes Funeral Home in Downtown Boone to inquire about the cost and availability of the recessed marble footstones and report to the HPC at their next meeting. Mr. Freed said that he could ask the Public Works Department their thoughts on the limestones and get some samples for the HPC to look at them and then get a quote on them.

Chairperson Plaag said that potentially one of the educational panels could be paid for by the Civil War marker program. He explained that anything that is suggested by the HPC for Civil War marker has to be approved by the TBA because they are the Civil War Trails member for Watauga County. He explained that the cost of a marker is usually approximately \$2,500.00 and the member has to provide most of the cost of it, if not all of the cost.

Vice-Chairperson Pollitt joined the meeting at approximately 3:52 p.m.

Chairperson Plaag explained that because of the Covid-19 Pandemic, the Civil Wars Trails program did not use most of their budget for its programming events. He said the Civil Wars Trails board has agreed to redirect some of their funding this year and subsidize new markers in new areas. He said this is an opportunity to get the Civil War Trails Markers paid for by working through the TBA and the Civil Wars Trails program.

Discussion ensued on the manufacturing of the markers. Member Watkins asked who does the manufacturing of the signs. Chairperson Plaag said that the Town might be able to ask if the font on the new markers mimic the font on other signage to prevent having clashing signage.

Chairperson Plaag suggested the possibility of having music and Candlelight Tours in the said cemetery. He said the Candlelight Tours have been popular in other communities. Council Liaison Roseman agreed with the possibility of having Candlelight Tours in the cemetery. Chairperson Plaag noted that when the former Cultural Resources Director heard about this type of thing, there was a concern for the staffing of these type of events. Mr. Freed said he is not against the programing and he is happy to put budget dollars towards it. Mr. Freed noted that he is not familiar with the type of programing but the Cultural Resource Department could support some of the advertising or the promotion of it. Mr. Freed said that perhaps a theatre group could put together the programming of it. Council Liaison Roseman talked about the Candlelight Tours being a paid tour.

Council Liaison Roseman left the meeting at approximately 4:00 p.m.

Discussion ensued on the information for the markers to be located at the cemetery. The HPC agreed to have signage at the front gate of the cemetery that tells what it is and why it is sacred to the people of the Town of Boone and Watauga County. The HPC also agreed that the information should explain the history of the Council's and have a QR Barcode that includes a map of the cemetery and information on the Union Soldiers graves and the division of the cemetery.

Chairperson Plaag offered to draft a statement regarding the HPC's recommendations for the educational panels. He said he would email the draft recommendations to Mr. Ward and the Boone Town Council for their review. Ms. Turner confirmed that the deadline to submit an action request for the April 2021 Council agenda is Friday, April 2, 2021.

Member Bond requested for the HPC to review the draft recommendations prior to them being sent to Council at their April 2021 Council meeting. Chairperson Plaag suggested that he could email the draft recommendations to the HPC for their review. He requested that all feedback should be emailed back to him only because of the meeting law requirements. Ms. Turner confirmed that a group email is not allowed under the meeting law requirements.

Motion and Vote:

Vice-Chairperson Pollitt made a motion, seconded by Member Bond for Chairperson Plaag to create a statement that contains the Historic Preservation Commission's recommendations for the markers at the Boone Historic Cemetery Interpretative Educational Panels.

Vote:

Aye – All

Nay – None

The motion passed.

Chairperson Plaag polled the HPC members as follows:

Member Bond, Member Watkins, Vice-Chairperson Pollitt and Chairperson Plaag

Town Streets

Chairperson Plaag opened the floor for the HPC to discuss their research on the Town Streets. He noted that he made a placeholder on the sample version that he created for the Town website that he had worked on with the Planning Staff to add links for Town Streets and other information. He pointed out that the links can contain photos and other information on the streets along with the history of them.

Discussion ensued on the goal of the Town Street Project. Council Liaison Brantz asked Chairperson Plaag to explain in general the goal of researching the Town Streets. Chairperson Plaag said the goal is to have on the HPC website where the public can read about the history of the significant streets in the Town of Boone.

Member Bond voiced her frustration on not being able to find a lot of information on the Town Streets that she is researching which are River Street, Faculty Street and Howard Street. Member Watkins noted that it is a difficult time to try to do research with many public places being temporally closed because of the pandemic. Vice-Chairperson Pollitt noted that there are not a lot of maps to help with the research of the Town Streets. Chairperson Plaag talked about a county map. Vice-Chairperson Pollitt noted that she was familiar with the county map and it was not very helpful for this particular Town Street research. Chairperson Plaag said there is a map in the Jones House that he would like to scan for Digital Watauga; he said it is a very early street map of Boone that dates to the 1920's.

Chairperson Plaag asked Ms. Turner about the possible digitizing of the some of the older town maps and posting them on the Digital Watauga website. Ms. Turner explained that the scanner that the Planning Staff is using needs replacement and the Planning Staff is waiting on the results of the budget hearings to see it can be replaced.

Chairperson Plaag noted that the HPC must use footnotes for the entries on their research to show where they found the information on the Town Streets.

Discussion ensued on other Town Streets. Chairperson Plaag said he needed volunteers to work on Depot Street and Queen Street. Vice-Chairperson Pollitt volunteered to work on Depot Street. Chairperson Plaag volunteered to work on Queen Street.

Chairperson Plaag noted that he would have the drafts prepared on the research he has completed on Water Street and King Street by the next HPC meeting. He said that the HPC could also review North Street at the next meeting.

Town Website

Chairperson Plaag noted that the Planning Staff had asked that discussion on this agenda item be tabled to next HPC meeting in April of 2021. The HPC agreed to table this agenda item until their next meeting.

Digital Watauga Project Funding Renewal

Ms. Turner explained that in the budget hearings that Ms. Shook had proposed that the annual funding renewal be a blanket approval. She said that Ms. Shook suggested that the HPC send a recommendation to Council for the suggested amount of \$5,000.00 for the year of 2021.

Chairperson Plaag asked Vice-Chairperson Pollitt to run the meeting while he recused himself from the HPC meeting for discussion on this topic, because he is directly involved with the Digital Watauga Project.

Chairperson Plaag explained the role that Digital Watauga plays in helping research and redevelopment of Downtown buildings with the Planning and Inspections Department as well as preserving the history of Watauga County. He further explained that the HPC relies on the services of Digital Watauga. He said that he anticipates that with the Town Streets project there will probably be a need for the services of Digital Watauga to process the Town Street photos. He said that Digital Watauga has allowed the use of its images for the Downtown Survey Report and District Designation Report that will be published. He said that Digital Watauga is continuing to take in new collections that show pieces of the architectural history.

Chairperson Plaag talked about the old Hunts Department store being located beside the Fire Department on King Street having the color blue on it along with structural glass that is under the brick veneer of the building. Ms. Turner told the HPC that she asked for a piece of the glass and it was given to her. Ms. Turner offered the piece of glass to Chairperson Plaag for the Digital Watauga Collection. Member bond suggested that the piece of glass be given to the Watauga Historical Society. She pointed out that the 150th Sesquicentennial will rely on what is in the collection.

On behalf of Digital Watauga Project, Chairperson Plaag requested that the Town of Boone continue to support the Digital Watauga Project with giving them the requested amount of \$5,000.00 for the year of 2021.

Motion and Vote:

Member Watkins made a motion, seconded by Vice-Chairperson Pollitt for the Historic Preservation Commission to recommend to Council to continue to support Digital Watauga for the services that they provide to the Town of Boone and to the Historic Preservation Commission by honoring Digital Watauga with their requested funding renewal amount of \$5,000.00 for the year of 2021.

Vote:

Aye – All

Nay- None

The motion passed.

Vice-Chairperson Pollitt polled the HPC members as follows:

Member Bond, Member Watkins, Vice-Chairperson Pollitt and Chairperson Plaag

At the end of the discussion on this topic, Chairperson Plaag resumed his position as Chairperson of the HPC.

Requests for Comments

Ms. Turner explained that the Planning Staff had looked into Chairperson Plaag's question from the last meeting regarding a blanket approval for anyone to speak for the HPC, when requested by the press or others.

Ms. Shook joined the meeting at approximately 4:48 p.m.

Ms. Shook responded and said that she had spoken with the Town Attorney on this topic. She said the Town Attorney recommended that the HPC not give a blanket approval to anyone to speak for the HPC, when requested by the media or others. She said the HPC members could speak as citizens on a topic the HPC might be assisting on.

Informal Discussion or Other Matters

Discussion ensued on a Superintendent of Public Welfare report from May of 1921. Vice-Chairperson Pollitt explained that she was a school nurse for 15 years and that she had found in some of her school paperwork the May 1921 Report from Mr. Ollie Coffey, who was the Superintendent of Public Welfare. She asked the HPC what she should do with the report. Chairperson Plaag suggested that Vice-Chairperson Pollitt adding the report to the Phoebe Pollitt Collection or adding it to an Anonymous Collection at Digital Watauga. Vice-Chairperson Pollitt supported the idea of the report being added to an Anonymous Collection.

Member Bond asked Chairperson Plaag how many items are online at Digital Watauga. Chairperson Plaag said that there are about 13,000 items online.

Chairperson Plaag suggested the following agenda items for the next HPC meeting: Town Website, Town Streets, COA Application, Junaluska Marker Dedication Road Closure, Cemetery Blocks and Downtown Projects Update.

Adjournment

Member Bond made a motion, seconded by Member Watkins to adjourn the meeting at 5:04 p.m.

Vote:

Aye – All

Nay – None

The motion passed.

Chairperson Plaag polled the HPC members by a show of hands by the following members: Member Bond, Vice-Chairperson Pollitt, Member Watkins and Chairperson Plaag.

Eric Plaag, Chairperson

Marlene Crosby, Board Secretary

----- Forwarded message -----

From: Eric Plaag [REDACTED]

Date: Mon, Mar 22, 2021 at 8:41 AM

Subject: Closed Session Minutes of the County Commissioners Regarding the Hardin House

To: John Ward <john.ward@townofboone.net>, Jane Shook <jane.shook@townofboone.net>, Christy Turner <Christy.Turner@townofboone.net>, Marlene Crosby <Marlene.Crosby@townofboone.net>

Cc: Pam Williamson [REDACTED]

Hello all,

This email is also being sent to members of the Historic Preservation Commission by blind copy to prevent discussion via email that might violate open meetings rules. Please do not respond to this email if you are a member of an elected or appointed body for the Town of Boone.

Attached are the unsealed, closed session minutes regarding the Hardin House (frequently referred to as the "Turner House" or the "Ginn House" by County officials) dating back to 2018. Pam Williamson and I each obtained these through simultaneous public records requests to Deron Geouque back in December, and we each finally received them last week. I urge all of you to read them carefully and be prepared to discuss these at the next HPC meeting. **Marlene**, please add this as an item at the top of our agenda (after the usual formalities). **Pam**, I encourage you to attend this meeting virtually if you wish to make any public comment. Please coordinate your virtual attendance with Planning and Inspections staff. **John**, I would be grateful if you could also be in attendance, as members of the HPC may have questions for you regarding some of the claims made by Mr. Geouque about the Town's position on various matters related to this topic.

For the record, Mr. Geouque's characterization of my remarks at the joint meeting of Town and County officials (as described on 7-23-19 in the attached) is completely false. I made clear during that meeting that the house would likely be eligible for the NRHP and Local Landmark designation if the later siding were removed and the porches restored--exactly what I had said in past comments to Mr. Geoque and the Commission as a whole. At no time have I possessed or received "an email stating that the Turner House will not be on the historical register" (whatever that is). I did share that there had been a previous attempt to have the building Study Listed (the first step in the NRHP process), but this had not been successful because of the presence of the siding and the alteration of the porches. I reiterated that these issues were reversible, and that the property would likely be eligible if that rehabilitation work were completed--exactly what I had told them in the writeup on the house that I had provided to them at the May 7, 2019, County Commissioners meeting (see attached).

Please note, also, that the attached document provided by the County regarding unsealed closed session minutes does not cover all instances or details of public, open-session meetings regarding the Hardin House dating back to 2018. I will attempt to reconstruct those minutes from what is available online and forward a separate document to you containing that information.

Best,

Eric

[REDACTED]

Communication: Emailed dated March 22, 2021 (Hardin House (aka Turner House))

02-20-18 Closed Session - UNSEALED

LAND ACQUISITION

Turner Law Office Building

County Manager Geouque stated that, several years ago, the County had asked Mr. John Turner if he would be interested in selling the property where his law office sat to the County. At that time Mr. Turner offered the property for \$1,000,000. The County did not purchase the property at that time. Mr. Geouque stated that the tax value on the property, which sits adjacent to the Administrative Building and East Annex, was approximately \$696,000. Mr. Turner currently has an appraisal in the amount of approximately \$800,000.

Mr. Geouque stated that Mr. Turner now wanted to sell the property and had asked if the County was interested in purchasing it. The County has considered placing a parking deck on that property. Discussion was held regarding the value in the property as it adjoined County property. Commissioner Yates asked County Attorney di Santi if he should ask to be recused when/if a vote was taken on the property due to his cousin, Mr. David Yates, being a part-owner in the property. County Attorney di Santi advised Commissioner Yates that it would be wise to ask to be recused.

Mr. Geouque stated that Mr. Joe Furman, Planning and Inspections Director, had questioned whether the building could be razed as it might be considered historical. Mr. Geouque stated that he planned to seek the answer through the Town of Boone. County Attorney di Santi stated that it would be appropriate to wait and seek the answer during the due diligence period if the County made an offer that was accepted.

Mr. Geouque stated that Mr. Turner wanted the County to pay for a new appraisal; however, the County Manager stated that negotiations should be held first and then the County could state that any offer submitted is contingent on an appraisal.

After discussion, the Board agreed, by consensus, to direct the County Manager to pursue the property.

03-06-18 Closed Session - UNSEALED

LAND ACQUISITION

Turner Law Office Building

County Manager Geouque stated that he had offered to purchase the Turner property at tax value, approximately \$695,000. The appraisal from Mr. Turner valued the property at \$800,000 in 2013.

After discussing the property, the Board agreed to direct the County Manager to offer up to \$775,000 for the property. If an offer was accepted, obtaining a new appraisal and discussing plans with the Town of Boone would take place during the due diligence time frame.

03-20-18 Closed Session - UNSEALED

LAND ACQUISITION

Turner Law Office Building

County Manager Geouque stated that negotiations were underway for the Turner property. The County Manager originally offered tax value and Mr. Turner countered with \$785,000. The County Manager came back with \$730,000 to which Mr. Turner countered with \$780,000. Negotiations will continue.

04-03-18 Closed Session - UNSEALED

LAND ACQUISITION

Turner Law Office Building

County Manager Geouque stated that negotiations were ongoing.

04-17-18 Closed Session - UNSEALED

Turner Law Office Building

County Manager Geouque stated that negotiations were ongoing with the current offer from Mr. Turner being \$765,000. The County Manager stated that he plans to counter with \$755,000. Mr. Turner has requested to rent the property back, if purchased from the County, while working to relocate his offices.

By consensus, the Board was agreeable with idea of leasing the property, if purchased, back to Mr. Turner.

05-01-18 Closed Session - UNSEALED

LAND ACQUISITION

Turner Law Office Building

County Manager Geouque stated that negotiations were ongoing with the County's current counter offer being at \$755,000 and the County being willing to work with Mr. Turner while he relocates his offices. Mr. Geouque stated that he asked for 180 days due diligence, however, it seemed that Mr. Turner might agree to 90-120 days. Mr. Geouque stated that he had talked with Ms. Jane Shook, Town of Boone Planning and Inspections Director, who stated that the Town now had a

thirty-three foot height restriction that might affect a parking deck. Mr. Geouque stated that he had also had discussions with Mr. John Ward, Town of Boone Manager, regarding a joint venture in building a parking deck. Mr. Geouque stated that, if the purchase was made, the County may need to demolish the house for parking and then build a parking deck in a few years.

06-19-18 Closed Session - UNSEALED

LAND ACQUISITION

Turner Law Office Building

County Manager Geouque stated he had received an offer from Mr. Turner. The terms included the purchase price of \$755,000 with Mr. Turner being allowed one year to vacate the building free of charge. The due diligence period will be for 120 days. Mr. Geouque stated that, if the purchase was made, the County may need to demolish the house for parking and then build a parking deck in a few years.

The offer was deferred to the County Attorney for review and would be on the July 17 agenda for consideration.

07-17-18 Closed Session - UNSEALED

LAND ACQUISITION

Turner Law Office Building

County Attorney di Santi reviewed the Purchase Agreement for Mr. Turner's property and stated that it is satisfactory as to form. The County Attorney stated that if the property has been deemed "historical" it would be discovered during the title search which would be conducted during the due diligence period. The County Manager stated that tax value for the property is \$695,000. The terms included the purchase price of \$755,000 with Mr. Turner leasing the property for one year. The due diligence period will be until October 31, 2018, and the closing date was set for November 28, 2018.

Action was taken in open session.

07-17-18

POSSIBLE ACTION AFTER CLOSED SESSION

Chairman Welch stated that the County had the opportunity to purchase the Ginn House from

Professional Holdings, LLC, at a purchase price of \$755,000 with Mr. Turner leasing the property for one year. The due diligence period will be until October 31, 2018, and the closing date was set for November 28, 2018.

County Manager Geouque requested the Board approve acquiring an updated appraisal for the property.

Vice-Chairman Kennedy, seconded by Commissioner Hodges, moved to approve the agreement for purchase and sale of real property located at 136 North Water Street, Boone, North Carolina, in the amount of \$755,000 subject to the terms and contingencies in the agreement and to direct the County Manager to obtain the services of Mr. Mike Sweeting to conduct an appraisal of the property.

VOTE: Aye-4(Welch, Kennedy, Hodges, Turnbow)
Nay-0
Absent-1(Yates)

08-21-18 Closed Session - UNSEALED

Turner Law Office Building

County Manager Geouque updated the Board on the due diligence process for Mr. Turner's property, known as the Guinn House. The County Manager reported that the appraisal, by Sweeting Appraisal, came in at \$755,000 which is the purchase price.

09-18-18 Closed Session - UNSEALED

LAND ACQUISITION

Turner Law Office Building

County Manager Geouque stated that the closing for the property will be scheduled soon. County Attorney di Santi stated the title work for the property came back fine.

12-03-18 Closed Session - UNSEALED

Turner Law Office Building

County Attorney di Santi stated that the closing for the property was held the week prior to the meeting.

February 18 & 19, 2019 Retreat

The following topics were discussed:

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Review of Current Capital Improvement Plan (CIP)

Mr. Deron Geouque & Mr. Robert Marsh

1. Current CIP Status Report
2. Courtroom # 2 Renovations
3. East Annex Building Program
4. Turner Building

03-05-19 Closed Session - UNSEALED

Turner Property

County Manager Geouque inquired to see if the Board was interested in a swap with the Town of Boone (the Turner property for other parking such as Queen Street lot, Library spaces, or metered spots on Queen Street). The County Manager stated that Mr. John Ward, Town of Boone Manager, had indicated that if the Town enacted a historic district, the Town still could not prohibit the demolition of the Turner building; however, the Town could be restrictive regarding the construction of parking on the lot.

The Turner house is currently being leased back to Mr. Turner until November 2019. Discussion was held regarding County plans for the house on the Turner property if a swap was not worked out with the Town of Boone. Plans would be to either demolish the house or list it for sale with the understanding the buyer would pay to have it moved. A last ditch effort would be to pay to move the house to Town of Boone property.

After discussions and by consensus, the Board agreed to direct the County Manager to send a letter to the Town of Boone stating to gage whether the Town is interested in a swap of properties. In the meantime, the County Manager is to get estimates for the cost of demo of the house and to have the house moved. If a swap isn't worked out by the next meeting, the house will be listed for sale by the County.

03-19-19 Closed Session - UNSEALED

Turner Property

County Manager Geouque stated that Maintenance Director, Robert Marsh, was in the process of getting quotes on the costs to demolish the building on the Turner property. The County Manager stated that he had not, however, had luck finding anyone who wants to move the building to another

property.

05-07-19

PUBLIC COMMENT

Mr. Eric Plagg, Chairperson for the Town of Boone Historic Preservation Board, requested the County and Town of Boone work together for solutions for the Turner house on County owned property located adjacent to the County Administration Building in Downtown Boone.

05-07-19 Closed Session - UNSEALED

ATTORNEY/CLIENT MATTERS

Turner Property

County Attorney di Santi stated that the County could offer the Turner Building to the Town. County Manager Geouque stated that the County has sent two letters offering such with no response from the Town. County Manager Geouque also stated that the Town Manager has known for two years about the County's plans to place a parking deck on the property.

06-18-19 Closed Session - UNSEALED

Turner Property

County Manager Geouque stated that he will be meeting with Town of Boone representatives regarding the Turner property next week. Mr. Geouque will share more information regarding the property after that meeting.

07-23-19 Closed Session - UNSEALED

Turner Property

Vice-Chairman Kennedy stated that he, Chairman Welch and County Manager Geouque had recently met with Town of Boone Mayor Rennie Brantz, Mr. John Ward, Town of Boone Manager, and Mr. Eric Plaag, Chairperson for the Town of Boone Historic Preservation Board. The Town's representatives asked that the County hold off a couple of months after Mr. Turner's lease was up on the now County-owned Turner property. County Manager Geouque stated that the lease was set to expire in November 2019. Vice-Chairman Kennedy stated that it was a productive meeting in which options for a parking deck were discussed. Mr. Plaag has an email stating that the Turner

Communication: Turner House Closed Session Minutes (Hardin House (aka Turner House))

House will not be on the historical register. At the end of the meeting, the Town representatives were told that the County is and has been trying to partner on projects with the Town of Boone. County Manager Geouque stated that he told those at the meeting that the County would partner with the Town but the County's contribution to the partnership would be the \$755,000 used to purchase the Turner property. He also told them that the County did not want the house on that property.

08-06-19 Closed Session - UNSEALED

ATTORNEY/CLIENT MATTERS

Turner Property

Clarification was given that the house on the County-owned Turner property would be demolished at the end of Mr. Turner's lease on the property.

09-17-19 Closed Session - UNSEALED

Turner Property Lease

County Manager Geouque stated that Mr. John Turner had approached him and requested to extend his lease for the County-owned property recently purchased from Mr. Turner located adjacent to the County's Administration Building. County Manager Geouque stated that the County did have funds to tear the building down and pave the lot for parking. The Board discussed extending the lease until Spring of 2020. County Attorney di Santi suggested extending the lease on a month to month basis.

After discussion, the Board agreed, by consensus, to extend the lease on a month-to-month basis and to raise the lease payment from Mr. Turner to \$1,500.00 per month.

10-01-19

B. Proposed Lease Extension for Turner Property

County Manager Geouque stated that Mr. John Turner had requested an extension of his firm's current lease with the County for the law office premises at 136 North Water Street, Boone. His request was for a maximum six month extension through May 30, 2020. He was agreeable to a monthly increase in rent from \$1,000 to \$1,500. The new monthly lease rate would be effective with the rent payable on November 30, 2019, which would be the first month of the extended term. Mr. Turner also agreed to continue to maintain the buildings and grounds through the extended term of the lease. Mr. Geouque stated that the Board could agree to the proposed terms or counter with a month to month lease agreement. Mr. Robert Marsh, Maintenance Director,

has prepared to advertise for a buyer for the house on the property. Mr. Turner is aware that he would need to move as soon as possible if a buyer is found.

Vice-Chairman Kennedy, seconded by Commissioner Yates, moved to approve the lease extension through May 30, 2020, at an increased monthly rate of \$1,500, with Mr. Turner continuing to maintain the buildings and grounds through the extended term.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

11-19-19 Closed Session - UNSEALED

Turner Property Lease

Concerns were shared that the Town of Boone may put the County-owned Turner Property within the Historic District they are considering to create. County Manager Geouque stated that it could delay the County's plan to demolish the house on the property if the Historic District is passed. County Attorney di Santi stated that, unless the Town adopts a moratorium, the County could get a demolition permit from the Town as early as tomorrow. The County Manager stated that he would check to see how long the permit would be good as the County recently extended Mr. Turner's lease for the property.

By consensus, the Board directed to get a demolition permit for the property, if possible.

12-03-19 Closed Session - UNSEALED

Turner Property Lease

County Manager Geouque stated that he has submitted the paperwork for a demolition permit with the Town of Boone for the Turner property. The County Manager stated that once he had applied for the permit he began to receive calls from citizens who want a public hearing held prior to the house being torn down.

12-17-19

B. Request to Surplus Turner Property House

County Manager Geouque stated that the County has advertised the sale of the Turner house and outbuilding located on County-owned property at 136 North Water Street, Boone, PIN #2900-79-8884-000 with bids being accepted until Tuesday, October 29, 2019. No bids were received

for the house and outbuilding. Since that time, staff has obtained a demolition permit for the buildings from the Town of Boone. Demolition would occur after the Turner Law Office, who is currently leasing the property, vacates the premises in April. The building needs to be surplus for demolition or any future sale.

Commissioner Yates, seconded by Commissioner Turnbow, moved to surplus the buildings on the property located at 136 North Water Street, Boone, North Carolina.

VOTE: Aye-4(Kennedy, Turnbow, Wallin, Yates)
Nay-0
Absent-1(Welch)

01-21-20

F. Announcements

County Manager Geouque announced the following:

- The Boone Town Council has expressed interest in a joint open public meeting to discuss the future of the County-owned Turner House and parking issues.

02-04-20

F. Proposed Dates for Joint Meeting with the Town of Boone to Discuss the Turner House

County Manager Geouque stated that the Town of Boone had confirmed that February 24, 2020, at 6:30 PM was a good time to hold a joint meeting to discuss the Turner building currently owned by the County. The County would host the meeting at the Agricultural Conference Center. Vice-Chairman Kennedy stated that he would not be able to attend that meeting due to a previous commitment at that time.

Commissioner Turnbow, seconded by Commissioner Yates, moved to schedule a special joint meeting with the Boone Town Council on Monday, February 24, 2020, at 6:30 P.M. to discuss the Turner building.

VOTE: Aye-4(Kennedy, Turnbow, Wallin, Yates)
Nay-0
Absent-1(Welch)

02-18-20

C. Announcements

County Manager Geouque announced the following:

- The Board of Commissioners will hold a joint meeting with the Boone Town Council to discuss the County-owned Turner building located on Water Street. The meeting will be held on Monday, February 24, 2020, at 6:30 P.M. in the Agriculture Conference Center located on Poplar Grove Road.

02-18-20 Closed Session - UNSEALED

Turner House

County Manager Geouque shared that Mr. John Turner had let him know that he found another place to rent and planned to be out of the County-owned Turner property in April 2020. Mr. Geouque stated that staff had received one bid from D. H. Griffin to demo the house on the Turner property. The cost associated with the demo was approximately \$30,000. Mr. Geouque stated that Town of Boone Manager, Mr. John Ward, had indicated that he wanted to meet prior to the Joint meeting with the Board of Commissioners and Boone Town Council scheduled for February 24, 2020. Mr. Geouque stated that he responded to Mr. Ward by stating that the only topic that would be covered in the Joint Meeting would be the Turner house.

2020 Retreat February 13 & 14, 2020

The following topics were discussed:

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Review of Current Capital Improvement Plan (CIP)

Mr. Deron Geouque & Mr. Robert Marsh

1. Current CIP Status Report
2. Courtroom # 2 Renovations
3. East Annex Building Program
4. Courthouse and Administration Roof Replacements
5. County Facilities Assessment Update
6. Turner Building

02-24-20

MINUTES

WATAUGA COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS JOINT MEETING WITH THE BOONE TOWN COUNCIL TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 24, 2020

The Watauga County Board of Commissioners held a joint meeting with the Boone Town Council at 6:30 P.M. on Monday, February 24, 2020, at the Agricultural Conference Center, Boone, North Carolina.

Those present were:

Watauga County: Chairman John Welch, Commissioners: Larry Turnbow, Charlie Wallin, and Perry Yates, as well as County Attorney, Anthony di Santi, County Manager Deron Geouque, and Clerk to the Board, Anita Fogle.

[Clerk's Note: Watauga County Vice-Chairman Billy Kennedy was absent due to a prior commitment.]

Town of Boone: Mayor, Rennie Brantz; Mayor Pro-Tem, Loretta Clawson; Council Members: Sam Furguele, Dustin Hicks, Nancy LaPlaca, and Connie Ulmer; Town Attorney, Allison Meade; Town Manager, John Ward; Town Clerk, Nicole Harmon; and Planning and Inspections Director, Jane Shook.

Mayor Brantz, followed by Chairman Welch, called the joint meeting to order at 6:30 P.M.

Commissioner Yates, seconded by Commissioner Turnbow, moved to add a closed session at the end of the Watauga County Commissioners' agenda for Attorney/Client Matters, per G. S. 143-318.11(a)(6) to discuss the Town of Boone vs. Watauga County lawsuit.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

Mayor Brantz asked County Manager Geouque to begin discussions. County Manager Geouque shared that the County bought the Turner House property for the purpose of creating parking spaces. The County had once owned the Turner House property (which was originally part of the Ginn property). After turning the upper portion of the Ginn lot into parking the County sold the lower portion, including the house, to Mr. Turner who used the house for his law offices. When the property became available, the County purchased it (now referred to as the Turner property) for parking which would include the demolition of the house to accommodate for the maximum number of parking spaces.

Mayor Brantz asked if Mr. Eric Plaag, who has served as a historical consultant for the Town of Boone, could share a presentation in regards to the history of the house on the Turner property.

Communication: Turner House Closed Session Minutes (Hardin House (aka Turner House))

County Manager Geouque stated that the Board of Commissioners had previously been briefed by Mr. Plaag; however, Council Member LaPlaca stated that she would like to hear the presentation.

Mr. Plaag shared the following: The Turner House has historical significance. It is not currently on the historic register; however, Mr. Plaag stated that his professional opinion was that the Turner House is historically significant with minor changes. It was built in 1926 by Oscar and Sue Hardin who lived in the house until their untimely death. The Brown's, Author and Clara, then lived in the home from 1952-1990. In 1997 the State decide not to add the home to the historical register due, in part, to the vinyl/aluminum siding, enclosure of porches, and other upkeep issues. Mr. Plaag stated that the home would have architectural and historical significance when restored.

When asked if it was important for the house to stay at the current location, Mr. Plaag replied that houses that had been moved were not usually accepted in the historical registry. Mr. Plaag stated that there have been exceptions, such as a Frank Lloyd Wright home that had been moved but was still listed. Mr. Plaag stated that, if the Turner House were moved, it would probably never be listed with the registry.

Lengthy discussion was held in regards to the house on the Turner property and its possible historical significance to the Town of Boone.

County Manager Geouque stated that the Turner property was purchased with the intent to gain forty to fifty parking spaces and then subsequently gain fifty-plus additional parking spaces by extending the Ginn parking lot over the Turner property parking lot.

Town Manager Ward presented the possibility of the Town of Boone and County working together to construct a parking deck at the Town's Queen Street parking lot which could possibly benefit both Courthouse and Library patrons. A parking deck on that lot could potentially double its size from one hundred to two hundred spaces.

Chairman Welch stated that the Turner property was purchased to use as parking not to restore the house. Discussion was held regarding the timeline of the Town creating a Historic District and the purchase of the house.

After discussion, Town Attorney Meade suggested the County sell the Turner House property and discuss parking options with the Town of Boone.

Town Manager Ward stated that the Queen Street lot could double in size. The Town of Boone could provide the property and a business model could be used where a third party would rent spaces in the deck with a certain number of spaces per jurisdiction.

Commissioner Wallin was concerned for elderly citizens who may need access to County buildings. Town Manager Ward suggested flipping current parking lots for public parking areas and have staff parking in the Queen Street lot.

Discussion turned to the County's intent to demolish the Turner House. The County has a Town of Boone issued demolition permit for the property which County Manager Geouque stated that

the County had to show activity by the date of June 3, 2020, or the permit expires. County Manager Geouque stated that the County solicited for someone to purchase the house and move it to another location. No offers were made. In the meantime, the County still needs additional parking.

County Manager Geouque stated that the County's primary parking needs were between 8:00 A.M. and 5:00 P.M. Monday through Friday with no demand on Saturdays. Town Manager Ward stated that the Town's highest use of parking was on the weekends with the trends in downtown businesses changing toward higher end restaurants and the different types of shops opening as well as people staying to attend the newly renovated Appalachian Theatre which results in more demand for evening parking.

Commissioner Yates stated that it will take time to explore alternate parking options and the County's demolition permit would potentially expire prior to finding a solution.

Town Attorney Meade suggested the County either reapply for a demolition permit prior to the Town putting new regulations into place or the Town agreeing to make sure the County would be issued the permit when needed. Attorney Meade didn't want the County to demo the property, prior to the permit expiring, if something could be worked out for parking. Town Manager Ward stated that he didn't want a delay. Chairman Welch stated that there were trust issues between the County and Town and suggested having the two attorneys looking into the possibilities and make sure there was an iron clad agreement that would be beneficial for all.

County Manager Geouque suggested having the County and Town Attorneys work toward extending the demolition permit while he and Town Manager Ward worked on determining the possibilities of the Queen Street lot.

Commissioner Turnbow stated that a timeline was needed and that costs analysis was important. Also, if the Historical Society were to restore the house, it would be better for it not to sit empty.

County Manager Geouque suggested the County could potentially donate the Turner House property to the Town of Boone with the County's purchase price value of \$755,000 being put toward the construction of the parking deck. The County Manager stated that the County was not interested in being in real estate and trying to sell the property. The County Attorney also stated that an engineer would be needed for the Queen Street lot and that would not be a quick process; however, he and Town Manager Ward could work on that.

Town Manager Ward stated that the Town had worked with the University of North Carolina - School of Government (UNC-SOG) on Howard Street parking and was told the space was too small for a parking deck. Approximately one hundred spaces would be needed per level.

County Manager Geouque stated that the County has long-range plans to build a facility between the Human Services Building and the Health Department and move all County operations to that area which would leave only Courthouse functions at the current County building locations.

County Manager Geouque stated that the County had \$100,000 budgeted for the demolition and surface lot at the Turner property which would be Phase One. Phase Two would consist of the

construction of the extension of the Ginn lot extending out over the Turner property surface lot. There was no estimate for Phase Two at this time.

Discussion was held regarding the County's immediate need for fifty parking spaces. Town Manager Ward stated that any additional reserved spaces from current Town of Boone lots would take away from customer parking for downtown which would hurt the revenue (sales tax) and would impact downtown businesses. Town Attorney Meade suggested the County would have immediate spaces once the Turner house was vacated. County Manager Geouque stated that would be around ten to twelve spaces as Town of Boone regulations would prohibit more spaces by eliminating the landscaping. Council Member Hicks stated that there are parking areas that are underutilized. County Manager Geouque stated that both the County-owned property near the new AppalCART facility and the Brookshire Park parking lot (during the winter months) have been unofficial park-and-ride sites.

After further discussion, and the agreement that both the County and Town need additional parking, County Manager Geouque stated that the Board of Commissioners would need to file for an extension of the demolition permit which, if granted, would give time to receive reports in regards to potential parking solutions.

By consensus, the Board of Commissioners, along with the Boone Town Council, agreed to have the County and Town Managers work with the County and Town Attorneys to develop possible solutions.

County Manager Geouque stated he and Town Manager Ward could have a preliminary plan within two months.

The Boone Town Council adjourned their meeting at 7:59 P.M.

Commissioner Wallin, seconded by Commissioner Turnbow, moved to enter closed session for Attorney/Client Matters, per G. S. 143-318.11(a)(6) including discussion on the Town of Boone vs. Watauga County lawsuit in regards to sales tax distribution.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

Commissioner Yates, seconded by Commissioner Turnbow, moved to resume the open meeting at 8:40 P.M.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

Commissioner Wallin, seconded by Commissioner Turnbow, moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:40 P.M.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

John Welch, Chairman

ATTEST: Anita J. Fogle, Clerk to the Board

02-24-20 Closed Session - UNSEALED

Turner House Property

County Manager Geouque asked how active the Board wished him to be in working toward a solution with the Town of Boone in regards to the Turner property.

By consensus, the Board agreed to direct the County Manager and County Attorney to reach out to the Town of Boone and be proactive in working toward a solution in regards to the Turner property.

County Attorney di Santi stated that the County will have to have an extension on the demolition permit so that it doesn't expire May 30.

03-17-20 Closed Session - UNSEALED

Turner House

County Attorney Capua stated that she and County Attorney di Santi have the expiration for the demolition permit calendared so that it will not be missed. County Manager Geouque suggested waiting until closer to that deadline date to request an extension. The County has a bid for the demo work and has asked for an extension on the bid quote to May 15, 2020.

04-07-20 Closed Session - UNSEALED

Turner House

County Attorney Capua stated that the County's demolition permit for the Turner house expires on June 3, 2020. County Manager Geouque stated that Mr. Turner planned to be moved out of the house by the end of April. The Town of Boone verbally agreed to an extension of the permit but, County Manager Geouque questioned if the Town would give the extension after the inverse condemnation lawsuit is filed. The County Manager stated that the County Attorney could draft a request asking for a formal extension for six additional months from the June 3 date. County Attorney Capua stated that the Town might still grant the extension, if the lawsuit is filed, because the extension would benefit the Town. Ms. Capua stated that she could also have the lawsuit ready to file in two weeks and the County could ask for an extension in the meantime or she could file the lawsuit first and then request the extension and let matters fall as they will. County Manager Geouque stated that he would follow up with Maintenance Director, Mr. Robert Marsh, to make certain that the demolition bidder will still honor their quote. Ms. Capua stated that it would be best to give a deadline for the Town to respond to a request for extension as that would give closure

in the event a response wasn't received.

After further discussion, the Board agreed, by consensus, to direct the County Attorney to send a letter to the Town of Boone requesting a six month extension on the Turner House demolition permit, from the expiration date of June 3, 2020, and give the Town until next Friday (April 17, 2020) to respond; if no response is received then the County is to move forward with demolition after Mr. Turner moves from the property at the end of April.

04-21-20 Closed Session - UNSEALED

Turner House

County Attorney Capua asked the County Manager for the status of the Turner House Demolition permit. County Manager Geouque stated that Mr. Robert Marsh, Maintenance Director, was to officially request the Town of Boone extend the Demolition Permit for the Turner House for six months from the date it is set to expire, June 3, 2020. County Attorney di Santi stated that if the County would send the information to County Attorney Capua and himself, they would walk the request to the Town of Boone offices. County Manager Geouque stated that Mr. Marsh would take the request. Ms. Capua reminded Mr. Geouque to be sure and submit the letter from Town of Boone Attorney, Ms. Allison Meade along with the request.

05-05-20 Closed Session - UNSEALED

Turner House

County Manager Geouque stated that the Town of Boone gave the County a six month extension on the Demolition Permit for the Turner House. Mr. Turner has turned in the keys and vacated the property. Mr. Geouque stated that the County's Maintenance Department would winterize the building so that it would not fall into disrepair. County Attorney di Santi asked for clarification that the permit was extended until January 3, 2021, and County Manager Geouque stated that, yes, it was.

06-16-20 Closed Session - UNSEALED

Turner House

County Manager Geouque stated that he would send Town of Boone Manager, Mr. John Ward, a request for an update on the status of testing for a joint parking deck. Mr. Geouque stated that the County had formed a partnership with the Town to provide additional parking and the soil borings should have been done by this time.

07-21-20

PROPOSED PARKING STRUCTURES

Mr. Matthew Oetting, Project Manager with McGill Associates, stated that he had been working with the Town of Boone, who was in a partnership with the County, on a proposed parking deck to be located at the Town-owned Queen Street parking lot. Mr. Oetting presented two options which he had previously presented at the Town's meeting on July 16, 2020.

Option 1 would be a three level deck, 160,000 square feet, and would house 450 parking spaces in the structure and 33 spaces in the exterior lot. The estimated project cost for Option 1 was \$15,500,000. Option 2 would be a three level deck, 103,000 square feet, and house 270 spaces in the structure and 51 spaces in two exterior lots. The estimated project costs for Option 2 was \$10,000,000. The cost for both options excluded mechanical ventilation, temporary soil retainage, and land/easement acquisition. Mr. Oetting stated that he used the Appalachian State University Stadium Precinct Parking Deck for cost source data.

County Manager Geouque presented a rough draft of a potential parking deck at the County-owned Turner and Ginn lots. This would be a County project, separate from the joint Town/County contract for parking deck services. A two level parking deck on the Ginn lot would cost roughly \$3,500,000 per level and house 250 parking spaces. A parking lot with a deck that extended from the Ginn lot over the Turner lot would cost roughly \$2,500,000 and house 80 – 100 spaces.

Discussion was held during which Commissioner Turnbow stated that it was imperative for a Commissioner, the County and Town Managers, and a Town of Boone Council Member meet to discuss how much each entity would pay.

The presentation was for information only; therefore, no action was required.

07-21-20 Closed Session - UNSEALED

Turner House

County Manager Geouque stated that Mr. Mark Scruggs had expressed interest in purchasing the house located on the County-owned Turner property and pay to have it moved to a lot located behind the Courthouse. Mr. Scruggs has been researching the costs associated with moving the house and requested a six-month timeframe to purchase and move it if terms were agreed upon. Mr. Geouque stated that, if the Board was agreeable to the purchase, he would work with the County Attorney and Mr. Scruggs on a negotiated sale. County Attorney di Santi stated that the County was not selling real property but rather transferring personal property and would research the best method of sale.

Commissioner Turnbow stated that he would be agreeable to sell the house for as little as \$1.00 and for the County to pay as much as \$100,000 to move the house for Mr. Scruggs. Mr. Turnbow stated that adding the \$100,000 to the \$3,500,000 cost of a parking deck on the Turner and Ginn properties was still less expensive than the County's portion of the costs associated with joining the Town of Boone to construct a parking deck on the Town's Queen Street parking lot.

County Attorney di Santi reminded the Board that the Demolition Permit for the house was set to expire in less than six months. County Manager Geouque stated that he would make sure that Mr. Scruggs was aware that the house would have to be moved prior to the expiration date of the Demolition Permit.

080420 Closed Session - UNSEALED

Turner House

County Manager Geouque stated that he had been speaking to Mr. Mark Scruggs who had expressed interest in purchasing the Turner house from the County and moving it from its current location. Mr. Geouque was concerned that requesting bids for the house could be seen by the Town of Boone as an unwillingness to continue discussions on a joint parking deck at the Town's Queen Street parking lot.

After questioning Mr. Scruggs intent to follow through with purchasing the house, Mr. Geouque stated that he would follow-up and see how serious he was prior to advertising for bids. Commissioner Turnbow shared that he would still be agreeable for the County to pay to have the house moved if someone wanted it as it would save money in the long run. Chairman Welch directed Mr. Geouque to vet Mr. Scruggs' intentions.

08-18-20 Closed Session - UNSEALED

Turner House

County Manager Geouque stated that Mr. Mark Scruggs who had expressed interest in purchasing the Turner house from the County and moving it from its current location has not submitted a bid on the house to date. Mr. Geouque stated that he would follow up with Mr. Scruggs to see if he was still interested.

Mr. Geouque sought direction on the Board as to whether the County should solicit bids for demolition as the current contract was now out-of-date.

By consensus, the Board tabled further discussion until the next meeting.

09-01-20 Closed Session - UNSEALED

ATTORNEY/CLIENT MATTERS

Turner House

County Manager Geouque stated that he had not heard anything further from Mr. Mark Scruggs in regards to the Turner House.

However, Muter Construction which was replacing the roof on both the Administration Building and the Courthouse needed an office space due to delays on the Courthouse roof replacement and asked if they could use the Turner house.

The delays on the project were caused due to the Town of Boone flagging the zoning permit due to the height of the roof on the Courthouse. The roof was in four elevations with three of the four meeting requirements. The contractor was offering an alternative of a low slope roof which would meet the requirement but the HVAC would be seen. The height requirement itself was contradictory in that the text of the Town's Ordinance said the regulations begin on King Street with the Courthouse building; however, the map for the Town's Ordinance showed the Administration Building as the starting point.

County Manager Geouque asked Mr. Muter with Muter Construction if they would be willing to demo the Turner House after using it in lieu of paying rent for use of the building. Mr. Geouque stated that he believed as long as the County was showing progress toward demolition by having the small structure on the back of the property taken down prior to the demo permit expiring on January 3, 2021, then the permit would remain active for six more months. Commissioner Wallin suggested getting that in writing from the Town of Boone.

The Board was agreeable with the exchange as long as details of the demolition permit were met.

10-20-20 Closed Session - UNSEALED

ATTORNEY/CLIENT MATTERS

Turner House

County Manager Geouque stated that he continued to monitor the demolition permit status for the Turner house and stated that a renewal may be necessary. In a recent Zoom meeting, Mr. Geouque informed McGill Associates that the County did not charge for parking and it would be a hurdle for the County to charge. With the Town of Boone charging for parking, it would also be a hurdle to develop a model for a joint parking deck which included paid and free parking. Therefore, a joint parking deck might prove difficult as the Town has not fulfilled agreements in the past with the County and the Town and County differences of opinion in charging for parking. When asked about the soil borings at the Town of Boone's Queen Street parking lot, County Manager Geouque stated that he would ask Mr. John Ward, Town of Boone Manager, for the results. Mr. Geouque

stated that it would be less expensive for the County to demolish the house on the Turner lot and develop parking on its own.

11-17-20 Closed Session - UNSEALED

Turner House

County Manager Geouque clarified that the Town of Boone had not had soil boring samples taken on the Town of Boone's Queen Street parking lot. McGill Associates had stated that they were working on a financial model, of which would cost \$50,000 for their services, but had not yet had soil borings performed, which would cost \$10,000 to have done and were needed prior to knowing if the property could be improved.

After discussion, the Board agreed, by consensus, to direct the County Manager to demolish the structures on the County-owned Turner property and build a County parking lot at that location.

12-07-20 Closed Session - UNSEALED

Turner House

County Manager Geouque asked to discuss the issue of the Turner House in closed session regarding an agreement with the Town of Boone to pursue a joint venture for a parking facility on property owned by the town on Queen Street rather than demolishing the Turner House as previously discussed in a joint meeting with the town on February 24, 2020. The County Manager was concerned regarding the issue because the demolition permit expires January 5, 2021 and whether the demolition can be accomplished in that time frame and the county does not have an agreement with the town. When County Manager Geouque inquired of Town Manager Ward about the soil borings to determine if it could be built on the Queen Street property, Mr. Ward said the soil borings had not been done, but he would inquire regarding the issue with the town's engineer. The engineer responded that the soil borings had not been done since the project was only at the conceptual stage. County Manager Geouque was concerned about the legal implications of proceeding with demolition because of the discussions with the town, but he was also concerned about completing the demolition before the permit expires. County Manager Geouque stated that it would cost in the \$20,000 to \$30,000 range to demolish the Turner house located on County-owned property on Waters Street adjacent to the Watauga County Administration Building. The demo proposal would be included on the County's December 15 agenda for consideration.

County Manager Geouque stated that he would email the Board of Commissioners and Mr. John Ward, Town of Boone Manager, to say that, due to the \$10,000,000 to \$15,000,000 price tag for a joint parking lot and the fact that soil borings were never conducted, the County planned to opt to build its own parking lot. Mr. Geouque stated that there would be room for approximately 40

parking spaces on the lot once the house was removed. Mr. Geouque stated that it would be up to Mr. Ward as to whether he informed his Board.

The Board agreed, by consensus, for the County Manager to send the email as he described and leave it to the Town Manager to inform the Boone Town Council.

121520

MISCELLANEOUS ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

A. Proposed Demolition of Turner Property Structures

County Manager Geouque stated that in February 2020, the Commissioners held a special called meeting with the Town of Boone to discuss the Turner House Property. After the meeting, direction was given to have a firm provide conceptual drawing(s) and soil borings to determine the viability of a parking deck at the Town owned Queen Street lot. The County and Town provided two proposals and the Town's proposal was selected due to the cost being less. In July, McGill Associates presented a rendering and cost estimate of the proposed deck at the Queen Street lot to the Board. The price tag was \$10 to \$15 million dollars but no soil borings were completed to determine the viability of the project. Continuing to delay construction of the parking lot/deck to meet the long-term parking needs of the courthouse facility only increases the escalation of cost to the County. Bids were received for demolition of the Turner House and the lowest bidder was D.H. Griffin in the amount of \$21,300. Due to the price and the uncertainty of the viability of the project, staff seeks direction from the Board on how to proceed.

Adequate funds have been budgeted to cover the expense of the demolition. Should the Board wish to proceed forward; action is required to accept D.H. Griffin's bid in the amount of \$21,300 to demolish the Turner House.

Commissioner Turnbow seconded by Vice-Chairman Kennedy moved to accept D.H. Griffin's bid in the amount of \$21,300 to demolish the Turner House.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

011921

A. Discussion of Turner House Demolition

County Manager Geouque stated that the Boone Town Manager, Mr. John Ward, sent an email inquiring if the County was interested in any further discussions or exploration of the joint Queen Street Parking Lot.

After discussions, including the concern that the Town of Boone never sought soil borings for geotechnical findings on the property and that the Town of Boone charges for parking and the County does not, the Board agreed, by consensus, to move forward with an independent plan to provide more parking for citizens closer to the Courthouse.

WT0056 Oscar and Suma Hardin House (1926)

136 North Water Street

Originally built as a residence, this one and a half-story, Colonial Revival frame building was first surveyed in 1988 and again in 2002. The house has served in recent years as a law office, first for Judge Philip Ginn, then later as the Turner Law Office. Past surveys have reported that the house was built in 1927 in error. In fact, ground was broken for construction of the house in September 1925 (*Watauga Democrat*, September 17, 1925), with work completed on the house in June 1926 (*Watauga Democrat*, June 24, 1926). Defining features of this side-gabled house include a steeply pitched gable over the main (west) elevation entrance, an ornate, second-floor, Palladian window under this entrance gable, a front entrance that has a webbed transom window and is flanked by full-length sidelights with ornate tracery, and four Tuscan columns on the porch that support the semi-circular balcony above this entrance. All of these elements still survive. Indeed, the home displays an unusually high style of architecture among the homes located within Boone's historic downtown district, and with proper rehabilitation, the house would be historically significant for its architectural features.

Oscar Hardin (1883-1927) was the grandson of Henry Hardin, a prominent and significant early Boone citizen. Oscar Hardin was engaged in business for many years at Hickory and Johnson City before returning to Boone to serve as a partner in the Henry J. Hardin & Co. firm at Boone, which was located at the old Blackburn Store site opposite the courthouse. He was also a leader in the Boone Methodist Church, serving on the church's board of stewards. Suma Bogle Little Hardin (1888-1931) was the daughter of Dr. H. McDuffie Little, a prominent Boone physician and a wealthy and significant landowner of property along the Boone side of Rich Mountain. She played a lead role in numerous civic ventures, including the Friday Afternoon Club and the Entre Nous Club. Following their untimely deaths, the home changed hands a couple of times before Walter and Clara Brown eventually purchased the home and resided there from 1952 into the early 1990s. Walter Brown was the postmaster of Todd, North Carolina, and his wife Clara was a teacher in Ashe County.

Judge Ginn made attempts in 1996 and 1997 to secure rehabilitation advice and Study List listing from the North Carolina Department of Cultural Resources, with a view toward obtaining rehabilitation tax credits and National Register listing. Unfortunately, North Carolina's National Register Advisory Council responded to Judge Ginn's Study List application by declining to Study List the property. The NRAC cited several areas of concern as the basis for their decision—the application of aluminum siding, enclosure of the porte cochere, shortening of a chimney stack, and “disturbance of the surrounding yard.” Of these four areas, three are essentially reversible, meaning that a committed property owner could easily address these areas of concern with historically appropriate rehabilitation, then ask the NRAC again for the property to be Study Listed.

Unfortunately, additional alterations have occurred since 2002. The north porch described in a 1997 Study List Application has since been filled in and dramatically altered to a one-story addition with a flat roof, prominent cornice treatment, rows of six-over-six, double-hung sash windows on the west, north, and east elevations, and board and batten siding that is not appropriate to the Colonial Revival style. In addition, the two large Norwegian pines have been removed from the property for reasons that are unclear. Perhaps most distressing, the ornate, pressed tin shingles have been removed entirely from the house since 2002 and replaced with asphalt shingles. While these additional areas of concern are problematic, most could be historically rehabilitated by a property owner working with a preservation professional. Following such work, the property would likely be eligible for NRAC re-consideration and possible Local Historic Landmark designation.

Watauga County Board of Commissioners

MINUTES

WATAUGA COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 20, 2018

The Watauga County Board of Commissioners held a regular meeting, as scheduled, on Tuesday, February 20, 2018, at 5:30 P.M. in the Commissioners' Board Room of the Watauga County Administration Building, Boone, North Carolina.

PRESENT: John Welch, Chairman
Billy Kennedy, Vice-Chairman
Jimmy Hodges, Commissioner
Larry Turnbow, Commissioner
Perry Yates, Commissioner
Anthony di Santi, County Attorney
Deron Geouque, County Manager
Anita J. Fogle, Clerk to the Board

Chairman Welch called the meeting to order at 5:41 P.M.

Commissioner Yates opened with a prayer and Vice-Chairman Kennedy led the Pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Chairman Welch called for additions and/or corrections to the February 6, 2018, regular meeting and closed session minutes.

Commissioner Yates, seconded by Vice-Chairman Kennedy, moved to approve the February 6, 2018, regular meeting minutes as presented.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

Commissioner Yates, seconded by Vice-Chairman Kennedy, moved to approve the February 6, 2018, closed session minutes as presented.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Chairman Welch called for additions and/or corrections to the February 20, 2018, agenda.

Vice-Chairman Kennedy, seconded by Commissioner Yates, moved to approve the February 20, 2018, agenda as presented.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

PROPOSED HEALTH DEPARTMENT BUILDING RENOVATION CHANGE ORDER

Mr. Robert Marsh presented Change Order number two regarding renovations to the Health Department Building. The Board previously approved a Change Order upgrading from standard carpet to carpet tiles. This Change Order includes the raising of two (2) electrical boxes and lowering data outlets to accommodate new base cabinets; installation of new ball valves/cutoffs for the water distribution lines for the upper level floor area; and the addition of three (3) circuit/outlets. Total cost of the Change Order is \$2,150.29. Funds are available in the current \$20,000 contingency to cover the expense. Mr. Randy Jones, Architect, has stated that he will reimburse the County \$1,423.29 for a net expense of \$727 to the County.

Vice-Chairman Kennedy, seconded by Commissioner Yates, moved to approve Change Order number two (2) in the amount of \$2,150.29 with the funds to come from the project contingency and with the understanding that Mr. Randy Jones plans to reimburse the County the amount of \$1,423.29.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

REQUEST TO SUBMIT A GRANT PRE-APPLICATION TO NC RECREATION TRAILS PROGRAM FOR MIDDLE FORK GREENWAY, SECTION 4

Mr. Joe Furman, Planning and Inspections Director, presented a pre-application to the North Carolina Recreational Trails Program for the full amount of \$100,000 for the Middle Fork Greenway, Section 4. A pre-application was submitted two years ago, however at that time only unpaved trails were being funded. This is no longer the case. The Blue Ridge Conservancy and Middle Fork Greenway will provide the \$25,000 required match if the grant is awarded. The total estimate for Section 4 is \$1.4 million. \$200,000 has been approved from the North Carolina Division of Water Resources grant and staff has submitted for a \$430,000 grant from the North Carolina Parks and Recreation Trust Fund (PARTF). The remaining cost of the project will be covered by Blue Ridge Conservancy through grant funds from the Watauga Tourism Development Authority (TDA) and fundraising efforts. Mr. Furman stated that notification from the pre-application should arrive by early summer and, if approved, then a request will be made to submit Part B in the application process.

Commissioner Turnbow, seconded by Commissioner Hodges, moved to authorize the submittal of a pre-application to the North Carolina Recreational Trails Program in the amount of \$100,000 for the Middle Fork Greenway, Section 4.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

TAX MATTERS

A. Monthly Collections Report

Tax Administrator, Mr. Larry Warren, presented the Tax Collections Report for the month of January 2017. This report was presented for information only and, therefore, no action was required.

B. Refunds and Releases

Mr. Warren presented the Refunds and Releases Report for January 2018 for Board approval:

TO BE TYPED IN MINUTE BOOK

Commissioner Hodges, seconded by Commissioner Yates, moved to approve the Refunds and Releases Report for January 2018, as presented.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

C. Tax Lien Report

Mr. Warren presented the Tax Lien Report which lists delinquent tax bills that were liens on real property and requested authorization to advertise such liens between March 1 and June 30, 2018.

Commissioner Yates, seconded by Commissioner Turnbow, moved to order the Tax Administrator to advertise the liens as reported between March 1 and June 30, 2018.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

FINANCE MATTERS

A. Budget Amendments

Ms. Margaret Pierce, Finance Director, reviewed the following budget amendments:

Account #	Description	Debit	Credit
103980-398121	Transfer from Capital Projects Fund		\$25,000
105890-463102	Appalachian Theatre	\$25,000	
213991-399101	Fund Balance Appropriation		\$25,000
219800-498010	Transfer to General Fund	\$25,000	

The amendment allocates an additional \$25,000 to the Appalachian Theatre project per a recommendation from the Economic Development Commission at the February 6, 2018, regular Board meeting.

233991-399101	Fund Balance Appropriation		\$5,000
243410-423800	Undercover Drug Purchases	\$5,000	

The amendment recognized additional funds for use in law enforcement cases as buy money for investigations. The funds are from the State Substance Abuse Tax Fund. The amendment was requested by Sheriff Hagaman.

Vice-Chairman Kennedy, seconded by Commissioner Yates, moved to approve the budget amendments as presented by Ms. Pierce.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

B. Vaya Health Quarterly Report

Ms. Margaret Pierce presented the Vaya Health Quarterly Financial Report as required by Statute. The report was given for information only and, therefore, no action was required.

C. Vaya Health FY 2017 Audit Report

Ms. Margaret Pierce presented the Vaya Health Annual Audited Financial Statements as required by Statute. The report was given for information only and, therefore, no action was required.

MISCELLANEOUS ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

A. Revision To The Resolution Ordering The Referendum For A Quarter-Cent Local Option Sales Tax With The Proceeds To Be Utilized For A 2 Cent Property Tax Rate Reduction In Watauga County

County Manager Geouque stated that the Board previously adopted a resolution ordering the referendum for a quarter-cent local option sales tax with the proceeds to be utilized for a two cent property tax rate reduction in Watauga County. In the resolution, May 17, 2018, was listed as the date of the primary. Since the adoption of that resolution, The County Manager stated that it has been brought to staff's attention that the date of the primary is May 8, 2018. County Manager Geouque requested the Board adopt a revised resolution clarifying the date of the primary as May 8, 2018.

Commissioner Yates, seconded by Vice-Chairman Kennedy, moved to adopt the revised "Resolution Ordering The Referendum For A Quarter-Cent Local Option Sales Tax With The Proceeds To Be Utilized For A 2 Cent Property Tax Rate Reduction In Watauga County."

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

B. Boards and Commissions

County Manager Geouque presented the following for consideration:

Watauga County Board of Adjustment

The terms of Bill Ragan, Baxter Palmer and Todd Rice expired in November. All three are willing to continue to serve if reappointed. NC Statutes require a representative (resident) of each zoned area in counties that have partial-county zoning such as Watauga. Mr. Rice represents the Valle Crucis Historic District, which is a small area with limited population, therefore small pool of potential representatives. Mr. Palmer is the alternate member and is the representative of the Foscoe-Grandfather zoned area. Mr. Ragan resides in the Howard Creek Watershed, which is not a zoned area in the traditional sense, but since the watershed ordinance was adopted under zoning authority, the County has attempted to appoint residents of those areas when possible.

The Pond Creek (Beech Mountain) Watershed Ordinance was not adopted under zoning authority as it is not large enough to qualify for partial-county zoning. Adam Rhyne resides in the South Fork New River/Winkler Creek/Middle Fork watershed (the boundaries adjoin and form one larger watershed-regulated area). David Hill and Charles Phillips are at-large members. Those 3 terms are not expiring this year. The new South Fork New River Watershed for the new Boone water intake does not have a representative.

Volunteer applications have been received from Mr. John Prickett, Mr. Joe Quinn, Mr. Michael Moore, Ms. Alyson Browett, and Ms. Emily Bish. All five requested to serve on the Board of Adjustment; however, upon review, Mr. Moore's application indicates he lives in the Foscoe-Grandfather Community. He does not live within the zoned area or the community council designated area. Mr. Prickett and Mr. Quinn are second readings. Ms. Browett and Ms. Bish are first readings.

Commissioner Turnbow, seconded by Vice-Chairman Kennedy, moved to waive the second reading for Ms. Browett and Ms. Bish.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

Commissioner Turnbow, seconded by Vice-Chairman Kennedy, moved to appoint Ms. Alyson Browett, Mr. John Prickett, and Ms. Emily Bish to serve on the Board of Adjustment.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

Adult Care Home Community Advisory Committee

Mr. Harold Eller's term will expire March 3, 2018, on the Watauga County Adult Care Home Community Advisory Committee. He is willing to continue to serve an additional three-year term if reappointed. This is a second reading and, therefore, action may be taken if so desired.

Commissioner Hodges, seconded by Commissioner Yates, moved to reappoint Mr. Harold Eller to a three-year term on the Watauga County Adult Care Home Community Advisory Committee.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

Tourism Development Authority (TDA)

The terms of Mr. Jim Neustadt and Mr. Brad Moretz will expire February 28, 2018. The two seats must be occupied by someone representing a business that collects the occupancy tax in Watauga County. Mr.

Wright Tilley, Watauga County TDA Director, has stated that both are willing to continue to serve an additional three-year term if reappointed. Ms. Alyson Browett submitted an application indicating her interest in serving on the TDA; however, Mr. Wright Tilley has stated that she does not appear to meet the requirements of the TDA seats listed above. Only owners or operators of lodging properties that collect the occupancy tax in Watauga County are eligible for consideration of these seats. This is a second reading and, therefore, action may be taken if so desired.

Commissioner Yates, seconded by Commissioner Hodges, moved to reappoint Mr. Jim Neustadt and Mr. Brad Moretz to three-year terms on the Watauga County Tourism Development Authority.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

WAMY Community Action

Ms. Joy Coffey's final term as a Public Sector representative for Watauga County ends on February 8, 2018. Ms. Melissa Soto, Executive Director of WAMY, requests a Commissioner or appointee be appointed to fill the four-year term. The County Manager stated that he would clarify the request with Ms. Soto.

AppalCART

The Town of Boone recommends the appointment of Ms. Connie Ulmer as the Town's representative on the AppalCART Board. This is a second reading and, therefore, action may be taken if so desired.

Vice-Chairman Kennedy, seconded by Commissioner Turnbow, moved to appoint Ms. Connie Ulmer as the Town of Boone's representative on the AppalCART Board.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

C. Announcements

County Manager Geouque announced the following:

- The Annual Pre-Budget Retreat began on Monday, February 19, 2018, at 12:00 P.M., and will reconvene on Wednesday, February 21, 2018, at 8:30 A.M.
- The Watauga County Cooperative Extension will hold their Annual "Report to the People" on Tuesday, March 13, from 11:45 A.M. to 1:00 P.M. at the Agricultural Conference Center. Extension staff will prepare a homemade lunch for the meeting.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment.

CLOSED SESSION

At 6:02 P.M., Commissioner Hodges, seconded by Vice-Chairman Kennedy, moved to enter Closed Session to discuss Attorney/Client Matters, per G. S. 143-318.11(a)(3), Land Acquisition, per G. S. 143-318.11(a)

(5)(i) and Personnel Matters, per G. S. 143-318.11(a)(6).

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

Vice-Chairman Kennedy, seconded by Commissioner Yates, moved to resume the open meeting at 7:08 P.M.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

POSSIBLE ACTION AFTER CLOSED SESSION

There was no action after closed session.

ADJOURN

Commissioner Yates, seconded by Vice-Chairman Kennedy, moved to adjourn the meeting at 7:08 P.M.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

John Welch, Chairman

ATTEST:

Anita J. Fogle, Clerk to the Board

Watauga County Board of Commissioners

MINUTES

WATAUGA COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS TUESDAY, MARCH 6, 2018

The Watauga County Board of Commissioners held a regular meeting, as scheduled, on Tuesday, March 6, 2018, at 8:30 A.M. in the Commissioners' Board Room of the Watauga County Administration Building, Boone, North Carolina.

PRESENT: John Welch, Chairman
Billy Kennedy, Vice-Chairman
Jimmy Hodges, Commissioner
Larry Turnbow, Commissioner
Perry Yates, Commissioner
Andrea Capua, County Attorney
Deron Geouque, County Manager
Anita J. Fogle, Clerk to the Board

Chairman Welch called the meeting to order at 8:32 A.M.

Commissioner Hodges opened with a prayer and Commissioner Turnbow led the Pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Chairman Welch called for additions and/or corrections to the February 20, 2018, special meeting, regular meeting and closed session minutes.

Vice-Chairman Kennedy, seconded by Commissioner Turnbow, moved to approve the February 20, 2018, special meeting minutes as presented.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

Vice-Chairman Kennedy, seconded by Commissioner Turnbow, moved to approve the February 20, 2018, regular meeting minutes as presented.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

Vice-Chairman Kennedy, seconded by Commissioner Turnbow, moved to approve the February 20, 2018, closed session minutes as presented.

VOTE: Aye-5

Nay-0

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Chairman Welch called for additions and/or corrections to the March 6, 2018, agenda.

County Manager Geouque requested to add consideration of acceptance of a Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA) grant award.

Vice-Chairman Kennedy, seconded by Commissioner Turnbow, moved to approve the March 6, 2018, agenda as presented.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

SHERIFF'S OFFICE REQUEST TO PURCHASE NEW BODY CAMERAS AND STORAGE

County Manager Geouque requested, on behalf of Captain Kelly Redmon with the Sheriff's Office, approval of the purchase of four (4) new Axon body cameras along with licensing fees and cloud based storage. Adequate funds have been budgeted in the FY 2017-2018 budget. The current Axon plan with twelve cameras cost \$12,108. The additional four cameras will cost \$3,160 which brings the total to \$15,268.

Commissioner Yates, seconded by Commissioner Turnbow, moved to approve the purchase of four (4) additional new Axon body cameras along with licensing fees and cloud based storage in the total amount of \$15,268.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

REQUESTS FOR SOUTH FORK RESTORATION PROJECT AT THE TED MACKORELL SOCCER COMPLEX

Mr. George Santucci with the New River Conservancy presented information regarding the South Fork River restoration project adjacent to the County-owned Ted Mackorell Soccer Complex and property on the other side of the river consisting of lots owned by the Town of Boone and Hollar and Greene Produce Company. Mr. Santucci requested approval of a restricted covenant on a fifty (50) foot buffer along the County-owned property. In addition he requested that the County hold a conservation easement on the Hollar and Green property. These restrictions and easements are required by the Clean Water Management Trust Fund (CWMTF) to ensure funding for the project.

Commissioner Turnbow, seconded by Vice-Chairman Kennedy, moved to grant a fifty (50) foot restricted covenant buffer on the County-owned property located at the Ted Mackorell Soccer Complex and to hold the conservation easement for the Hollar and Greene Produce Company property related to this project.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

Discussion was held to clarify if Hollar and Greene had approved the conservation easement. Mr. Santucci said that they were in agreement. Mr. Joe Furman stated that Hollar and Greene Produce would have to allow the County an easement to their property on which the restricted covenant could be placed.

After discussion, Commissioner Yates, seconded by Commissioner Turnbow, moved to accept an easement from Hollar and Greene in order to place the restricted covenant as approved in the prior motion.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

PROPOSED PRE-APPLICATION FOR AN APPALACHIAN REGIONAL COMMISSION (ARC) GRANT FOR SECTION 4 OF THE MIDDLE FORK GREENWAY

Mr. Joe Furman, Planning and Inspections Director, requested permission to submit a pre-application for \$300,000 to the Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) for funds for the Middle Fork Greenway, Section 4. The ARC rates counties by “level of distress” and determines the required grant match accordingly.

Watauga County is considered an “at risk” County; therefore, the maximum percentage of the cost of the project ARC funds can cover is 70%. The estimated cost of the project is \$1.8 million; the \$300,000 (which is the maximum amount that can be requested) will not approach the 70% that would be covered by ARC funds.

Mr. Furman stated that the Blue Ridge Conservancy (BRC) is also an eligible applicant and they are in the process of determining which entity has a better chance of being funded. If the determination is made that BRC should be the applicant, the County would not apply.

Mr. Furman stated that, if the County applies, he would know by early summer if the ARC planned to invite the County to submit a full application.

Vice-Chairman Kennedy, seconded by Commissioner Turnbow, moved to approve the submission of the grant pre-application contingent upon it being determined that the County would be the more suitable applicant.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

REQUEST TO ACCEPT TENNESSEE VALLEY AUTHORITY GRANT FUNDS

Mr. Joe Furman stated that the Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA) has granted Watauga County an amount not to exceed \$50,000 for work on the Guy Ford Road River Access project. Mr. Furman presented the proposed Cooperative Agreement from the TVA and requested the Board accept the grant award from the TVA.

Commissioner Yates, seconded by Commissioner Hodges, moved to accept the Tennessee Valley Authority grant award in an amount not to exceed \$50,000 as presented by Mr. Furman.

VOTE: Aye-5

BOARD OF EQUALIZATION AND REVIEW SCHEDULE

Mr. Larry Warren, Tax Administrator, discussed the scheduling of the FY 2018 Board of Equalization and Review (E&R). Mr. Warren recommended the convening date for the Board of Equalization and Review be scheduled for Wednesday April 18, 2018, at 2:30 P.M. and the adjournment of the Board be scheduled for Thursday April 26, 2018, at 5:00 P.M. The Board discussed other meeting dates as well.

Commissioner Yates, seconded by Commissioner Turnbow, moved to set the following dates for the Board of Equalization and Review:

- Convene on Wednesday, April 18, 2018, at 2:30 P.M.
- Meet on Thursday, April 19, 2018, from 4:00 – 7:00 P.M.
- Meet on Monday, April 23, 2018, from 4:00 – 7:00 P.M.
- Adjourn on Thursday, April 26, 2018, from 4:00 – 5:00 P.M.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

Mr. Warren stated that the Board may create a special Board of Equalization and Review or, as in previous years, the Board of Commissioners may serve as the Board of Equalization and Review and include the County Manager to serve as an alternate member. The County Manager would only serve if a quorum could not be met otherwise. A proposed resolution establishing the Board of Equalization and Review was presented. Mr. Warren stated that the Board of Equalization and Review has been compensated \$75 per meeting in the past. County Manager Geouque clarified that he would not receive compensation.

Vice-Chairman Kennedy, seconded by Commissioner Turnbow, moved to adopt the resolution and establish the compensation rate for the Board of Equalization and Review at \$75.00 per meeting.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

MISCELLANEOUS ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

A. Proposed Lease Renewal - Daymark Recovery

County Manager Geouque presented a proposed lease renewal with Daymark Recovery Services, Inc. The County Manager stated that the current lease is set to expire June 30, 2018. The County Attorney has reviewed and updated the existing lease to allow for another three (3) year term. The conditions are proposed to remain the same. If approved, the lease will be forwarded to Daymark Recovery Services for their approval.

Commissioner Yates, seconded by Commissioner Turnbow, moved to approve the lease with Daymark Recovery Services effective July 1, 2018, through June 30, 2021, and as set forth in the lease.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

B. Boards and Commissions

County Manager Geouque presented the following for consideration:

WAMY Community Action

Ms. Joy Coffey's final term as a Public Sector representative for Watauga County expired on February 8, 2018. Ms. Melissa Soto, Executive Director of WAMY, requests a Commissioner or appointee be appointed to fill the four-year term. There is one position to fill. Mr. George Winkler has expressed some interest to Ms. Soto.

Ms. Soto has stated that the WAMY Board meets bi-monthly on the 2nd Tuesday at 5:00 P.M. The meetings are held in the Commissioners' Board Room in Avery County. The next meeting is their Board Retreat (and a great time for a new member to begin) which will be held in the Boone office on April 7 at 10:00 A.M. The next regular meeting will be May 8.

Consideration was tabled to allow for Mr. Winkler to submit a volunteer application if he is interested in serving.

High Country Workforce Development Board

Mr. Keith Deveraux, Director of the High Country Workforce Development Board (WDB), has recommended the appointment of Mr. Hayden Gibson to serve on the WDB.

Commissioner Yates, seconded by Commissioner Turnbow, moved to waive the second reading and appoint Mr. Hayden Gibson to the High Country Workforce Development Board.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

Blowing Rock ETJ Representative for Planning Board and Board of Adjustment

Mr. Kevin Rothrock, Blowing Rock Planning Director, stated that the Blowing Rock Town Council recommended Mr. Harrison Herbst to serve as an Extra-territorial Jurisdiction (ETJ) representative on both the Blowing Rock Planning Board and Board of Adjustment.

Commissioner Yates, seconded by Commissioner Turnbow, moved to waive the second reading and appoint Mr. Harrison Herbst to serve as an Extra-territorial Jurisdiction representative on the Blowing Rock Planning Board and Blowing Rock Board of Adjustment.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

C. Announcements

County Manager Geouque announced the following:

- Watauga County Cooperative Extension invites you to the Annual "Report to the People" on Tuesday, March 13, from 11:45 A.M. to 1:00 P.M. at the Agricultural Conference Center. The staff plans to prepare a homemade lunch, and Extension Director, Jim Hamilton, will briefly present an

update.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment.

CLOSED SESSION

At 9:03 A.M., Commissioner Hodges, seconded by Commissioner Turnbow, moved to enter Closed Session to discuss Attorney/Client Matters, per G. S. 143-318.11(a)(3) and Personnel Matters, per G. S. 143-318.11(a)(6).

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

Vice-Chairman Kennedy, seconded by Commissioner Yates, moved to resume the open meeting at 9:37 A.M.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

POSSIBLE ACTION AFTER CLOSED SESSION

There was no action after Closed Session.

ADJOURN

Commissioner Turnbow, seconded by Vice-Chairman Kennedy, moved to adjourn the meeting at 9:37 A.M.

John Welch, Chairman

ATTEST:

Anita J. Fogle, Clerk to the Board

Watauga County Board of Commissioners

MINUTES

WATAUGA COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS TUESDAY, MARCH 20, 2018

The Watauga County Board of Commissioners held a regular meeting, as scheduled, on Tuesday, March 20, 2018, at 5:30 P.M. in the Commissioners' Board Room of the Watauga County Administration Building, Boone, North Carolina.

PRESENT: John Welch, Chairman
Billy Kennedy, Vice-Chairman
Jimmy Hodges, Commissioner
Larry Turnbow, Commissioner
Perry Yates, Commissioner
Anthony di Santi, County Attorney
Deron Geouque, County Manager
Anita J. Fogle, Clerk to the Board

Chairman Welch called the meeting to order at 5:33 P.M.

Commissioner Yates opened with a prayer and Vice-Chairman Kennedy led the Pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Chairman Welch called for additions and/or corrections to the February 19 & 21, 2018, special meeting minutes as well as the March 6, 2018, regular meeting and closed session minutes.

Commissioner Hodges, seconded by Commissioner Yates, moved to approve the February 19 & 21, 2018, regular meeting minutes as presented.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

Commissioner Hodges, seconded by Commissioner Yates, moved to approve the March 6, 2018, regular meeting minutes as presented.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

Commissioner Hodges, seconded Commissioner Yates, moved to approve the March 6, 2018, closed session minutes as presented.

VOTE: Aye-5

Nay-0

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Chairman Welch called for additions and/or corrections to the March 20, 2018, agenda.

Vice-Chairman Kennedy, seconded by Commissioner Turnbow, moved to approve the March 20, 2018, agenda as presented.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

WATAUGA COUNTY SCHOOL SYSTEM LOTTERY FUNDS REQUEST

Dr. Scott Elliott, Watauga County Schools Superintendent, requested approval of applications for Education Lottery Funds. A total amount of \$117,500 is being requested. \$60,000 is to replace the phone intercom and bell systems at Cove Creek Elementary School and \$57,500 for a new fire alarm system at Valle Crucis Elementary School. Dr. Elliott stated that the phone intercom and bell systems are being replaced Countywide, one school at a time. Dr. Elliott gave a brief update stating that he had met with the County Manager and discussed facility needs and capital improvement plans earlier in the day.

Commissioner Yates, seconded by Commissioner Turnbow, moved to approve the \$117,500 request for lottery funds to be utilized for phone intercom, bell, and fire systems as requested by Dr. Elliott.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

OPIOID LITIGATION PRESENTATION

Mr. Mike Fox, with Tuggle Duggins Attorneys at Law, and Mr. Garry Whitaker, Attorney with McHugh Fuller Law Group, PLLC, presented information on the opioid epidemic. Mr. Whitaker and Mr. Fox presented statistics and data encouraging the Board to join in an opioid litigation by pursuing all civil remedies against those in the chain of distribution of prescription opiates responsible for the opioid epidemic which is plaguing Watauga County, North Carolina, including, but not limited to, filing a claim for public nuisance to abate the damages caused thereby. Mr. Fox stated that thirty-five counties in North Carolina were in various stages of approving litigation. Twenty-six counties have filed suits to date.

Discussion was held and then tabled for closed session to allow for consultation with the County Attorney.

[Clerk's Note: Action was taken after closed session.]

PARKS AND RECREATION MATTERS

A. Vehicle Bid Award Request

Mr. Stephen Poulos, Parks and Recreation Director, stated that vehicle bids were solicited for one (1) new 2018 Ford F150 pickup truck. The following three (3) bids, which include tax and tag fees, were received:

Ashe County Ford of West Jefferson	\$22,884.36
Duncan Ford of Blacksburg	\$22,831.83
Asheville Ford Lincoln	\$22,099.97

Asheville Ford Lincoln is the lowest responsible bidder in the amount of \$22,099.97.

Vice-Chairman Kennedy, seconded by Commissioner Turnbow, moved to award the bid to Asheville Ford Lincoln for one (1) new 2018 Ford F150 pickup truck in the amount of \$22,099.97 which includes taxes and tag fees.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

PARKS AND RECREATION MATTERS

B. Out-of-State Travel

Mr. Poulos stated that a trip, traveling to Abingdon, Virginia, to attend a play at the Barter Theater, has been scheduled for the older adult population. Mr. Poulos and Ms. Keron Poteat, Recreation Specialist II, will be providing transportation and assistance for the trip and lunch. Mr. Poulos requested authorization for out-of-state travel for himself and Ms. Poteat.

Commissioner Hodges, seconded by Commissioner Yates, moved to authorize the out-of-state travel to Abingdon, Virginia, for Mr. Stephen Poulos and Ms. Keron Poteat as requested.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

TAX MATTERS

A. Monthly Collections Report

Tax Administrator, Mr. Larry Warren, presented the Tax Collections Report for the month of February 2018. This report was presented for information only and, therefore, no action was required.

B. Refunds and Releases

Mr. Warren presented the Refunds and Releases Report for February 2018 for Board approval:

TO BE TYPED IN MINUTE BOOK

Commissioner Turnbow, seconded by Commissioner Yates, moved to approve the Refunds and Releases Report for February 2018, as presented.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

MISCELLANEOUS ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

A. Boards and Commissions

County Manager Geouque presented the following:

W.A.M.Y. Community Action

Ms. Joy Coffey's final term as a Public Sector representative for Watauga County ended on February 8, 2018. Ms. Melissa Soto, Executive Director of W.A.M.Y. Community Action, Inc., has requested a Commissioner or appointee be appointed to fill one four-year term. A volunteer application has been received from Mr. George Winkler who has expressed interest in serving.

Ms. Soto has stated that the W.A.M.Y. Board meets bi-monthly on the 2nd Tuesday at 5:00 P.M. The meetings are held in the Commissioners' Board Room in Avery County. The next meeting is their Board Retreat (and a great time for a new member to begin) which will be held in the Boone office on April 7 at 10:00 A.M. The next regular meeting will be May 8, 2018.

Vice-Chairman Kennedy, seconded by Commissioner Turnbow, moved to waive the second reading and appoint Mr. George Winkler to serve as the Watauga County representative on the W.A.M.Y. Community Actions, Inc., Board.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

B. Announcements

County Manager Geouque announced that the Watauga County Planning & Inspections, Veteran's Service Office, and the Red Cross Office are moving on Wednesday, March 21, 2018, to the 2nd Floor of the Health Department Building located at 126 Poplar Grove Connector. The entrance to these offices will be at the lower level on the side facing the Human Services Building (Social Services/Project on Aging).

Chairman Welch announced that the Watauga County Health Leadership Forum will be held on Friday, April 13, 2018, from 10:00 A.M. to 12:30 P.M. in the Watauga Medical Center Auditorium. The Keynote Speaker will be Mr. Danny Staley, Director of the North Carolina Division of Public Health. Mr. Staley will speak on the opioid epidemic. County Manager Geouque stated that Mr. Staley served as the Director of Appalachian District Health Department prior to his current position.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Mr. Terry Hamilton shared his gratitude to the Board for support of the Library. Mr. Hamilton is a long-time volunteer and patron of the Library.

Sheriff Hagaman shared remarks on the opioid issue. The Sheriff stated that there had been ten lives saved during the past one and one-half years with Narcan. The Sheriff also stated that Watauga County has a Mental Health Task Force through which Daymark Recovery Services has been following up with those admitted to the Emergency Department on a Narcan overdose. The Sheriff then introduced Ms. Mollie Mellishrencken who has served as an intern with the Sheriff's Office. Ms. Mellishrencken is a Watauga County native and Hardin Park parent who will be graduating from Appalachian State University this spring

with a degree in Social Work and will then begin a graduate dual concentration program in individual clinical practice and community and organizational management.

Ms. Mollie Mellishrencken stated that she had recently anonymously interviewed forty-two offenders. Among the statistics collected, Ms. Mellishrencken shared that charges against the offenders included 40% being probation violations, 20% being larceny/theft, and 16% being possession of drugs. Of those, 42% were directly related to drugs. Out of the remaining 58%, 75% were indirectly related to drugs with 68% of those being methamphetamines, 38% being marijuana, and 28% being heroin with some using multiple drugs. Ms. Mellishrencken offered to provide her full report to those interested.

CLOSED SESSION

At 6:37 P.M., Commissioner Turnbow, seconded by Vice-Chairman Kennedy, moved to enter Closed Session to discuss Attorney/Client Matters, per G. S. 143-318.11(a)(3), Land Acquisition, per G. S. 143-318.11(a)(5)(i) and Personnel Matters, per G. S. 143-318.11(a)(6).

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

Commissioner Turnbow, seconded by Vice-Chairman Kennedy, moved to resume the open meeting at 7:03 P.M.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

POSSIBLE ACTION AFTER CLOSED SESSION

Commissioner Yates, seconded by Commissioner Turnbow, moved to adopt a resolution declaring the opioid crisis a public nuisance which must be abated for the benefit of Watauga County and its residents and citizens.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

Commissioner Turnbow, seconded by Vice-Chairman Kennedy, moved to give authority for Watauga County to be represented by McHugh Fuller Law Group, PLLC, to pursue all civil remedies against those in the chain of distribution of prescription opiates responsible for the opioid epidemic which is plaguing Watauga County, North Carolina, including, but not limited to, filing a claim for public nuisance to abate the damages caused thereby.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

Commissioner Turnbow, seconded by Vice-Chairman Kennedy, moved to approve a five-year extension of County Manager, Deron Geouque's, employment contract which includes an annual salary of \$135,000 and a \$500 per month vehicle allowance.

VOTE: Aye-5

Nay-0

ADJOURN

Commissioner Yates, seconded by Commissioner Turnbow, moved to adjourn the meeting at 7:10 P.M.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

John Welch, Chairman

ATTEST:

Anita J. Fogle, Clerk to the Board

Watauga County Board of Commissioners

MINUTES

WATAUGA COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS TUESDAY, APRIL 3, 2018

The Watauga County Board of Commissioners held a regular meeting, as scheduled, on Tuesday, April 3, 2018, at 8:30 A.M. in the Commissioners' Board Room of the Watauga County Administration Building, Boone, North Carolina.

PRESENT: John Welch, Chairman
Billy Kennedy, Vice-Chairman
Jimmy Hodges, Commissioner
Larry Turnbow, Commissioner
Perry Yates, Commissioner
Andrea Capua, County Attorney
Deron Geouque, County Manager
Anita J. Fogle, Clerk to the Board

Chairman Welch called the meeting to order at 8:33 A.M.

Commissioner Hodges opened with a prayer and Commissioner Turnbow led the Pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Chairman Welch called for additions and/or corrections to the March 20, 2018, regular meeting and closed session minutes.

Vice-Chairman Kennedy, seconded by Commissioner Turnbow, moved to approve the March 20, 2018, regular meeting minutes as presented.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

Vice-Chairman Kennedy, seconded by Commissioner Turnbow, moved to approve the March 20, 2018, closed session minutes as presented.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Chairman Welch called for additions and/or corrections to the April 3, 2018, agenda.

County Manager Geouque requested to add Personnel Matters, per 143-318.11(a)(6) under Closed Session and add the disposition of 131 Morningside Drive under Miscellaneous Administrative Matters.

Vice-Chairman Kennedy, seconded by Commissioner Hodges, moved to approve the April 3, 2018, agenda as amended.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

PROPOSED PROCLAMATION ESTABLISHING “GREENING MY PLATE” MONTH

Ms. Margie Mansure and Mr. Bill Moretz presented a proposed proclamation declaring the month of April 2018 as “Greening My Plate Month.” The purpose of the proclamation is to bring awareness to the benefits of locally grown fruits and vegetables and recognize and celebrate the farmers who provide this produce.

Commissioner Yates, seconded by Commissioner Hodges, moved to adopt the proclamation as presented.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

REQUEST TO RENEW LEASE FOR USE OF COUNTY SPACE FOR WEEKDAY FARMERS’ MARKET

Ms. Courtney Baines, Executive Director of Blue Ridge Women in Agriculture, requested a renewal of the lease allowing a weekday Farmers Market at the Human Service parking lot. Ms. Baines stated that the Blue Ridge Women in Agriculture would be managing and doing the marketing for the market this year. The main modification to the lease is increasing from a one-year to three-year term. Ms. Baines stated that the three-year term was desired as it would be looked upon more favorably when applying for grants.

County Attorney Capua stated that since the lease would be for a three-year term a nominal rent amount would need to be included to make the lease forcible. A continued point of consideration would also be to ensure that the market does not impact County operations as the request will be for the market to start around 4:00 PM.

Commissioner Yates, seconded by Commissioner Turnbow, moved to approve the lease as amended to include a rent fee of one dollar (\$1.00) per year.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

PROPOSED COMMUNITY PRIDE WEEK PROCLAMATION

Ms. Pamela Thomas, Recycling Coordinator, presented a proposed proclamation declaring Monday, May 7 - Saturday, May 12, 2018, as Community Pride Week in Watauga County. Hazardous Household Waste Day will be held on Saturday, May 12, during Community Pride Week from 8:00 A.M. to 12:00 P.M. The event is conducted each year by Sanitation staff and has proven to be very popular with the County's citizens.

Vice-Chairman Kennedy, seconded by Commissioner Turnbow, moved to adopt the proclamation as

presented by Ms. Thomas.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

COMMUNICATIONS AND EMERGENCY SERVICES MATTERS

A. Proposed Proclamation Declaring April 8-14, 2018, As National Public Safety Telecommunicators Week In Watauga County

Mr. Jeff Virginia, Communications and Emergency Services Director, presented a proposed proclamation declaring April 8-14, 2018, As National Public Safety Telecommunicators Week in Watauga County. Chairman Welch read the proclamation and presented Mr. Virginia with a signed proclamation.

Commissioner Yates, seconded by Commissioner Hodges, moved to adopt the proclamation as presented.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

B. Proposed Proclamation Recognizing Telecommunicators Melissa Harmon, David Hill, Penny Roark, And Aaron Ward For Actions Taken That Contributed To Saving The Lives Of Others

Mr. Virginia presented a proposed proclamation recognizing Telecommunicators Melissa Harmon, David Hill, Penny Roark, and Aaron Ward for actions taken that contributed to saving the lives of others. Chairman Welch read the proclamation and presented each of those recognized with a signed proclamation.

Vice-Chairman Kennedy, seconded by Commissioner Turnbow, moved to adopt the proclamation as presented.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

BUDGET AMENDMENTS

Ms. Margaret Pierce, Finance Director, reviewed the following budget amendments:

Account #	Description	Debit	Credit
233317-343109	State Substance Abuse Tax Revenue		\$5,000
234310-429000	Other Supplies	\$2,000	
234310-435300	Maintenance Repair Vehicles	\$3,000	

The amendment recognizes, per the request of Sheriff Hagaman, additional funds for other supplies and maintenance/repair to vehicles for the Narcotics Division. The funds are from the State Substance Abuse Tax Fund and additional revenue has been received above projections.

663740-381000	Sale of Recycled Scrap		\$60,000
667420-469567	Contracted Services – Tub Grinding	\$60,000	

The amendment recognized additional funds from the sale of recycled scrap to cover additional expenditures for grinding brush and stumps.

Commissioner Yates, seconded by Vice-Chairman Kennedy, moved to approve the budget amendments as presented by Ms. Pierce.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

REQUEST FOR ACCEPTANCE OF THE FY 2018 SHIP/MIPPA GRANT/CONTRACT

Ms. Angie Boitnotte, Project on Aging Director, requested acceptance of a Medicare Improvements for Patients and Providers Act (MIPPA) grant from the Seniors' Health Insurance Information Program (SHIPP). The grant is in the amount of \$2,566 with no local match required. If accepted, MIPPA grant funds, in the amount of \$2,566, will be used to expand low income subsidy outreach and to upgrade technology used for SHIP counseling and activities.

Vice-Chairman Kennedy, seconded by Commissioner Yates, moved to accept the Medicare Improvements for Patients and Providers Act (MIPPA) grant in the amount of \$2,566 as presented by Ms. Boitnotte.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

MISCELLANEOUS ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

A. Disbursement of 131 Morningside Drive

County Manager Geouque stated that in the past the County was awarded funds from the Hazardous Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP) for the demolition and removal of a home located at 131 Morningside Drive in Boone. Several years prior to that numerous homes located in the area were demolished and removed along Morningside Drive as part of a HMGP project. At that time, the subject property owner was not interested in participating in the project. However, continued flood related issues after the sale of the home prompted the new owners to request participation in the HMGP. Since the removal, the County has been in negotiations with the Town of Boone. Town of Boone Manager, Mr. John Ward, has stated that the Town is interested in taking ownership of the property. County Manager Geouque stated that he will present a resolution for consideration of donating the property to the Town of Boone at the next meeting.

B. Boards and Commissions

County Manager Geouque presented the following for consideration:

Watauga Community Housing Trust

Four terms on the Watauga Community Housing Trust are expiring. The expiring terms are for the following organizations: Town of Boone

Appalachian Regional Healthcare System

High Country Home Builders Association
Habitat for Humanity

After appointment, each organization will designate their representative. The terms are for two years.

Vice-Chairman Kennedy, seconded by Commissioner Hodges, moved to waive the second reading and appoint the Town of Boone, Appalachian Regional Healthcare System, High Country Home Builders Association, and Habitat for Humanity to two-year terms on the Watauga Community Housing Trust.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

C. Announcements

County Manager Geouque announced that the North Carolina Association of County Commissioners will be holding district meetings across the State in April with the meeting for our district being on April 4, 2018, in Yadkin County.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment.

CLOSED SESSION

At 9:06 A.M., Commissioner Turnbow, seconded by Vice-Chairman Kennedy, moved to enter Closed Session to discuss Attorney/Client Matters, per G. S. 143-318.11(a)(3), Land Acquisition, per G. S. 143-318.11(a)(5)(i), and Personnel Matters, per G. S. 143-318.11(a)(6).

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

Vice-Chairman Kennedy, seconded by Commissioner Turnbow, moved to resume the open meeting at 9:30 A.M.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

ADJOURN

Commissioner Turnbow, seconded by Vice-Chairman Kennedy, moved to adjourn the meeting at 9:30 A.M.

John Welch, Chairman

ATTEST:

Anita J. Fogle, Clerk to the Board

Watauga County Board of Commissioners

MINUTES

WATAUGA COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS TUESDAY, APRIL 17, 2018

The Watauga County Board of Commissioners held a regular meeting, as scheduled, on Tuesday, April 17, 2018, at 5:30 P.M. in the Commissioners' Board Room of the Watauga County Administration Building, Boone, North Carolina.

PRESENT: John Welch, Chairman
Billy Kennedy, Vice-Chairman
Jimmy Hodges, Commissioner
Larry Turnbow, Commissioner
Perry Yates, Commissioner
Anthony di Santi, County Attorney
Deron Geouque, County Manager
Anita J. Fogle, Clerk to the Board

Chairman Welch called the meeting to order at 5:30 P.M.

Commissioner Yates opened with a prayer and Vice-Chairman Kennedy led the Pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Chairman Welch called for additions and/or corrections to the April 3, 2018, regular meeting and closed session minutes.

Vice-Chairman Kennedy, seconded by Commissioner Yates, moved to approve the April 3, 2018, regular meeting minutes as presented.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

Vice-Chairman Kennedy, seconded Commissioner Yates, moved to approve the April 3, 2018, closed session minutes as presented.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Chairman Welch called for additions and/or corrections to the April 17, 2018, agenda.

County Manager Geouque requested to add surplus property under Finance Matters.

Vice-Chairman Kennedy, seconded by Commissioner Yates, moved to approve the April 17, 2018, agenda as amended.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

APPALACHIAN REGIONAL LIBRARY PRESENTATION

Ms. Jane Blackburn, Appalachian Regional Library (ARL) Director, introduced the following who were present for the meeting: Mr. Terry Hamilton, an Appalachian Regional Library Board member, Ms. Tish Rokoske, a former Board member, and Ms. Monica Caruso, the Watauga County Librarian. Ms. Blackburn presented the recently completed salary study, as performed by Springsted, for the ARL.

Ms. Blackburn began by stating that the Interlocal Agreement for the Appalachian Regional Library stipulates that the budgets for each county “will include an agreed upon amount paid by each member county for the materials, salaries, and operating expenses.” Ms. Blackburn went on to give data and the reasons why the ARL chose to do a compensation study and what they hoped to achieve with the study. The results of the study shows that salary levels within the ARL are significantly lower than the average salary rates paid in comparable regional library systems and the turnover rate is high within the ARL which is costly in services and funds.

Ms. Blackburn stated that the following options were presented by Springsted:

- Option 1 brings all those below grade to the minimum of the new recommended grade and provides nothing for those within or above grade.
- Option 2 brings all those under grade to the minimum of their new recommended grade and provides all those whose current salaries fall within grade a 2% increase (if any are below grade by less than 2%, they get a full 2% raise).
- Option 3 brings employees into the new scale using a ‘Years of Service’ adjustment based on time with the library as benchmark for service length.

Option 3 is Springsted’s and the ARL Governing Board’s recommended option.

Ms. Blackburn requested the Board of Commissioners consider moving all current employees to the minimum in their salary range in the new pay scale, plus 0.5% per year in position, and fully fund all personnel costs, over the course of the next 3 years.

No action was taken at this time as the request will be discussed during the budget process.

PROPOSED PROCLAMATION HONORING RENEE BOUGHMAN AND F.A.R.M. CAFÉ

Mr. Thomas Brown, Volunteer Coordinator and Marketing/Development Coordinator with F.A.R.M. Café,

presented a proposed proclamation declaring May 2, 2018, as RENEE BOUGHMAN and F.A.R.M. CAFÉ DAY. The purpose of the proclamation is to bring awareness and support of work to end food insecurity in the High Country by visiting the F.A.R.M. Café. Mr. Brown invited the Board to F.A.R.M. Café on May 2 where Best Cellar will be providing lunch and the proclamation will be presented to Renee Boughman.

Vice-Chairman Kennedy, seconded by Commissioner Turnbow, moved to adopt the proclamation as presented.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

[Clerk's Note: Due to technical problems, the Community/Recreation Center Update presentation was given prior to Closed Session.]

REQUEST FOR RPO RANKING OF TRANSPORTATION PROJECTS

Mr. Joe Furman, Planning and Inspections Director, requested the Board rank in order the eight (8) listed projects for the possible inclusion in the 2020-2029 State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP). The rankings are due May 1, 2018.

Vice-Chairman Kennedy, seconded by Commissioner Yates, moved to approve the following ranking of projects for possible inclusion in the 2020-2029 State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP):

1. Multi-lane US Hwy 421 from Vilas to Tennessee line
2. Multi-lane NC Hwy 194 from East King Street to Howard's Creek Road
3. Middle Fork Greenway, Section 5 from Niley Cook Road to Jordan V. Cook Road
4. Multi-lane 105 Bypass
5. Improve Deerfield Road/Bamboo Road intersection at 3-way stop sign
6. Improve US Hwy 321 between Payne Branch Road and Fairway Drive
7. Multi-lane NC Hwy 105 from Clark's Creek Road to US Hwy 221 in Linville
8. Improve US Hwy 421/old 421 South intersection at Food Lion

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

TAX MATTERS

A. Monthly Collections Report

Tax Administrator, Mr. Larry Warren, presented the Tax Collections Report for the month of March 2018. This report was presented for information only and, therefore, no action was required.

B. Refunds and Releases

Mr. Warren presented the Refunds and Releases Report for March 2018 for Board approval:

TO BE TYPED IN MINUTE BOOK

Commissioner Yates, seconded by Vice-Chairman Kennedy, moved to approve the Refunds and Releases Report for March 2018, as presented.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

FINANCE MATTERS

A. Budget Amendments

Ms. Margaret Pierce, Finance Director, reviewed the following budget amendments:

Account #	Description	Debit	Credit
103300-332004	SHIIP Grant		\$2,566
105550-449901	SHIIP Grant Expenses	\$2,566	

The amendment recognizes the acceptance of the Medicare Improvements for Patients and Providers Act (MIPPA) grant from the State Health Insurance Information Program (SHIIP). No match is required.

105911-471000	NC Lottery Funds		\$117,500
105911-470004	Valle Crucis Fire Alarm Replacement	\$57,500	
105911-470028	Phone and Intercom System – Cove Creek	\$60,000	

The amendment allocates funds for the NC Lottery projects as requested by the Watauga County Schools and approved by the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction.

Vice-Chairman Kennedy, seconded by Commissioner Yates, moved to approve the budget amendments as presented by Ms. Pierce.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

B. Proposed Community Recreation Center Financing

Ms. Pierce presented an engagement letter from Parker Poe Adams & Bernstein LLP to serve as the County's Bond Council for the financing of the new Community Recreation Center. The County has utilized the services of Parker Poe Adams & Bernstein LLP multiple times in which they have provided exemplary service. The fee is a \$55,000 lump sum payment for Bond Council Services.

Commissioner Yates, seconded by Commissioner Turnbow, moved to approve Parker Poe Adams & Bernstein LLP as the County's Bond Council for the Community Recreation Center and approve the \$55,000 lump sum fee contingent upon the County Attorney's review.

VOTE: Aye-5

Nay-0

Ms. Pierce also presented an engagement letter from Robert W. Baird & Company, Inc. to serve as the County's managing underwriter or placement agent for the Community Recreation Center. The engagement letter will be replaced and superseded by a bond purchase agreement to be entered into when the Securities are priced following a successful completion of the offering process. Robert W. Baird & Company, Inc. has served in many projects in North Carolina and has a successful relationship with the North Carolina Local Government Commission. The proposed fees are in line with the 2012 school refinance. Robert W. Baird & Company, Inc.'s per bond fee is not to exceed \$2.85/\$1,000 plus expenses related to the bond issuance.

Vice-Chairman Kennedy, seconded by Commissioner Turnbow, moved to approve Robert W. Baird & Company, Inc. as the County's managing underwriter or placement agent for the Community Recreation Center and approve the fee of \$2.85/\$1,000 plus expenses related to the bond issuance contingent upon the County Attorney's review.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

C. Surplus Property

Ms. Pierce stated that a surplus 1998 John Deere 160 Excavator was put on GovDeals for sale with an expected sale price of \$15,000-20,000. The auction closed April 16, 2018, with a high bid of \$36,501. The amount of the sale exceeded the County Manager's approval level of \$30,000, therefore; Board approval was required to finalize the sale.

Ms. Pierce stated that a 2005 Volvo VHD roll off truck has also been declared surplus with an expected sale price in the range of \$20,000-25,000. Based on the sale of the last item, staff recommends the Board approve the surplus and sale of this vehicle in the event the \$30,000 threshold is once again exceeded.

Commissioner Yates, seconded by Commissioner Turnbow, moved to approve the sale of the 1998 John Deere Excavator and the surplus and sale of the 2005 Volvo truck as presented by Ms. Pierce.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

MISCELLANEOUS ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

A. Authorize the Transfer of County Owned Property at 131 Morningside Drive to the Town of Boone

County Manager Geouque stated that in August of 2014, the Board approved the submittal of an application to the Hazardous Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP) for funding for the demolition and removal of a home located at 131 Morningside Drive in Boone. Several years ago numerous homes located in the area were demolished and removed along Morningside Drive as part of a HMGP project. At that time, the subject property owner was not interested in participating in the project. However, continued flood related issues after the sale of the home has prompted the new owners to request participation in the HMGP. Based on conversations at that time with Mr. Stephen Sudderth, the Town of Boone was not interested in participating

in the current application leaving the County the only option for assistance and relief for the home owner. Board approval was given to accept the grant from the Hazardous Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP) with matching funds to be paid by the State. The demolition and removal of the house has now been completed. The Town of Boone has indicated a willingness to accept the property.

County Manager Geouque stated that per North Carolina General Statute 160A-274 staff requests authorization for the transfer of the County owned property located at 131 Morningside Drive to the Town of Boone. The County would handle all necessary legal work regarding the transfer.

Commissioner Turnbow, seconded by Vice-Chairman Kennedy, moved to authorize the transfer of the County owned property located at 131 Morningside Drive to the Town of Boone with the all necessary legal work regarding the transfer to be handled by the County.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

B. Announcements

County Manager Geouque announced the following:

- The location of the Tuesday, May 1, 2018, Board of Commissioners meeting has been changed to the Cooperative Extension Conference Room due to One-Stop Voting taking place in the Commissioners' Board Room. The meeting will be held at 8:30 A.M.
- Budget Work Sessions are scheduled for Wednesday, May 2, and Thursday, May 3, 2018, from 12:00 P.M. until 7:00 P.M. The Work Sessions will be held in the Commissioners' Conference Room.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Mr. Craig Hughes, AppalCART Director, and Mr. Jim Ritchey with Whitman Requardt and Associates, LLP, shared that AppalCART is conducting a Comprehensive Service Review and encouraged everyone to tell AppalCART "where to go." Mr. Hughes shared the following dates and invited the Board to attend:

Tuesday, April 17

BREMCO

2491 US HWY 421 S, Boone

10:00 A.M. – 12:00 P.M.

Stakeholder Workshop

12:00 – 2:00 P.M.

Drop-In-Session

Wednesday, April 18

College of Education

Building, Room 124A
151 College Street, Boone

Drop-In Sessions

9:30 A.M. - 11:00 A.M.
11:00 A.M. - 12:30 P.M.
1:00 P.M. - 2:30 P.M.
2:30 P.M. - 4:00 P.M.

Thursday, April 19

108 Lakeside Drive,
Blowing Rock

Drop-In Session

12:00 – 2:00 P.M.

A link to the Comprehensive Service Review survey has been posted under announcements on the County's website.

Mr. Hughes also gave a brief update on the bus fleet by stating that ten new buses were received in January with nine already incorporated into operations and one on standby to when the Appalachian State University College of Health Sciences opens.

COMMUNITY/RECREATION CENTER UPDATE

Mr. Chad Roberson with Clark Nexsen gave a presentation on the current plans for the recreation center. Mr. Roberson shared the layout of the facility and described the façade as well. Mr. Roberson reviewed the design development timeline as well as costs. Completion of the facility is expected by May 2020 at a total cost of approximately \$30,000,000.

Vice-Chairman Kennedy, seconded by Commissioner Turnbow, moved to approve the design development submittal and direct Clark Nexsen to proceed with the construction documents.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

CLOSED SESSION

At 7:10 P.M., Vice-Chairman Kennedy, seconded by Commissioner Turnbow, moved to enter Closed Session to discuss Attorney/Client Matters, per G. S. 143-318.11(a)(3).

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

Vice-Chairman Kennedy, seconded by Commissioner Turnbow, moved to resume the open meeting at 7:25 P.M.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

ADJOURN

Vice-Chairman Kennedy, seconded by Chairman Welch, moved to adjourn the meeting at 7:25 P.M.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

John Welch, Chairman

ATTEST:

Anita J. Fogle, Clerk to the Board

Watauga County Board of Commissioners

MINUTES

WATAUGA COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS TUESDAY, MAY 1, 2018

The Watauga County Board of Commissioners held a regular meeting, as scheduled, on Tuesday, May 1, 2018, at 8:30 A.M. in the Watauga County Agricultural Conference Center in Boone, North Carolina.

PRESENT: John Welch, Chairman
Billy Kennedy, Vice-Chairman
Jimmy Hodges, Commissioner
Larry Turnbow, Commissioner
Perry Yates, Commissioner
Anthony di Santi, County Attorney
Deron Geouque, County Manager
Anita J. Fogle, Clerk to the Board

Chairman Welch called the meeting to order at 8:30 A.M.

Commissioner Hodges opened with a prayer and Commissioner Turnbow led the Pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Chairman Welch called for additions and/or corrections to the April 17, 2018, regular meeting and closed session minutes.

Vice-Chairman Kennedy, seconded by Commissioner Turnbow, moved to approve the April 17, 2018, regular meeting minutes as presented.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

Vice-Chairman Kennedy, seconded by Commissioner Turnbow, moved to approve the April 17, 2018, closed session minutes as presented.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Chairman Welch called for additions and/or corrections to the May 1, 2018, agenda.

County Manager Geouque requested to add a budget amendment as recently requested by the Sheriff.

Commissioner Yates, seconded by Commissioner Turnbow, moved to approve the May 1, 2018, agenda as amended.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

JUVENILE CRIME PREVENTION COUNCIL (JCPC) FY 2019 CERTIFICATION, MEMBERSHIP, AND COUNTY PLAN

Dr. Paul Holden, Chairman of Juvenile Crime Prevention Council (JCPC), presented the JCPC's FY 2019 Certification, County Plan, and membership roster.

Commissioner Hodges, seconded by Commissioner Turnbow, moved to approve the Juvenile Crime Prevention Council FY 2019 Certification, County Plan, and Membership as presented.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

APPALACHIAN DISTRICT HEALTH DEPARTMENT'S COMMUNITY HEALTH ASSESSMENT REPORT PRESENTATION

Ms. Maria Julian, Appalachian District Health Director of Community Services, presented key findings from the Community Health Assessment Report. Data included demographics and special populations, social and economic determinants of health, environmental health, morbidity, chronic disease and mortality rates, health behaviors, maternal and child health, behavioral health, and healthcare resources and access. Ms. Julian stated that the full report was available on the Health Department's website. The report was for information only; therefore, no action was required.

PROPOSED ALLOCATION OF PROJECTED FY 2019 HOME AND COMMUNITY CARE BLOCK GRANT (H&CCBG) FUNDS

Ms. Angie Boitnotte, Project on Aging Director, requested the acceptance of the projected allocation of \$269,489 in Home and Community Care Block Grant (H&CCBG) funds for FY 2019. The required local match is \$29,943 and is present in the Project on Aging's FY 2019 requested budget. Ms. Boitnotte stated that the H&CCBG Committee recommended the funds be allocated as follows:

H&CCBG Service	H&CCBG Allocation	Local Match
In-Home Aide	\$126,904	\$14,101
Congregate Meals	\$45,954	\$5,106
Home Delivered Meals	\$80,833	\$8,981
Transportation	\$15,798	\$1,755
Totals	\$269,489	\$29,943

Commissioner Yates, seconded by Vice-Chairman Kennedy, moved to accept the projected allocation in the amount of \$269,489 in Home and Community Care Block Grant funds for FY 2019 and to approve the local match in the amount of \$29,943.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

BID AWARD REQUEST FOR EAST ANNEX HVAC REPLACEMENT PROJECT

Mr. Robert Marsh, Maintenance Director, presented the following bids received for the HVAC system for the East Annex:

Bidder	Amount
Edmisten Heating & Cooling	\$18,297
Mountaineer Heating & Cooling	\$20,568
Boone Heating & Air Conditioning	\$21,135
Associated Heating & Air Conditioning	\$23,464

Mr. Marsh stated that the equipment is over twenty-years old and in need of replacement. The replacement of the HVAC system will be in conjunction with the replacement of the roof. Edmisten Heating and Cooling was the lowest responsive bidder. Adequate funds have been identified in the current Fiscal Year 2018 budget.

Commissioner Turnbow, second by Vice-Chairman Kennedy moved to award the bid to Edmisten Heating and Cooling in the amount of \$18,297 for the replacement of the HVAC system at the East Annex facility.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

BROOKSHIRE PARK SOUTH FORK NEW RIVER STABILIZATION

Mr. Joe Furman, Planning and Inspections Director, requested authorization for a \$20,000 contract with Brushy Fork Environmental Consulting, Inc. to stabilize a portion of the bank next to the greenway located at the Brookshire Park. Recent rains have exacerbated the current situation and to reduce future damage and mitigate safety issues staff would recommend approving the contract. Brushy Fork Environmental Consulting is currently working on a nearby project and savings could be realized by adding to their current contract. Mr. Furman stated that requests for qualifications would need to be waived for the project. Funds for the contract would come from the administrative contingency fund.

Vice-Chairman Kennedy, seconded by Commissioner Yates, moved to waive the project from the request for qualifications process and authorize to contract with Brushy Fork Environmental Consulting, Inc., in the amount of \$20,000 to stabilize the river bank located at Brookshire Park.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

PROPOSED JUVENILE CRIME PREVENTION COUNCIL (JCPC) BUDGET AMENDMENT

Ms. Margaret Pierce, Finance Director, presented a revised Juvenile Crime Prevention Council (JCPC) FY

2017-18 Funding Allocation form. Crossnore was unable to fully expend funds so the Council requested to transfer \$20,885 to the other programs as detailed below:

Task Force/Admin	\$3,500
Juvenile Mediation	\$800
WYN Youth Resource Center	\$6,607
Project Challenge	\$3,518
Mountain Alliance	\$6,460

The Task Force/Admin funds will be allocated to help fund the State of the Child event. No additional County funding is required.

Commissioner Yates, seconded by Commissioner Turnbow, moved to approve the revised funding allocation for the Juvenile Crime Prevention Council as requested.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

BUDGET AMENDMENTS

Ms. Margaret Pierce, Finance Director, reviewed the following budget amendments:

Account #	Description	Debit	Credit
233991-399101	Fund Balance Appropriation		\$5,000
234310-423800	Undercover Drug Purchases	\$5,000	

The amendment recognizes, per the request of Sheriff Hagaman, additional funds for use in law enforcement cases as buy money for investigations. The funds are from the State Substance Abuse Tax Fund.

Vice-Chairman Kennedy, seconded by Commissioner Hodges, moved to approve the budget amendment as presented by Ms. Pierce.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

MISCELLANEOUS ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

A. Presentation of the FY 2019 Capital Improvement Plan (CIP)

The County Manager presented the FY 2018-2019 Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) for review prior to discussion during the upcoming budget work sessions.

B. Presentation of the Manager's FY 2019 Recommended Budget

The County Manager presented his Recommended FY 2019 Budget at the meeting and reviewed highlights.

He announced upcoming budget work sessions scheduled to begin at 12:00 P.M. on both Wednesday, May 2, and Thursday, May 3, 2018. A public hearing will be held on Tuesday, May 15, 2018, at 5:30 P.M. to allow citizen comment on the proposed budget.

C. Proposed Property & Liability Insurance and Workers Compensation Renewals Request

County Manager Geouque stated that renewal rates for property and liability insurance and workers compensation were as follows: property and liability at a rate of \$185,667, which is a \$3,052 decrease, and workers compensation at a rate of \$237,279, which is a 6% decrease. Based on prior years' claims experience staff recommended continuing the property deductible at \$5,000. Adequate funds are in the Manager's recommended budget to cover the insurance premiums.

Vice-Chairman Kennedy, seconded by Commissioner Turnbow, moved to approve the renewals for property and liability insurance, in the amount of \$185,667, and workers compensation in the amount of \$237,279, from the North Carolina Association of County Commissioners (NCACC).

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

D. Announcements

County Manager Geouque announced the following:

- Budget Work Sessions are scheduled for Wednesday, May 2, and Thursday, May 3, 2018, from 12:00 P.M. until 7:00 P.M. The Work Sessions will be held in the Commissioners' Conference Room.
- Monday, May 7 through Saturday, May 12, 2018, has been designated as "Community Pride Week" in Watauga County. Hazardous Household Waste Day will be held on Saturday, May 12, 2018, from 8:00 AM to 12:00 PM.
- A public hearing will be held on Tuesday, May 15, 2018, beginning at 5:30 P.M. to allow citizen comment on the FY 2019 Proposed Budget.
- The Trustees of Caldwell Community College & Technical Institute invites the Board of Commissioners to a meeting on Wednesday, May 16, 2018, at 6:00 P.M. at the Watauga Instructional Facility on Hwy 105 Bypass, Boone NC, in Room 112.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment.

CLOSED SESSION

At 9:27 A.M., Commissioner Hodges, seconded by Commissioner Turnbow, moved to enter Closed Session to discuss Attorney/Client Matters, per G. S. 143-318.11(a)(3), Land Acquisition, per G. S. 143-318.11(a)(5)(i), and Personnel Matters, per G. S. 143-318.11(a)(6).

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

Vice-Chairman Kennedy, seconded by Commissioner Turnbow, moved to resume the open meeting at 10:07 A.M.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

ADJOURN

Vice-Chairman Kennedy, seconded by Commissioner Turnbow, moved to adjourn the meeting at 10:07 A.M.

John Welch, Chairman

ATTEST:

Anita J. Fogle, Clerk to the Board

Watauga County Board of Commissioners

MINUTES

WATAUGA COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS TUESDAY, JUNE 19, 2018

The Watauga County Board of Commissioners held a regular meeting, as scheduled, on Tuesday, June 19, 2018, at 5:30 P.M. in the Commissioners' Board Room of the Watauga County Administration Building, Boone, North Carolina.

PRESENT: John Welch, Chairman
Billy Kennedy, Vice-Chairman
Jimmy Hodges, Commissioner
Larry Turnbow, Commissioner
Perry Yates, Commissioner
Andrea Capua, County Attorney
Deron Geouque, County Manager
Anita J. Fogle, Clerk to the Board

Chairman Welch called the meeting to order at 5:31 P.M.

Commissioner Yates opened with a prayer and Vice-Chairman Kennedy led the Pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Chairman Welch called for additions and/or corrections to the June 5, 2018, regular meeting and closed session minutes.

Vice-Chairman Kennedy, seconded by Commissioner Turnbow, moved to approve the June 5, 2018, regular meeting minutes as presented.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

Vice-Chairman Kennedy, seconded by Commissioner Turnbow, moved to approve the June 5, 2018, closed session minutes as presented.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Chairman Welch called for additions and/or corrections to the June 19, 2018, agenda.

County Manager Geouque requested to add a capital improvement request from Caldwell Community College

to Miscellaneous Administrative Matters and Land Acquisition, per G. S. 143-318.11(a)(5)(i) to closed session.

Commissioner Hodges, seconded by Commissioner Yates, moved to approve the June 19, 2018, agenda as presented.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

SOCIAL SERVICES MATTERS

A. Social Worker Out-of-State Travel Request

Mr. Tom Hughes, Director of Social Services, stated that due to a court order received on May 5, 2018, one or some of the County's social workers must travel to South Carolina to conduct home visits. The Judge ordered a minimum of three visits; however, it is anticipated that additional visits may be required. Adequate funds are budgeted in the Social Services budget to cover travel expenses.

Commissioner Yates, seconded by Vice-Chairman Kennedy, moved to authorize the out-of-state travel to South Carolina for the County's Social Services Department as mandated through a court order.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

B. Proposed NC Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS)/County Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) Pursuant to G. S. 108A-74

Mr. Tom Hughes presented a proposed Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services. Mr. Hughes shared extensive background information including that the sanction powers have been in place; however, the State now wants counties to sign the MOU as an official document. Mr. Hughes stated that Attachments 1-10 of the MOU however are new. He shared concerns as they include across-the-board percentages related to performance requirements that are too high for counties the size of Watauga to meet. Mr. Hughes indicated that if the Department of Social Services did not meet the standards as set forth, the County would receive calls. Mr. Hughes stated that he was not recommending the Board sign or not sign the MOU; however, if it was signed, Mr. Hughes indicated that he planned to ask for additional staff. Mr. Hughes did recommend the Board of Commissioners remove "Advisory Board" from the title of the Social Services Board.

Mr. Hughes stated that other counties were signing the MOU with reservations and some were including an additional signed form which included wording which added additional protection for the County.

County Manager Geouque stated that the ratios the State was putting into place wouldn't work everywhere and that he would be cautious to add positions because of the MOU alone. The County Manager stated that you cannot staff a Department for worse case scenarios.

Chairman Welch tabled further discussion to allow the County Attorney to review the documents and gather more information.

PROPOSED ACCEPTANCE OF CLEAN WATER MANAGEMENT TRUST FUND

(CWMTF) GRANT FOR WETLANDS CONSTRUCTION ON BROOKSHIRE ROAD

Mr. Joe Furman, Planning and Inspections Director, stated that in December 2017, an application was submitted by the County, as prepared by Blue Ridge Environmental Consultants (BREC), for a Clean Water Management Trust Fund (CWMTF) grant to construct wetlands on County owned property located on Brookshire Road at the Soccer Complex.

The County has received notice that the grant was awarded in the amount of \$365,000 with all matching funds to come from donation of easements, in-kind services, and BREC (private funds).

Commissioner Turnbow, seconded by Commissioner Yates, moved to accept the grant from the Clean Water Management Trust Funds in the amount of \$365,000.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

TAX MATTERS

A. Monthly Collections Report

Tax Administrator, Mr. Larry Warren, presented the Tax Collections Report for the month of May 2018. The report was presented for information only and, therefore, no action was required.

B. Refunds and Releases

Mr. Warren presented the Refunds and Releases Report for May 2018 for Board approval:

TO BE TYPED IN MINUTE BOOK

Vice-Chairman Kennedy, seconded by Commissioner Hodges, moved to approve the Refunds and Releases Report for May 2018 as presented.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

MISCELLANEOUS ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

A. Audit Contract

County Manager Geouque stated that Ms. Misty Watson, the County's current auditor, submitted a letter of resignation. Ms. Watson is in good standing with the County however, she is choosing to pursue alternative business opportunities. Due to time constraints and the requisite to start and complete the fiscal year audit; County staff requested the departing audit firm provide a recommendation on a possible replacement. Many auditing firms are engaged and are unable to provide services due to current obligations and schedules.

Ms. Watson recommended Gould Killian, CPA Group, P.A., who has submitted a proposal for the County's audit in the amount of \$47,500 for the financial statement audit and compliance audit on up to two major programs. An additional charge of \$4,900 for agreed-upon procedures plus \$2,350 for each additional major program over the two included in the \$47,500 base price will be charged.

The County Manager stated that he has personally met with and vetted the new firm. Reference checks have been made with high marks and 100% satisfaction rates being given by current counties and towns. Staff has contacted the North Carolina State Auditor's Office for their input with no response to date. Regarding the fire contracts which is currently \$750 per fire department, staff will review the current contracts and determine if these procedures can be done internally.

Commissioner Turnbow, seconded by Vice-Chairman Kennedy, moved to approve the audit contract with Gould Killian, CPA Group, P.A., in the amount of \$47,500 for the financial statement audit and compliance audit on up to two major programs with an additional charge of \$4,900 for Agreed-Upon Procedures plus \$2,350 for each additional major program over the two included in the \$47,500 base price.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

B. Caldwell Community College & Technical Institute (CCC&TI) Capital Improvement Request

County Manager Geouque stated that the bids for the Student Center on the Watauga Campus of Caldwell Community College and Technical Institute (CCC&TI) came in \$651,534 over budget. The County Manager stated that Dr. Mark Poarch, President of CCC&TI, has requested the County release funds budgeted for CCC&TI capital needs. County Manager Geouque stated that there is approximately \$302,000 in the fund and this is the intended purpose of the funds.

Vice-Chairman Kennedy, seconded by Commissioner Hodges, moved to release all available funds set aside for Caldwell Community College and Technical Institute capital improvement projects as requested.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

C. Appointment of the North Carolina Association of County Commissioners' (NCACC) Annual Conference Voting Delegate

County Manager Geouque stated that the North Carolina Association of County Commissioners' (NCACC) Annual Conference is scheduled for August 23-25, 2018, in Catawba County. Each county in attendance is required to select a voting member for representation at the annual business meeting which is conducted as a part of the conference. Submission of the voting delegate is due by August 17, 2018.

Chairman Welch tabled the appointment of a delegate to allow for Board members to check calendars prior to making a commitment to attend the meeting.

D. Boards and Commissions

County Manager Geouque presented the following Boards and Commissions appointments for consideration:

Appalachian Regional Library

The Appalachian Regional Library Board recommends that Ms. Ala Sue Moretz be reappointed to the Appalachian Regional Library Board to fill a second term.

Commissioner Yates, seconded by Commissioner Turnbow, moved to waive the second reading and reappoint Ms. Ala Sue Moretz to the Appalachian Regional Library Board.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

Watauga County Public Library

The Appalachian Regional Library Board recommends that Dr. Mary Reichel be reappointed to the Watauga County Public Library local board to fill a second term.

Commissioner Yates, seconded by Vice-Chairman Kennedy, moved to waive the second reading and reappoint Ms. Mary Reichel to the Watauga County Public Library Board.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

Economic Development Commission

Ms. Pat Parish and Mr. Tim Hodges terms on the Economic Development Commission (EDC) expire in June.

Ms. Parish resigned from the EDC in May. Therefore, her slot will need to be filled. Mr. Hodges has completed one term, is eligible for a second term, and is interested in being reappointed. A volunteer application was presented from Ms. Angela Weaver who is interested in serving on the EDC. Both terms are for three years. The EDC will not meet again until July.

Commissioner Turnbow, seconded by Commissioner Yates, moved to recuse Commissioner Hodges from action involving Mr. Tim Hodges due to family relations.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

Commissioner Yates, seconded by Vice-Chairman Kennedy, moved to reappoint Mr. Tim Hodges to the Economic Development Commission (EDC).

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

Commissioner Yates, seconded by Commissioner Turnbow, moved to bring Commissioner Hodges back into discussions.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

Commissioner Yates, seconded by Commissioner Turnbow, moved to waive the second reading and appoint Ms. Weaver to the Economic Development Commission (EDC).

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

E. Announcements

County Manager Geouque announced the following:

- The 111th NCACC Annual Conference will be held August 23-25, 2018, in Catawba County. The following website: www.ncacc.org/AnnualConference (<http://www.ncacc.org/AnnualConference>) was given for additional information.
- The first regular meeting in July has been cancelled; therefore, the next Board of Commissioners Meeting will be held on Tuesday, July 17, 2018, at 5:30 P.M.

Vice-Chairman Kennedy announced the High Country Chapter Military Officers Association and the Town of Boone will hold a formal dedication of the Watauga County Veterans Memorial on July 4, 2018, at 9:45 A.M. at Boone Town Hall.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment.

CLOSED SESSION

At 6:30 P.M., Commissioner Turnbow, seconded by Vice-Chairman Kennedy, moved to enter Closed Session to discuss Attorney/Client Matters, per G. S. 143-318.11(a)(3), Personnel Matters, per G. S. 143-318.11(a)(6), and Land Acquisition, per G. S. 143-318.11(a)(5)(i).

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

Commissioner Yates, seconded by Vice-Chairman Kennedy, moved to resume the open meeting at 7:15 P.M.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

ADJOURN

Commissioner Yates, seconded by Commissioner Turnbow, moved to adjourn the meeting at 7:15 P.M.

John Welch, Chairman

ATTEST:

Anita J. Fogle, Clerk to the Board

Watauga County Board of Commissioners

MINUTES

WATAUGA COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

TUESDAY, JULY 17, 2018

The Watauga County Board of Commissioners held a regular meeting, as scheduled, on Tuesday, July 17, 2018, at 5:30 P.M. in the Commissioners' Board Room of the Watauga County Administration Building, Boone, North Carolina.

PRESENT: John Welch, Chairman
Billy Kennedy, Vice-Chairman
Jimmy Hodges, Commissioner
Larry Turnbow, Commissioner
Anthony di Santi, County Attorney
Deron Geouque, County Manager
Anita J. Fogle, Clerk to the Board

Chairman Welch called the meeting to order at 5:39 P.M. and announced that Commissioner Yates was not able to attend.

Commissioner Hodges opened with a prayer and Commissioner Turnbow led the Pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Chairman Welch called for additions and/or corrections to the June 19, 2018, regular meeting and closed session minutes.

Vice-Chairman Kennedy, seconded by Commissioner Turnbow, moved to approve the June 19, 2018, regular meeting minutes as presented.

VOTE: Aye-4(Welch, Kennedy, Hodges, Turnbow)
Nay-0
Absent-1(Yates)

Vice-Chairman Kennedy, seconded by Commissioner Turnbow, moved to approve the June 19, 2018, closed session minutes as presented.

VOTE: Aye-4(Welch, Kennedy, Hodges, Turnbow)
Nay-0
Absent-1(Yates)

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Chairman Welch called for additions and/or corrections to the July 17, 2018, agenda.

County Manager Geouque requested to add the Annual Settlement and Oath to Tax Matters and a Board of

Elections Funding Request and Watauga Arts Council Grant Support Request to Miscellaneous Administrative Matters. At the request of Vice-Chairman Kennedy, the County Manager requested the Board of Elections item be placed at the beginning of the meeting.

Commissioner Turnbow requested to remove the Blue Ridge Resource Conservation and Development Funding Request for placement on a future agenda.

Commissioner Hodges, seconded by Commissioner Turnbow, moved to approve the July 17, 2018, agenda as amended.

VOTE: Aye-4(Welch, Kennedy, Hodges, Turnbow)
Nay-0
Absent-1(Yates)

BOARD OF ELECTIONS FUNDING REQUEST

County Manager Geouque stated that, due to changes by the General Assembly requiring One-Stop Voting locations to be open for twelve hours, the Board of Elections has requested a funding increase in the current budget. The County Manager presented the following two funding options: Option 1 would increase funding by \$27,632 and Option 2 would increase funding by \$20,392. The reduction in Option 2 is due to reduced staff at each One-Stop location. Board of Elections members, Mr. Eric Eller and Dr. Richard Rapfogel stated that the Board of Elections would take formal action to approve the option chosen on July 18, 2018; however, both agreed that Option 2 was acceptable.

Commissioner Turnbow, seconded by Vice-Chairman Kennedy, moved to approve the Option 2 funding increase for Board of Elections in the amount of \$20,392 with the contingency that the County Manager could facilitate Option 1 if needed.

VOTE: Aye-4(Welch, Kennedy, Hodges, Turnbow)
Nay-0
Absent-1(Yates)

SOCIAL SERVICES MATTERS

A. Vehicle Bid Award Request - Subaru

Mr. Tom Hughes, Social Services Director, presented the following bids for a 2018 Subaru Forester:

BIDDER	AMOUNT
Jim Armstrong Subaru (Hickory, NC)	\$22,769
Tindol Subaru (Gastonia, NC)	\$22,950
Modern Subaru (Boone, NC)	\$23,318
Randy Marion Subaru (Mooresville, NC)	No response

Mr. Hughes stated that four companies were solicited with three responses received. Jim Armstrong Subaru was the lowest responsive bidder in the amount of \$22,769. The total amount including tax and tag is \$23,458.07.

Adequate funds have been budgeted in the current fiscal year to cover the purchase.

Vice-Chairman Kennedy, seconded by Commissioner Turnbow, moved to award the bid for a 2018 Subaru

Forester to Jim Armstrong Subaru in the amount of \$23,458.07 which includes tax and tag.

VOTE: Aye-4(Welch, Kennedy, Hodges, Turnbow)
Nay-0
Absent-1(Yates)

B. Proposed NC Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS)/County Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) Pursuant to G. S. 108A-74

At the June 19th meeting the Board tabled action on the Memorandum of Understanding MOU with the NC Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS). Mr. Tom Hughes, Social Services Director, presented the MOU with the NC Department of Health and Human Services for consideration. The MOU is required per NCGS 108A-74. Counties are required to enter into annual written agreements for all social services programs other than medical assistance. The law requires the agreement to contain certain performance requirements and administrative responsibilities related to the social services program. Mr. Hughes stated that thirty-four counties had submitted a cover letter with their MOU citing reservations with the MOU and other counties added a writ to the end of their signed MOUs. Many of the MOUs that included the writ were returned with a request from the State to resubmit the MOU without the writ attached. The MOU's with the letters attached were accepted.

County Attorney di Santi presented a proposed resolution to accompany Watauga County's MOU. The resolution states that the County signed the MOU with reservation and requests DHHS consider modifying the mandatory criteria and benchmarks imposed by the MOU to address small counties. The resolution also requests DHHS to reconsider the oversight, compliance and enforcement process.

After discussion, Vice-Chairman Kennedy, seconded by Commissioner Hodges, moved to approve the Memorandum of Understanding and adopt the "Resolution Regarding the HB 630 Required Agreement Between the North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services ("DHHS") and Watauga County, North Carolina (the "County") and the Watauga County Department of Social Services ("DSS")."

VOTE: Aye-3(Welch, Kennedy, Hodges)
Nay-1(Turnbow)
Absent-1(Yates)

C. Request to Change the Name of the Social Services Advisory Board

Mr. Hughes requested the change of the name of the Social Services Advisory Board to the Watauga Board of Social Services to be more in line with wording in the above MOU. County Manager Geouque stated that a previous Board of Commissioners abolished the Watauga County Board of Social Services and reconstituted the Board as the Social Services Advisory Board. The purpose of the change was for the Board of Commissioners to have more control over the Department of Social Services instead of an independent Board.

County Attorney di Santi verified that the name change requested would only affect the name of the Board and nothing more. The Board would continue to have the same authority it currently has.

Vice-Chairman Kennedy, seconded by Commissioner Turnbow, moved to change the name of the Social Services Advisory Board to the Watauga Board of Social Services.

VOTE: Aye-4(Welch, Kennedy, Hodges, Turnbow)
Nay-0
Absent-1(Yates)

Mr. Hughes stated that the Watauga Board of Social Services may make a presentation to the Board of Commissioners regarding upcoming changes due to the MOU with DHHS and may request a position or two be added to the Department of Social Services.

County Manager Geouque stated that position requests would be appropriate for the Annual Pre-Budget Retreat which is typically held during February.

D. Social Services Advisory Board

Mr. Hughes requested the Board consider Ms. Lynn Patterson's reappointment to the Social Services Board for a four-year term at this time.

[Clerk's Note: Consideration for Ms. Patterson's appointment was originally listed for consideration later on the agenda under Boards and Commissions which is a part of Miscellaneous Administrative Matters.]

Commissioner Turnbow, seconded by Vice-Chairman Kennedy, moved to waive the second reading and reappoint Ms. Lynn Patterson to a four-year term on the Social Services Board.

VOTE: Aye-4(Welch, Kennedy, Hodges, Turnbow)
Nay-0
Absent-1(Yates)

PROPOSED MCLAURIN PARKING AGREEMENT

Mr. Joe Furman, Planning and Inspections Director, presented a proposed contract with McLaurin Parking for the County-owned Ginn Parking Lot located on Queen Street. The lot would be a pay lot with a central pay station, including Saturdays. Jurors and County employees can park in the lot for free with the use of parking stickers or juror parking notices. Mr. Furman stated that the County would receive, as rent for each month, thirty percent (30%) of the monthly gross parking revenue for the first \$1,000 collected and fifty percent (50%) of the gross parking revenue for all parking revenue in the excess of the first \$1,000 collected. McLaurin Parking would pay for the pay station and signage. The lease is for a three-year term.

Commissioner Turnbow, seconded by Vice-Chairman Kennedy, moved to approve the lease with McLaurin Parking contingent upon the County Attorney's review.

VOTE: Aye-4(Welch, Kennedy, Hodges, Turnbow)
Nay-0
Absent-1(Yates)

MAINTENANCE MATTERS

A. Vehicle Bid Award Request - Work Van

Mr. Robert Marsh, Maintenance Director, presented the following bids for a two-wheel drive medium roof height van:

BIDDER	AMOUNT
Asheville Ford (Asheville, NC)	\$32,173
Modern Nissan (Winston Salem, NC)	\$27,573
Modern Ford (Boone, NC)	No response

Capital Ford	No response
Nissan (Boone, NC)	No response

Mr. Marsh stated that five vendors were solicited with only two responses received. Modern Nissan was the lowest responsive bidder in the amount of \$27,573. The total amount including tax and tag is \$28,406.19. Adequate funds have been budgeted in the current fiscal year to cover the purchase.

Vice-Chairman Kennedy, seconded by Commissioner Turnbow, moved to award the bid for a 2018 Nissan cargo van to Modern Nissan in Winston Salem, NC, in the amount of \$28,406.19 which includes tax and tag.

VOTE: Aye-4(Welch, Kennedy, Hodges, Turnbow)
Nay-0
Absent-1(Yates)

B. Vehicle Bid Award Request - Compact Pickup Truck

Mr. Robert Marsh, Maintenance Director, presented the following bids for a two-wheel drive compact pickup truck:

BID SUMMARY			
VENDOR	TRUCK		
	Toyota Tacoma Access Cab 2.7L; 4 cyl.; 127" WB	Chevrolet Colorado Ext. Cab 2.5L; 4 cyl., 128" WB	Nissan Frontier King Cab 2.5L; 4 cyl.; 125.9" WB
Modern Toyota Boone, NC	No bid received		
Auto Star Nissan Boone, NC			No bid received
Modern Nissan Winston-Salem, NC			NCSA Base Bid \$16,834 Add Equipment \$2,243 Total \$19,077
Modern Toyota Winston-Salem, NC	NCSA Base Bid \$23,662		
Parks Chevrolet Huntersville, NC		NCSA Base Bid \$21,044 Includes power equip Refused to provide updated pricing.	
- Bid Specification: Base bid from North Carolina Sheriffs Association, specification number; Toyota 356; Nissan 412; Chevrolet 273 - General specification includes two-wheel drive, compact pickup with four-cylinder engine, automatic transmission, AC, extra cab, short bed and power windows and door locks. - Staff also obtained quotes for a full-size, two-wheel drive pickup. Bid range received was \$19,056-\$23,142. Staff rejected bids in favor of a smaller, more economical vehicle.			

Mr. Marsh stated that five (5) vendors were solicited with three responses received. Modern Nissan was lowest responsive bidder in the amount of \$19,077. The total amount including tax and tag is \$19,665.31. Adequate funds have been budgeted in the current fiscal year to cover the purchase.

Commissioner Turnbow, seconded by Commissioner Hodges, moved to award the bid for a 2018 Nissan two-wheel drive compact pickup truck to Modern Nissan in Winston Salem, NC, in the amount of \$19,655.31 which includes tax and tag.

VOTE: Aye-4(Welch, Kennedy, Hodges, Turnbow)
Nay-0
Absent-1(Yates)

TAX MATTERS

A. Monthly Collections Report

Tax Administrator, Mr. Larry Warren, presented the Tax Collections Report for the month of June 2018. The report was presented for information only and, therefore, no action was required.

B. Refunds and Releases

Mr. Warren presented the Refunds and Releases Report for June 2018 for Board approval:

TO BE TYPED IN MINUTE BOOK

Vice-Chairman Kennedy, seconded by Commissioner Turnbow, moved to approve the Refunds and Releases Report for June 2018 as presented.

VOTE: Aye-4(Welch, Kennedy, Hodges, Turnbow)
Nay-0
Absent-1(Yates)

C. Annual Settlement of Tax Collector

Tax Administrator Warren presented the following Annual Settlement Statements for Fiscal Year 2018 for Board approval:

TO BE TYPED IN MINUTE BOOK

Vice-Chairman Kennedy, seconded by Commissioner Turnbow, moved to approve the Annual Settlement Statements for Fiscal Year 2018.

VOTE: Aye-4(Welch, Kennedy, Hodges, Turnbow)
Nay-0
Absent-1(Yates)

Commissioner Turnbow, seconded by Commissioner Hodges, moved to accept the Tax Administrator's "Oath as to Diligent Effort to Collect Taxes."

VOTE: Aye-4(Welch, Kennedy, Hodges, Turnbow)
Nay-0
Absent-1(Yates)

D. Oath to Collect Taxes

Mr. Warren presented a proposed order granting authorization to collect taxes for Fiscal Year 2019. Once approved, a sworn oath would be administered to Tax Administrator Warren.

Commissioner Turnbow, seconded by Commissioner Hodges, moved to grant authorization for Tax Administrator Warren to collect taxes for Fiscal Year 2019.

VOTE: Aye-4(Welch, Kennedy, Hodges, Turnbow)
Nay-0
Absent-1(Yates)

MISCELLANEOUS ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

A. Watauga Arts Council Grant Support Request

County Manager Geouque presented a draft letter of support for the Watauga Arts Council in reference of a grant application to “Our Town” who is the National Endowment for the Arts’ creative placemaking grants program. The grant requires a partnership between a nonprofit organization and a local government entity. The Watauga County Economic Development Commission recently approved providing the match for this grant, if awarded, through an in-kind match and in an amount up to \$10,000.

Ms. Cherry Johnson, Director of Watauga Arts Council, stated that specific criteria had to be included in the support letter and requested to revise it to include the information needed.

Commissioner Turnbow, seconded by Vice-Chairman Kennedy, moved to authorize the Chairman to sign the letter of support once modified to include the specific criteria as mentioned by Ms. Johnson.

VOTE: Aye-4(Welch, Kennedy, Hodges, Turnbow)
Nay-0
Absent-1(Yates)

B. Proposed Resolution Supporting the Naming of the U.S. Highway 221/U.S. 421 Overpass in the Deep Gap Community in Honor of Sergeant Dillon C. Baldrige

County Manager Geouque presented a proposed resolution supporting the naming the future U.S. 221/U.S. 421 overpass in the Deep Gap community in honor and memory of Sergeant Dillon C. Baldrige who gave the ultimate sacrifice for his community and Country.

Commissioner Turnbow, seconded by Vice-Chairman Kennedy, moved to adopt the Resolution Supporting the Naming of the U.S. Highway 221/U.S. 421 Overpass in the Deep Gap Community in Honor of Sergeant Dillon C. Baldrige as presented.

VOTE: Aye-4(Welch, Kennedy, Hodges, Turnbow)
Nay-0
Absent-1(Yates)

C. Community/Recreation Center Request

County Manager Geouque stated that, in February, the Board approved the increase in scope for the Community Recreation Center with the addition of two gyms bringing the total to four gyms. The County Manager presented a proposal formalizing the increase in scope for the two additional gyms. The original cost of the increase in scope was \$356,000 bringing the total cost of the project to \$34,947,500; however, after additional negotiations, staff was able to secure a reduction of \$16,000 bringing the increase in scope down to \$340,000.

Commissioner Turnbow, seconded by Vice-Chairman Kennedy, moved to approve the increase in scope of the Community Recreation Center by \$340,000 for the addition of two gyms bringing the total to four gyms.

VOTE: Aye-4(Welch, Kennedy, Hodges, Turnbow)

Nay-0

Absent-1(Yates)

D. Proposed Contract for Phase II of the Public Safety and Emergency Communications Systems Comprehensive Study

County Manager Geouque stated that at the Annual Pre-Budget Retreat, Board direction was given to develop a contract to complete a comprehensive study of public safety and emergency communications systems. Dr. Marvin Hoffman conducted and completed the study for the County. The County has been satisfied with Dr. Hoffman and his work product. Due to the departure of Mr. Jeff Virginia, former Director of Communications and Emergency Services, and the desire to keep the momentum going forward, staff would like to extend an additional offer to Dr. Hoffman for technical assistance and planning services regarding the County's emergency communications systems. The proposed contract is in the amount of \$14,000 and additional charges for travel which would be approved by the County Manager and would follow County policy regarding per diems.

Vice-Chairman Kennedy, seconded by Commissioner Hodges, moved to accept the contract with Mr. Marvin Hoffman in the amount of \$14,000 and additional charges for travel to be approved by the County Manager and to follow the County policy regarding per diems contingent upon the review of the County Attorney.

VOTE: Aye-4(Welch, Kennedy, Hodges, Turnbow)

Nay-0

Absent-1(Yates)

E. Proposed Renewals of Maintenance Agreements

1. VESTA
2. Console Infrastructure
3. Fixed Equipment
4. Subscribers
5. Centerline Maintenance

County Manager Geouque presented four maintenance contracts, as prepared by Ms. Elaine Griffith, E911 Addressing Technician. Four of the contracts are with Wireless Communications Inc. and one is with High Country Council of Governments for the County's E911 and Emergency Management Radio systems. The VESTA (Patriot System) Maintenance agreement is in the amount of \$57,580.32. The Console Infrastructure Maintenance agreement is in the amount of \$12,900. The Fixed Equipment Maintenance agreement is in the amount of \$10,080. The Subscribers Maintenance agreement is in the amount of \$4,872. The Centerline Maintenance contract with High Country Council of Governments is for an hourly rate in the amount of \$60.00; not to exceed \$7,200. All are included in the current budget.

Commissioner Turnbow, seconded by Vice-Chairman Kennedy, moved to approve the VESTA (Patriot System)

Maintenance agreement in the amount of \$57,580.32; the Console Infrastructure Maintenance agreement in the amount of \$12,900; the Fixed Equipment Maintenance agreement in the amount of \$10,080; the Subscribers Maintenance agreement in the amount of \$4,872; and the Centerline Maintenance contract with High Country Council of Governments for an hourly rate of \$60.00 not to exceed \$7,200.

VOTE: Aye-4(Welch, Kennedy, Hodges, Turnbow)
Nay-0
Absent-1(Yates)

F. Proposed Lease with Tourism Development Authority (TDA)

County Manager Geouque stated that the Watauga County Tourism Development Authority (TDA) is requesting to lease space temporarily from the County in the East Annex. The space requested is in the former location of the Planning and Inspections offices. The time period would be a minimum of two (2) years while they secure a new location. The TDA would pay \$1,545 monthly. Funds generated from the lease could be utilized to renovate the building for new court purposes.

Commissioner Turnbow, seconded by Vice-Chairman Kennedy, moved to approve the lease with the Tourism Development Authority for space in the East Annex in the amount of \$18,540 annually as presented.

VOTE: Aye-4(Welch, Kennedy, Hodges, Turnbow)
Nay-0
Absent-1(Yates)

G. Out-of-State Travel Request - Sanitation

County Manager Geouque stated that Mr. Rex Buck, Operations Service Director, would like to visit Columbia, South Carolina, to evaluate a stationary shredder unit. If their equipment is suitable for our materials a mobile unit demonstration at the County's facility would be scheduled in September. The equipment has the potential to save the County money and allow for more efficient handling and disposal of materials. The director will drive down and back in the same day to reduce costs to the County.

Commissioner Turnbow, seconded by Commissioner Hodges, moved to approve the out-of-state travel request for Mr. Rex Buck as presented.

VOTE: Aye-4(Welch, Kennedy, Hodges, Turnbow)
Nay-0
Absent-1(Yates)

H. Bid Award Request for Fire Marshal Truck

County Manager Geouque presented the following bids for a new 1/2 ton 4x4 pickup truck to replace a 2007 F150 which will be used by the Fire Marshal's Office. Three vendors were solicited with two responses received. Asheville Ford was lowest responsive bidder in the amount of \$28,192.40. The total amount including tax and tag is \$29,044.17. In addition, the equipment up-fit for the vehicle is \$7,471.86. Adequate funds are budgeted in the current fiscal year to cover the purchase.

Vice-Chairman Kennedy, seconded by Commissioner Hodges, moved to award the bid to Asheville Ford for a 2018 Ford 150 4x4 pickup truck in the amount of \$29,044.17, which includes tax and tag, and to Dana Safety

Supply, Inc., for the new vehicle equipment up-fit in the amount of \$7,075.44.

VOTE: Aye-4(Welch, Kennedy, Hodges, Turnbow)
Nay-0
Absent-1(Yates)

I. Appointment of the North Carolina Association of County Commissioners' (NCACC) Annual Conference Voting Delegate

County Manager Geouque stated that the North Carolina Association of County Commissioners' (NCACC) Annual Conference is scheduled for August 23-25, 2018, in Catawba County. Each county in attendance is required to select a voting delegate for representation at the Annual Business Meeting which is conducted as a part of the conference. Submission of the voting delegate is due August 17, 2018. Chairman Welch stated that he may be able to attend the meeting.

Chairman Welch tabled consideration of an appointment until the August 7, 2018, Board meeting.

J. Boards and Commissions

County Manager Geouque presented the following for consideration:

Social Services Advisory Board

Ms. Lynn Patterson is willing to be reappointed to the Social Services Advisory Board for a four-year term.

[Clerk's Note: Ms. Patterson was appointed earlier in the meeting at the request of Social Services Director, Mr. Tom Hughes.]

W.A.M.Y. Community Action, Inc. Board

Ms. Kelly Cox has indicated interest in serving as a Watauga County Public Representative on the W.A.M.Y. Community Action Inc., Board of Directors. W.A.M.Y. has requested the Board waive the 1st reading in order to expedite the appointment.

Commissioner Turnbow, seconded by Vice-Chairman Kennedy, moved to waive the first reading and appoint Kelly Cox to serve as a Watauga County Public Representative on the W.A.M.Y. Community Action, Inc., Board of Directors.

VOTE: Aye-4(Welch, Kennedy, Hodges, Turnbow)
Nay-0
Absent-1(Yates)

K. Announcements

County Manager Geouque announced the following:

- The 111th NCACC Annual Conference will be held August 23-25, 2018, in Catawba County. Visit www.ncacc.org/AnnualConference (<http://www.ncacc.org/AnnualConference>) for full information.
- The High Country Council of Governments' Annual Banquet is scheduled for Friday, September 7, 2018, at Linville Ridge.

- Vice-Chairman Kennedy shared a letter of appreciation from the Library.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment.

CLOSED SESSION

At 7:08 P.M., Vice-Chairman Kennedy, seconded by Commissioner Turnbow, moved to enter Closed Session to discuss Attorney/Client Matters, per G. S. 143-318.11(a)(3), Land Acquisition, per G. S. 143-318.11(a)(5)(i), and Personnel Matters, per G. S. 143-318.11(a)(6).

VOTE: Aye-4(Welch, Kennedy, Hodges, Turnbow)
Nay-0
Absent-1(Yates)

Vice-Chairman Kennedy, seconded by Commissioner Turnbow, moved to resume the open meeting at 7:44 P.M.

VOTE: Aye-4(Welch, Kennedy, Hodges, Turnbow)
Nay-0
Absent-1(Yates)

POSSIBLE ACTION AFTER CLOSED SESSION

Chairman Welch stated that the County had the opportunity to purchase the Ginn House from Professional Holdings, LLC, at a purchase price of \$755,000 with Mr. Turner leasing the property for one year. The due diligence period will be until October 31, 2018, and the closing date was set for November 28, 2018.

County Manager Geouque requested the Board approve acquiring an updated appraisal for the property.

Vice-Chairman Kennedy, seconded by Commissioner Hodges, moved to approve the agreement for purchase and sale of real property located at 136 North Water Street, Boone, North Carolina, in the amount of \$755,000 subject to the terms and contingencies in the agreement and to direct the County Manager to obtain the services of Mr. Mike Sweeting to conduct an appraisal of the property.

VOTE: Aye-4(Welch, Kennedy, Hodges, Turnbow)
Nay-0
Absent-1(Yates)

ADJOURN

Vice-Chairman Kennedy, seconded by Commissioner Hodges, moved to adjourn the meeting at 7:50 P.M.

VOTE: Aye-4(Welch, Kennedy, Hodges, Turnbow)
Nay-0
Absent-1(Yates)

John Welch, Chairman

ATTEST:

Watauga County Board of Commissioners

MINUTES

WATAUGA COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS TUESDAY, AUGUST 21, 2018

The Watauga County Board of Commissioners held a regular meeting, as scheduled, on Tuesday, August 21, 2018, at 5:30 P.M. in the Commissioners' Board Room of the Watauga County Administration Building, Boone, North Carolina.

PRESENT: John Welch, Chairman
Billy Kennedy, Vice-Chairman
Jimmy Hodges, Commissioner
Larry Turnbow, Commissioner
Perry Yates, Commissioner
Frank C. "Ham" Wilson, III, County Attorney
Deron Geouque, County Manager
Anita J. Fogle, Clerk to the Board

Chairman Welch called the meeting to order at 5:35 P.M.

Commissioner Hodges opened with a prayer and Commissioner Turnbow led the Pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Chairman Welch called for additions and/or corrections to the August 7, 2018, regular meeting and closed session minutes.

Vice-Chairman Kennedy, seconded by Commissioner Turnbow, moved to approve the August 7, 2018, regular meeting minutes as presented.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

Vice-Chairman Kennedy, seconded by Commissioner Turnbow, moved to approve the August 7, 2018, closed session minutes as presented.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Chairman Welch called for additions and/or corrections to the August 21, 2018, agenda.

County Manager Geouque requested to add consideration of a Special Warranty Deed for the 131

Morningside Drive property and to add discussion of Land Acquisition, per, G. S. 143-318.11(a)(5)(i) to closed session.

Vice-Chairman Kennedy, seconded by Commissioner Turnbow, moved to approve the August 21, 2018, agenda as amended.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

Chairman Welch shared a plaque presented to the Board of Commissioners from the High Country Chapter of the Military Officers Association of America (MOAA) in appreciation of the Board's support of the Watauga County Veterans Memorial which was dedicated and unveiled on July 4, 2018.

PUBLIC HEARING TO ALLOW CITIZEN COMMENT ON THE PROPOSED FINANCING OF THE NEW COMMUNITY RECREATION CENTER

Chairman Welch stated that a public hearing was scheduled to allow citizen comment on the proposed financing of the new Community Recreation Center as required by the Local Government Commission.

Commissioner Yates, seconded by Commissioner Turnbow, moved to call the public hearing to order at 5:40 P.M.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

The following shared comments regarding the proposed financing of the new Community Recreation Center:

Karen Carter
Craig Dudley
Jim Bryan
Ron Henries
David Jackson
Billy Norris
Andy Hill
George Wilcox
Jerry Cantwell
Joan Bathanti
Scott St. Clair
Brenda Speckmann
Erin Patterson
Josh Wilson
Dave Robertson
Melissa Weddell
Stephanie West
Carson Coatney
Eric Heistand
Wright Tilley
Trent Carter
Sam Hawes

Of the twenty-two speakers, eighteen spoke in support of the project and four spoke against the project.

Vice-Chairman Kennedy, seconded by Commissioner Hodges, moved to close the public hearing at 6:45 P.M.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE NEGOTIATION OF AN INSTALLMENT FINANCING CONTRACT AND PROVIDING FOR CERTAIN OTHER RELATED MATTERS THERETO

County Manager Geouque presented a proposed resolution authorizing the negotiation of an installment financing contract and providing for certain other related matters thereto. The resolution is required by the Local Government Commission (LGC) for the approval of the financing of the Community Recreation Center.

Commissioner Turnbow, seconded by Vice-Chairman Kennedy, moved to adopt the resolution authorizing the negotiation of an installment financing contract and providing for certain other related matters thereto as presented.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

Chairman Welch recessed the meeting at 6:58 P.M. for a short break and reconvened the meeting at 7:10 P.M.

PROPOSED RESOLUTION TO FORMALLY RECOGNIZE AND AUTHORIZE THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE WATAUGA COUNTY FOOD COUNCIL

Ms. Faith Bradley with the Watauga Food Council requested consideration of a resolution which would provide formal recognition of Watauga Food Council. Ms. Bradley stated that the Food Council is an umbrella organization serving to coordinate and identify strategies to help improve the local food system. Ms. Bradley read the resolution which includes the request for in-kind support from the County including the involvement of staff from key County Departments, with the required approval of Departmental Directors; the use of County facilities for meeting space, as available; and the referrals of volunteers to the working groups of the Watauga County Food Council by the Board of Commissioners to offer input and help guide its direction. County Manager Geouque suggested the Food Council make reports to the Board throughout the year to provide updates on their projects.

Vice-Chairman Kennedy, second by Commissioner Turnbow, moved to adopt the resolution formally recognizing and authorizing the establishment of the Watauga County Food Council as presented.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

PROJECT ON AGING MATTERS

A. Request to Accept FY 2019 Senior's Health Insurance Information Program (SHIIP) Grant/Contract

Ms. Angie Boitnotte, Director of Project on Aging (POA), presented the FY 2019 grant/contract for the Senior's Health Insurance Information Program (SHIIP). The grant is in the amount of \$3,231 and requires no County funds. The funds are used to provide assistance and outreach to low-income citizens.

Vice-Chairman Kennedy, seconded by Commissioner Yates, moved to accept the Senior's Health Insurance Information Program (SHIIP) grant in the amount of \$3,231.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

B. Request to Accept General Purpose Funding for Senior Centers

Ms. Boitnotte presented additional Senior Center General Purpose funding available to the County's two senior centers in the amount of \$14,257. A 25% local match is required in the amount of \$4,752 which is present in the current Project on Aging budget.

Commissioner Yates, seconded by Commissioner Turnbow, moved to accept the additional Senior Center General Purpose funding in the amount of \$14,257 and approve the local match in the amount of \$4,752.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

BID AWARD REQUEST FOR LARGE INDUSTRIAL INFIELD RENOVATION PROJECT

Mr. Robert Marsh, Maintenance Director, presented the following bids for the replacement of the large industrial field backstop and fencing:

Bidder	Amount
American Fence Company, Hickory, NC	\$64,972
Triangle Fence Company, Rhonda, NC	\$42,020
Rio Grande Fence Company, Kingsport, TN	\$38,870
McCall Commercial Fencing, Inc., Gray, TN	\$28,388
Emory Wallace Fence Company, Boone, NC	No Bid
Champion Fence, Charlotte, NC	No Bid
Fence Builders, Winston- Salem, NC	No Response
Sharp Fence, Kingsport, TN	No Response

Mr. Marsh stated that eight vendors were solicited with four responding to the bid proposal. McCall Commercial Fencing was the lowest responsive bidder in the amount of \$28,388. Adequate funds have been budgeted in the Fiscal Year 2018-2019 budget.

Vice-Chairman Kennedy, seconded by Commissioner Turnbow, moved to award the bid to McCall Commercial Fencing in the amount of \$28,388 for backstop and fencing replacement at the industrial field.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

TAX MATTERS

A. Monthly Collections Report

Tax Administrator, Mr. Larry Warren, presented the Tax Collections Report for the month of July 2018. The report was presented for information only and, therefore, no action was required.

B. Refunds and Releases

Mr. Warren presented the Refunds and Releases Report for July 2018 for Board approval:

TO BE TYPED IN MINUTE BOOK

Vice-Chairman Kennedy, seconded by Commissioner Hodges, moved to approve the Refunds and Releases Report for July 2018 as presented.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

BUDGET AMENDMENTS

Ms. Misty Watson, Finance Director, reviewed the following budget amendments:

Account #	Description	Debit	Credit
103991-399100	Fund Balance		\$267,133
109800-498021	Transfer to Capital Projects Fund	\$267,133	
213980-398100	Transfer from General Fund		\$267,133
219930-459122	WCS CIP – Projectors	\$68,748	
219930-459122	WCS CIP – Vehicles	\$21,467	
219930-459122	WCS CIP – Vehicles Bus	\$408	
219930-459122	WCS CIP – Computers	\$2,901	
219930-459122	WCS CIP – Mobile Classroom Units	\$138,609	
219930-459122	WCS CIP – WHS Sealant on Track	\$35,000	

The amendment returned unused Capital Improvement Project funds from completed projects to set aside capital project funds for the schools.

143300-343300	Adoption Promotion Funds		\$58,800
145410-440006	Adoption Promotion	\$58,800	

The amendment recognizes funds received from the North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services for the enhancement of programs to encourage and support adoption.

Vice-Chairman Kennedy, seconded by Commissioner Yates, moved to approve the budget amendments as presented by Ms. Watson.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

MISCELLANEOUS ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

A. NC Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS)/County Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) Pursuant to G. S. 108A-74 Update

At the June 19th meeting the Board tabled action on the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the NC Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS). Mr. Tom Hughes, Social Services Director, presented the MOU with the NC Department of Health and Human Services for consideration. The MOU is required per NCGS 108A-74. Counties are required to enter into annual written agreements for all social services programs other than medical assistance. The law requires the agreement to contain certain performance requirements and administrative responsibilities related to the social services program. Mr. Hughes stated that thirty-four counties had submitted a cover letter with their MOU citing reservations with the MOU and other counties added a writ to the end of their signed MOUs. Many of the MOUs that included the writ were returned with a request from the State to resubmit the MOU without the writ attached. The MOU's with the letters attached were accepted. County Attorney di Santi presented a proposed resolution to accompany Watauga County's MOU. The resolution states that the County signed the MOU with reservation and requests DHHS consider modifying the mandatory criteria and benchmarks imposed by the MOU to address small counties. The resolution also request DHHS to reconsider the oversight, compliance and enforcement process.

After discussion, Vice-Chairman Kennedy, seconded by Commissioner Hodges, moved to approve the Memorandum of Understanding and adopt the "Resolution Regarding the HB 630 Required Agreement Between the North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services ("DHHS") and Watauga County, North Carolina (the "County") and the Watauga County Department of Social Services ("DSS")."

NCDHHS sent notification they were in receipt of the County's request and are unable to sign the documents provided. NCDHHS requested the County resubmit the signed MOU without any attachments or edits to the language. After discussion, Commissioner Yates, seconded by Vice-Chairman Kennedy, moved to table further discussion to give the County Manager time to contact other counties to see how they handled the Memorandum of Understanding with the North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services.

The County Manager was able to determine that Yadkin and Watauga counties were the only two out of the 100 counties not to have signed the MOU. The County Manager also received a telephone call from the NCDHHS Secretary and Deputy Secretary. During the telephone call, it was determined that it would be beneficial for at least two of the Board members to have a follow up conversation with NCDHHS Secretary and Deputy Secretary. The County Manager was to select a few times for a possible telephone call.

Commissioner Yates, seconded by Vice-Chairman Kennedy, moved to direct Chairman Welch, Commissioner Turnbow, the County Manager and the Social Services Director to hold a conference call with the NC Department of Health and Human Services.

VOTE: Aye-5

Nay-0

B. Proposed Corrected Special Warranty Deed for 131 Morningside Drive Property

County Manager Geouque presented a correction to the Special Warranty Deed for the 131 Morningside Drive property that was deeded by the County to The Town of Boone to which the required FEMA restrictions have been added. The restrictions should have been added when Mr. and Mrs. Cowart deeded the property to Watauga County in 2016. The County Attorney prepared the Correction Special Warranty Deed.

Commissioner Yates, seconded by Commissioner Turnbow, moved to approve the Correction Special Warranty Deed as presented.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

C. Sheriff's Office Vehicle Purchase Request

County Manager Geouque stated that the Sheriff's Office received bids from Asheville Ford for six (6) new all-wheel drive 2018 Ford Police Interceptors with a unit price of \$28,265.97. In addition, up-fitting for the vehicles was priced at \$6,091.82 per unit.

At the August 7, 2018, meeting, staff requested the Board approve the purchase of six (6) new all-wheel drive 2018 Ford Police Interceptors with a unit price of \$28,265.97 from Asheville Ford for a total amount of \$174,720 including taxes and tags. In addition, approval of Dana Safety Supply for all of the vehicles in the amount of \$6,091.82 per unit for a total amount of \$36,551 was required.

After considerable discussion, the Board tabled the request until a bid from Modern Ford could be obtained. Captain Kelly Redmon was able to obtain a bid from Modern Ford which is \$99 less than the bid provided by Asheville Ford. Discussion was held regarding whether Modern Ford had a competitive advantage since the bids had been opened prior to their bid.

After discussion, Commissioner Yates, seconded by Commissioner Turnbow, moved to award the bid to Modern Ford in the amount of \$28,166 for a total amount of \$168,996 not including taxes and tags; to approve the amount of \$36,551 for Dana Safety Supply to up-fit the vehicles; and to direct the Sheriff's Office, as well as all County Departments, to always request a direct bid from local vendors in addition to the Sheriff's Association and State contract prices.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

D. Announcements

County Manager Geouque announced the following:

- The 111th NCACC Annual Conference will be held August 23-25, 2018, in Catawba County. Visit www.ncacc.org/AnnualConference (<http://www.ncacc.org/AnnualConference>) for full information.

- The High Country Council of Governments' Annual Banquet is scheduled for Friday, September 7, 2018, at Linville Ridge.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Ms. Anne Ward shared her opinion on the recent Court of Appeals ruling for the Henions and requested the County support the Henions and require Maymead to have no deviations from their plans.

CLOSED SESSION

At 7:42 P.M., Commissioner Turnbow, seconded by Vice-Chairman Kennedy, moved to enter Closed Session to discuss Attorney/Client Matters, per G. S. 143-318.11(a)(3), Land Acquisition, per G. S. 143-318.11(a)(5)(i), and Personnel Matters, per G. S. 143-318.11(a)(6).

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

Vice-Chairman Kennedy, seconded by Commissioner Yates, moved to resume the open meeting at 8:15 P.M.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

County Manager Geouque stated that Mr. Chad Roberson, Architect for the new Community Recreation Center, is willing to come and meet with Commissioners, a couple at a time, to field any questions there may be regarding the project.

Upon realizing that discussion was not held regarding an Attorney/Client matter, Commissioner Turnbow, seconded by Vice-Chairman Kennedy, moved to re-enter Closed Session at 8:18 P.M. to discuss Attorney/Client Matters, per G. S. 143-318.11(a)(3)

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

Commissioner Yates, seconded by Commissioner Turnbow, moved to resume the open meeting at 8:36 P.M.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

ADJOURN

Vice-Chairman Kennedy, seconded by Commissioner Turnbow, moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:36 P.M.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

John Welch, Chairman

ATTEST:

Anita J. Fogle, Clerk to the Board

Watauga County Board of Commissioners

MINUTES

WATAUGA COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 18, 2018

The Watauga County Board of Commissioners held a regular meeting, as scheduled, on Tuesday, September 18, 2018, at 5:30 P.M. in the Commissioners' Board Room of the Watauga County Administration Building, Boone, North Carolina.

PRESENT: John Welch, Chairman
Billy Kennedy, Vice-Chairman
Jimmy Hodges, Commissioner
Larry Turnbow, Commissioner
Perry Yates, Commissioner
Anthony di Santi, County Attorney
Deron Geouque, County Manager
Anita J. Fogle, Clerk to the Board

Chairman Welch called the meeting to order at 5:33 P.M.

Chairman Welch thanked all emergency personnel as well as the Governor and Senator Ballard for their service during the recent weather events associated with Hurricane Florence.

Commissioner Yates opened with a prayer and Vice-Chairman Kennedy led the Pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Chairman Welch called for additions and/or corrections to the September 4, 2018, regular meeting and closed session minutes.

Commissioner Yates, seconded by Commissioner Turnbow, moved to approve the September 4, 2018, regular meeting minutes as presented.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

Commissioner Yates, seconded by Commissioner Turnbow, moved to approve the September 4, 2018, closed session minutes as presented.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Chairman Welch called for additions and/or corrections to the September 18, 2018, agenda.

Vice-Chairman Kennedy, seconded by Commissioner Hodges, moved to approve the September 18, 2018, agenda as presented.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

REQUEST FOR FUNDS TO UPGRADE AND PROFESSIONALIZE THE DOC WATSON MUSEUM AT THE HISTORIC COVE CREEK SCHOOL

Ms. Karen James, who is working with the Cove Creek Preservation & Development (CCP&D), stated that she planned to apply for a grant through the Blue Ridge National Heritage Area. If awarded, the funds would be used to hire a Museum Consultant to review the available space and develop a master plan to ensure the feasibility of enhancing the Doc Watson Museum in the Historic Cove Creek School. The grant requires a partner funds 50% of the grant award amount. Ms. James requested Watauga County partner by committing to provide \$15,000. The grant application is due on October 1, 2018, and requires the commitment at the time of the submission. Discussion was held regarding this being an appropriate request for the Tourism Development Authority (TDA); however, the TDA's next meeting is October 9, 2018, which is after the October 1 deadline.

Commissioner Turnbow, seconded by Commissioner Hodges, moved to commit, contingent upon Ms. James receiving the grant award, a match of half of the grant, in the amount of \$15,000, with the Board of Commissioners to discuss with the Tourism Development Authority where best for the funds to be allocated from.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

RURAL OPERATING ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (ROAP) GRANT APPLICATION REQUEST

Mr. Craig Hughes, AppalCART Director, presented the Rural Operating Assistance Program (ROAP) grant application for FY 2019. Watauga County was awarded \$157,297 which is down slightly from last year's funding. The grant does not require a local match.

Commissioner Yates, seconded by Vice-Chairman Kennedy, moved to approve the Rural Operating Assistance Program (ROAP) grant application for FY 2019 and accept the funds to be awarded in the amount of \$157,297.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

TAX MATTERS

A. Monthly Collections Report

Tax Administrator, Mr. Larry Warren, presented the Tax Collections Report for the month of August 2018. The report was presented for information only and, therefore, no action was required.

B. Refunds and Releases

Mr. Warren presented the Refunds and Releases Report for August 2018 for Board approval:

TO BE TYPED IN MINUTE BOOK

Vice-Chairman Kennedy, seconded by Commissioner Hodges, moved to approve the Refunds and Releases Report for August 2018 as presented.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

COMMUNITY RECREATION CENTER MATTERS

A. Proposed Resolution Approving A Contract and A Deed of Trust and The Delivery Thereof and Providing for Certain Other Related Matters

County Manager Geouque stated that a public hearing was held to allow citizen input on the proposed financing of the Community Recreation Center on August 21, 2018. In order for the project to continue forward, Board action is required to approve the enclosed resolution authorizing a contract, deed of trust, and the delivery thereof and providing for certain related matters. The resolution states that the County will not finance more than \$20,000,000 for the project.

Vice-Chairman Kennedy, seconded by Commissioner Yates, moved to adopt the resolution as presented.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

B. Community Recreation Center Update

Mr. Chad Roberson, Clark Nexsen, introduced Mr. David Fey, Project Manager, and Mr. Matt Johnson, Construction Manager, and gave an update on the progress of the new Community Recreation Center. A video illustrating a walk-through of the new facility was shown. Mr. Roberson stated that tariffs were affecting project costs. Pre-qualification of trade partners were ongoing. Mr. Johnson stated that the project has gone through fourteen months of work resulting in three detailed estimates. Eighteen supply houses have been visited locally, within a fifty mile radius, and there has been fifteen percent minority participation thus far.

Mr. Roberson stated that the Local Government Commission's (LGC) push for information has resulted in the project being pushed ahead by three months with an anticipated substantially complete date of March 2020. This presentation was given as information only.

C. Community Recreation Center GMP

Mr. Chad Roberson presented the Guaranteed Maximum Price for the Community Recreation Center as required by the contract and provided Change Order #1 to Harper Corporation's existing contract for Board consideration. Change Order #1 for the GMP includes Clarifications, Schedule of Values, General Conditions Itemized Costs, weather assumptions, and Preliminary Project Schedule. Additionally, the Total Project Budget indicating budgetary items necessary for the successful completion of the project includes the following:

- owner contingency
- architectural fees
- engineering fees
- building permit fees
- bid contingency
- special inspections budget
- survey costs
- technology/equipment budget
- furniture, fixture and equipment budget

Mr. Roberson stated that the building will be turnkey and ready for operations at completion.

The proposed Guaranteed Maximum Price (GMP) is \$32,937,626 with a total project budget of \$38,547,395.78. The difference between the Schematic total project budget and GMP is \$3,600,178.40.

There are two options for handling the increase:

Option 1 is to reduce the scope of the project. Should the Board choose this option the only way to reduce the cost by \$3.6 million is delete two of the gyms and construct them at a later date. This option would also reduce the walking track and will cost more to construct in the future.

Option 2 would be to appropriate the additional funds necessary from the general fund balance. A \$3.6 million fund balance allocation would leave the County with an unaudited fund balance in the range of 30%-33% which is well above the required amount.

Vice-Chairman Kennedy, seconded by Commissioner Turnbow, moved to approve the Guaranteed Maximum Price (GMP) for the Community Recreation Center in the amount of \$32,937,626.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

Vice-Chairman Kennedy, seconded by Commissioner Turnbow, moved to approve Change Order # 1 for a total project budget of \$38,547,395.78 with the additional \$3.6 million to cover the increase to be allocated from the general fund balance.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

MISCELLANEOUS ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

A. Announcements

County Manager Geouque announced that the Trustees of Caldwell Community College & Technical Institute (CCC&TI) invited the Board of Commissioners to a meeting on Wednesday, September 19, 2018, at 6:00 P.M. at the Watauga Instructional Facility on Hwy 105 Bypass, Boone NC, in Room 112.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment.

CLOSED SESSION

At 6:29 P.M., Commissioner Turnbow, seconded by Vice-Chairman Kennedy, moved to enter Closed Session to discuss Attorney/Client Matters, per G. S. 143-318.11(a)(3), and Land Acquisition, per G. S. 143-318.11(a)(5)(i).

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

Commissioner Yates, seconded by Commissioner Turnbow, moved to resume the open meeting at 7:25 P.M.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

ADJOURN

Commissioner Turnbow, seconded by Vice-Chairman Kennedy, moved to adjourn the meeting at 7:25 P.M.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

John Welch, Chairman

ATTEST:

Anita J. Fogle, Clerk to the Board

Watauga County Board of Commissioners

MINUTES

WATAUGA COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS MONDAY, DECEMBER 3, 2018

The Watauga County Board of Commissioners held a regular meeting, as scheduled, on Tuesday, December 3, 2018, at 8:30 A.M. in the Commissioners' Board Room of the Watauga County Administration Building, Boone, North Carolina.

PRESENT: John Welch, Chairman
Billy Kennedy, Vice-Chairman
Jimmy Hodges, Commissioner
Larry Turnbow, Commissioner
Perry Yates, Commissioner
Anthony di Santi, County Attorney
Deron Geouque, County Manager
Anita J. Fogle, Clerk to the Board

Chairman Welch called the meeting to order at 8:32 A.M.

Commissioner Hodges opened the meeting with a prayer and Commissioner Turnbow led the Pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Chairman Welch called for additions and/or corrections to the November 20, 2018, regular meeting and closed session minutes.

Vice-Chairman Kennedy, seconded by Commissioner Turnbow, moved to approve the November 20, 2018, regular meeting minutes as presented.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

Vice-Chairman Kennedy, seconded by Commissioner Turnbow, moved to approve the November 20, 2018, closed session minutes as presented.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

PRESENTATION OF PROCLAMATION TO COMMISSIONER JIMMY HODGES

Chairman Welch read a Proclamation presented to Commissioner Jimmy Hodges by the Board of

Commissioners honoring his service to the County.

RECESS MEETING FOR SWEARING IN OF NEW COMMISSIONERS

At 8:39 A.M. Commissioner Yates, seconded by Commissioner Turnbow, moved to recess the meeting to allow for Commissioners-Elect Billy Kennedy, Larry Turnbow, and Charlie Wallin to take their oath of office.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

RECONVENE

County Manager Geouque reconvened the meeting at 8:49 A.M. in the Commissioners' Board Room with Commissioners Kennedy, Turnbow, Wallin, Welch, and Yates present.

BOARD ORGANIZATIONAL MATTERS

A. Election of Officers

County Manager Geouque called for nominations for Chairman of the Watauga County Board of Commissioners.

Vice-Chairman Kennedy, seconded by Commissioner Yates, moved to nominate Commissioner Welch for Chairman.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

The meeting was turned over to Chairman Welch.

Chairman Welch called for nominations for Vice-Chairman of the Watauga County Board of Commissioners.

Commissioner Turnbow, seconded by Commissioner Wallin, moved to nominate Commissioner Kennedy for Vice-Chairman.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

B. Staff Appointments

Commissioner Turnbow, seconded by Commissioner Yates, moved to reappoint Deron Geouque as the County Manager.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

Commissioner Turnbow, seconded by Commissioner Yates, moved to reappoint Anita Fogle as Clerk to the Board.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

Commissioner Turnbow, seconded by Commissioner Yates, moved to reappoint both Monica Harrison and

Tammy Adams as Substitute Clerks to the Board.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

Vice-Chairman Kennedy, seconded by Commissioner Turnbow, moved to reappoint di Santi, Watson, Capua, Wilson, & Garrett as the Law Firm representing Watauga County as legal counsel for Watauga County.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

Commissioner Turnbow, seconded by Vice-Chairman Kennedy, moved to reappoint di Santi, Watson, Capua, Wilson, & Garrett as the Law Firm representing as legal counsel for Watauga County Department of Social Services and the Child Support Enforcement Offices with rates to remain as current and authorized di Santi, Watson, Capua, Wilson, & Garrett to appoint another attorney, at the same rate, in the event their firm had a conflict of interest.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

C. Fidelity Bonds

The following individual fidelity bonds were presented for approval:

<u>Position</u>	<u>Bond Amount</u>	<u>Statutory Requirement</u>
Finance Director	\$50,000	No less than \$50,000, per NCGS 159-29
Deputy Finance Director (County Manager)	\$50,000	
Tax Collector	\$50,000	Amount considered reasonable by BCC, NCGS 105-349-c
Register of Deeds	\$50,000	At least \$10,000 but no more than \$50,000, NCGS 161-4
Sheriff	\$25,000	Amount considered reasonable by BCC, but no more than \$25,000 max, NCGS 162-8

Commissioner Turnbow, seconded by Vice-Chairman Kennedy, moved to approve the individual fidelity bonds as presented.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

D. Commissioner Appointments to Boards & Commissions

Chairman Welch presented the following Commissioner Board appointments for consideration:

Board/Commission	Member
palachian District Health Department	Yates
palachian Theatre Board of Trustees Ex-Officio Member	Wallin or Welch
palCART Authority	Wallin
ie Ridge Resource Conservation & Development Area	Turnbow
dwell Community College & Technical Institute - Watauga Advisory Board	Welch
ildren's Council	Turnbow
ild Protection Team	Kennedy
operative Extension Advisory Leadership Board	Yates
onomic Development Commission (EDC)	Turnbow
acational Planning Committee (2 appointees)	Wallin & Welch
IS Advisory Committee	Yates
gh Country Council of Governments	Turnbow
xecutive Board	
ural Transportation Advisory Committee	
venile Crime Prevention Council (JCPC)	Welch
mane Society	Turnbow
rary Board	Kennedy
tor Vehicle Valuation Review Committee	Welch
w River Service Authority Board	Wallin
rthwest Regional Housing Authority (Ms. Pat Vines' term expires December 12, 2019)	
A Advisory Committee (Home & Community Care Block Grant)	Yates
riff's Office Liaison	Kennedy & Turnbow
a County Commissioner Advisory Board	Wallin
ial Services Advisory Board	Wallin
tauga County Fire Commission	Yates
tauga County Personnel Advisory Committee	Welch
tauga County Recreation Commission	Welch
tauga Medical Center Board of Trustees	Kennedy
tauga Opportunities, Inc.	Turnbow
rkforce Development Board (WDB)	Chairman

Vice-Chairman Kennedy, seconded by Commissioner Wallin, moved to accept the appointments as presented.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

Each Commissioner nominates a representative to the Watauga County Planning Board and the Boone Rural Fire Protection Service District Board whose terms run concurrent with the term of the appointing Commissioner. Planning Board members must live within the appointing Commissioners District and action must be taken by the entire Board of Commissioners to make these appointments. Boone Rural Fire Service District Board members must own property and reside within that Fire Service District. These appointments will be made at a

future meeting.

E. Regular Meeting Schedule

Chairman Welch stated that the Board of Commissioners' regular meetings were currently scheduled for the first Tuesday of each month at 8:30 A.M. and the third Tuesday of each month at 5:30 P.M.

Vice-Chairman Kennedy, seconded by Commissioner Yates, moved to retain the regular meeting schedule for the Watauga County Board of Commissioners as follows: the first Tuesday of each month at 8:30 A.M. and the third Tuesday of each month at 5:30 P.M.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Chairman Welch called for additions and/or corrections to the December 3, 2018, agenda.

Commissioner Turnbow, seconded by Vice-Chairman Kennedy, moved to approve the December 3, 2018, agenda as presented.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

SHERIFF'S OFFICE REQUESTED AWARD TO RETIRING OFFICER

Sheriff Hagaman stated that Captain Jaska "Dee Dee" Rominger is retiring December 31, 2018. G.S. 20-187.2 allows governing bodies of a law enforcement agency to award a retiring member the service side arm at a price determined by the governing body. Law enforcement personnel may retire at age 55 with 25 years of credible service with full retirement benefits. The Sheriff requests that Captain Rominger's respective side arm and badge be awarded to her upon retirement and that the Board set the price of the side arm at \$1.

Commissioner Yates, seconded by Vice-Chairman Kennedy, moved to award Captain Rominger's side arm and badge to her upon retirement and to set the price of the side arm at \$1.00.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

BUDGET AMENDMENTS

Ms. Misty Watson, Finance Director, reviewed the following budget amendments:

Account #	Description	Debit	Credit
104199-449900	Miscellaneous Expense	\$550,000.00	
104199-499100	Contingency	\$202,041.00	
103991-399100	Fund Balance – Appropriated		\$752,041.00

The amendment allocates funds from appropriated fund balance to general administration for the purchase of 136 North Water Street; land acquisition previously approved by the Board.

493910-391002	Limited Obligation Bond Proceeds	\$18,490,000.00
493910-391003	Limited Obligation Bond Premium	\$1,723,276.55
496120-458000	Capital Outlay – Building and Improvements	\$20,213,276.55

The amendment recognizes the limited obligation bond proceeds for the Community Recreation Center.

Vice-Chairman Kennedy, seconded by Commissioner Turnbow, moved to approve the budget amendments as presented by Ms. Watson.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

MISCELLANEOUS ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

A. January's Meeting Schedule

County Manager Geouque stated that the Board has traditionally cancelled one of the meetings in December or January depending on how the holidays have fallen. Due to where Christmas and New Year fall during the week, staff would recommend the Board cancel the first meeting in January as there would be insufficient time to prepare the Board packets. Historically, December and the first weeks in January have few issues requiring Board action.

Vice-Chairman Kennedy, seconded by Commissioner Wallin, moved to cancel the first meeting in January as presented by the County Manager.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

B. Appointment of the North Carolina Association of County Commissioners' (NCACC) Legislative Goals Conference Voting Delegate

County Manager Geouque stated that the North Carolina Association of County Commissioners' (NCACC) Legislative Goals Conference is scheduled for January 10-11, 2019, in Wake County. Each county in attendance is required to select a voting member for the Conference. Submission of the voting delegate is due December 28, 2018.

Commissioner Turnbow, seconded by Commissioner Yates, moved to appoint Vice-Chairman Kennedy as the Watauga County voting delegate at the North Carolina Association of County Commissioners Legislative Goals Conference.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

C. Boards and Commissions

County Manager Geouque shared the following appointments for consideration:

Board of Adjustment

A Board of Adjustment term expires in November. The current member resides in the South Fork New River Watershed. If he is to be replaced, it is recommended that another resident of that area be appointed “if practicable”. A map of the area was presented showing where 3 watershed areas adjoin, creating essentially one single residency district.

County Manager Geouque stated that Mr. Lonnie Webster had expressed interest in serving on the Board of Adjustment and does reside in the South Fork New River Watershed. This is a second reading.

Commissioner Turnbow, seconded by Vice-Chairman Kennedy, moved to appoint Mr. Lonnie Webster to the Watauga County Board of Adjustment.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

Watauga Medical Center Board of Trustees

The Watauga Medical Center Board of Trustees has recommended Ms. Kim Miller, Mr. Kent Tarbutton, and Ms. Jan Winkler for re-appointment as Board Trustees. Each of their terms would be effective January 1, 2019, through December 31, 2021. These are second readings.

Chairman Welch tabled consideration of the Watauga Medical Center Board of Trustees until the December 18, 2018, Board meeting.

D. Announcements

County Manager Geouque announced the following:

- The High Country Council of Governments Legislative Breakfast planned for Wednesday, December 5, 2018 has been cancelled and will be rescheduled at a later date.
- The Annual County Christmas Luncheon, scheduled on Thursday, December 13, 2018, will be held at Dan'l Boone Inn from 11:45 A.M. to 2:00 P.M.
- The Essentials of County Government course will be held the following dates:

December 13-14, 2018	Durham
January 17-18, 2019	Asheville
January 31-February 1, 2019	Greenville

Additional information is included in your packet. If interested in attending, please notify Anita who will assist with your registration and accommodations.

- Ms. Diane Deal, Clerk of Court, and Ms. Amy Shook, Register of Deeds, invites you to join them and their staff for holiday goodies on Wednesday, December 12, from 12:30 – 2:30 P.M. The reception will be in the hallway between their offices.

PUBLIC COMMENT

The following shared concerns regarding the closing of the Watauga County Parks and Recreation swimming

pool in the Spring of 2019 for the construction of the new Community Recreation Center: Linda Stanley, Don Wood, Sandi Wells, Brenda Vaught, Marti Turlington, Erin Patterson, John L. Patterson, Barbie Fisher, Eri Ohashi, Cindy Brown Greer, Bekah Valentine, and Kim Chasteen.

CLOSED SESSION

At 9:42 A.M., Commissioner Turnbow, seconded by Vice-Chairman Kennedy, moved to enter Closed Session to discuss Attorney/Client Matters, per G. S. 143-318.11(a)(3).

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

[Clerk's Note: Commissioner Yates left the meeting during closed session, at 10:13 A.M., due to a prior commitment.]

Vice-Chairman Kennedy, seconded by Commissioner Wallin, moved to resume the open meeting at 10:42 A.M.

VOTE: Aye-4(Welch, Kennedy, Turnbow, Wallin)
Nay-0
Absent-1(Yates)

ADJOURN

Commissioner Turnbow, seconded by Commissioner Wallin, moved to adjourn the meeting at 10:42 A.M.

VOTE: Aye-4(Welch, Kennedy, Turnbow, Wallin)
Nay-0
Absent-1(Yates)

John Welch, Chairman

ATTEST:

Anita J. Fogle, Clerk to the Board

Watauga County Board of Commissioners

MINUTES

WATAUGA COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS SPECIAL MEETING MONDAY, FEBRUARY 18, 2019 & TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 19, 2019

The Watauga County Board of Commissioners held a special meeting on Monday, February 18, 2019, and Tuesday, February 19, 2019, in order to conduct a budget retreat to review goals and objectives for the County. The meetings were held in the Commissioners' Board Room located in the Watauga County Administration Building, Boone, North Carolina.

PRESENT: John Welch, Chairman
Billy Kennedy, Vice-Chairman
Larry Turnbow, Commissioner
Charlie Wallin, Commissioner
Perry Yates, Commissioner
Deron Geouque, County Manager
Misty Watson, Finance Director

Lunch was provided at 12:00 PM. Chairman Welch called the meeting to order on Monday, February 18, 2019, at 12:40 PM, welcoming those in attendance.

The following topics were discussed:

Opening Remarks

Mr. Deron Geouque

FY 2019 Review and Discussion of 2020 Budget

Ms. Misty Watson

1. Revenues
2. Expenditures
3. Debt Service Report
4. Budget Calendar
5. Future Appropriations

Review of Current Capital Improvement Plan (CIP)

Mr. Deron Geouque & Mr. Robert Marsh

1. Current CIP Status Report
2. Courtroom # 2 Renovations
3. East Annex Building Program
4. Turner Building
5. Recreation Fields
 - a. Reorientation of Complex Field
 - b. Tennis Courts
 - c. Basketball Courts
 - d. Pickleball Courts

- e. Draft Fee Schedule for New Community Recreation Center

Break from 2:30 PM to 3:00 PM

Sanitation Matters

Mr. Rex Buck

1. New Solid Waste Contract
2. Solid Waste Ordinance
3. Community Pride Schedule

Tourism Development Authority (TDA)

Mr. Matt Vincent and Mr. Wright Tilley

Caldwell Community College & Technical Institute

Dr. Mark Poarch

Break from 4:45 PM to 5:00 PM

School Board Funding Issues

Superintendent Dr. Scott Elliott, School Board Members Ron Henries, Jason Cornett,

Dr. Jay Fenwick, Dr. Gary Childers, and Staff members Ly Marze, Dr. Stephen Martin, Danny Clark

1. FY 2020 Funding Needs
2. Schools' Capital Improvement Plan

Public Safety and Emergency Communications Systems Study Update

Mr. Marvin Hoffman and Mr. Will Holt

County Manager's Summary

Mr. Deron Geouque

A recess was declared at 6:46 P.M. The meeting reconvened on Wednesday, February 21, 2018, at 9:00 AM.

Children's Council Presentation

Ms. Crystal Kelly

Update on Recreational Projects

Mr. Joe Furman & Ms. Wendy Patoprsty

1. Guy Ford Paddle Access
2. Middle Fork Greenway

Community Recreation Center (CRC) Update

Mr. Chad Roberson

County Facilities Assessment

Mr. Chad Roberson

Landfill Solar Lease

Mr. Derek Moretz

Miscellaneous & Commissioner Matters

Mr. Deron Geouque

Budget work sessions were set for May 8, 2019, from 2-8 P.M. and May 9, 2019, from 9 A.M.-4 P.M.

Board Discussion and Directives

The County Manager concluded the retreat by reviewing the issues discussed and seeking direction from the Board for Fiscal Year 2019-2020.

The meeting adjourned at 11:25 PM

John Welch

Chairman, Watauga County Board of Commissioners

ATTEST:
Deron Geouque
County Manager

Watauga County Board of Commissioners

MINUTES

WATAUGA COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS TUESDAY, MARCH 5, 2019

The Watauga County Board of Commissioners held a regular meeting, as scheduled, on Tuesday, March 5, 2019, at 8:30 A.M. in the Commissioners' Board Room of the Watauga County Administration Building, Boone, North Carolina.

PRESENT: John Welch, Chairman
Billy Kennedy, Vice-Chairman
Larry Turnbow, Commissioner
Charlie Wallin, Commissioner
Perry Yates, Commissioner
Andrea Capua, County Attorney
Deron Geouque, County Manager
Anita J. Fogle, Clerk to the Board

Chairman Welch called the meeting to order at 8:35 A.M.

Commissioner Yates opened with a prayer and Vice-Chairman Kennedy led the Pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Chairman Welch called for additions and/or corrections to the February 19, 2019, regular meeting and closed session minutes.

Vice-Chairman Kennedy, seconded by Commissioner Turnbow, moved to approve the February 19, 2019, regular meeting minutes as presented.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

Vice-Chairman Kennedy, seconded by Commissioner Turnbow, moved to approve the February 19, 2019, closed session minutes as presented.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Chairman Welch called for additions and/or corrections to the March 5, 2019, agenda.

Vice-Chairman Kennedy, seconded by Commissioner Yates, moved to approve the March 5, 2019, agenda as presented.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

SRO AGREEMENT WITH CALDWELL COMMUNITY COLLEGE AND TECHNICAL INSTITUTE (CCC&TI)

Sheriff Len Hagaman and Caldwell Community College and Technical Institute (CCC&TI) Vice-President of Operations, Mr. Donnie Bassinger, presented a proposed agreement for the Sheriff's Office to provide a Student Resource Officer for the Watauga Campus of CCC&TI. CCC&TI will pay the salary and benefits for the position and the County will pay for the vehicle, uniform, training, and equipment. Sheriff Hagaman stated that existing funds are in the current budget to cover the costs associated with the agreement.

County Attorney Capua asked about insurance liability. County Manager Geouque stated that the County would be liable as the situation would be the same as when officers were working off-duty special events. County Attorney Capua requested wording be added to the agreement to clarify insurance liability.

Commissioner Turnbow, seconded by Commissioner Wallin, moved to approve the Student Resource Officer Agreement between the Sheriff's Office and Caldwell Community College contingent upon County Attorney review and clarification of insurance responsibilities.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

WATAUGA COMPASSIONATE COMMUNITY INITIATIVE REPORT

Ms. Denise Presnell and Ms. Candis Walker updated the Board on the Watauga Compassionate Community Initiative (WCCI) Conference which is scheduled for Saturday, May 4, 2019, from 8:00 A.M. to 4:00 P.M. at Watauga High School. The mission of the collaborative is to promote health and resiliency in our community and to effectively prevent, recognize and treat trauma by creating safe, stable, nurturing environments and relationships. There will be classes throughout the day for community members, service providers and educators that will focus on trauma prevention and treatment, promoting health and resiliency, and creating safe and nurturing spaces and relationships. The deadline to register for the Conference is Thursday, March 14, 2019.

This report was for information only and, therefore, no action was required.

HIGH COUNTRY FOOD HUB UPDATE

Ms. Courtney Baines, Executive Director of Blue Ridge Women In Agriculture, gave an update on the High Country Food Hub. Ms. Baines stated that Economic Development Commission support has allowed for great growth including the installation of a new freezer and a root crop storage area. The total online market sales for 2019 are \$23,000. The total online market sales for 2018 totaled \$103,130. There have been 74 new customers so far in 2019. The High Country Food Hub was named "Start Up Business of the Year" by the Boone Area Chamber of Commerce. Ms. Baines stated that a Farm-to-Plate Dinner Series was ongoing with the upcoming dates of March 24 at the Gamekeeper, April 18 at Reid's Café and Catering, and May 19

at Gideon Ridge Inn.

Mr. Jim Hamilton, Cooperative Extension Director, stated there was proposed plans for skin products that include CBD oil. Mr. Hamilton wanted to make the County aware since the products may smell and test like marijuana. Mr. Hamilton stated that hemp production is a legal and viable crop for this area and the Cooperative Extension was applying for a permit to grow a few plants at the Cooperative Extension Building. A lot of interest has been generated since the crop recently became legal to grow and the potential is here for hemp/CBD production to be a new economic driver for agriculture in Watauga County.

This report was for information only and, therefore, no action was required.

MIDDLE FORK GREENWAY NAMING OPPORTUNITIES

Mr. Joe Furman, Planning and Inspections Director, presented a proposed Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) that, if approved, would waive the County's current Facility, Property, and Space Naming Policy to allow the Blue Ridge Conservancy the authority to name different aspects of the Middle Fork Greenway in order to raise funds for the project. The policy does have a provision for the Board to waive or modify any requirement of this policy as it deems appropriate on a case-by-case basis. Most of the land associated with the Middle Fork Greenway will be owned by the County. Mr. Furman stated that both agency attorneys have reviewed the MOA.

Commissioner Turnbow, seconded by Vice-Chairman Kennedy, moved to approve the Memorandum of Agreement as presented.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

PARKS AND RECREATION OUT-OF-STATE TRAVEL REQUEST

Mr. Stephen Poulos, Parks and Recreation Director, requested approval of out-of-state travel for Ms. Keron Poteat, Recreation Specialist II. Ms. Poteat plans to take seniors to the Barter Theater in Abingdon, VA, on April 11, 2019.

Commissioner Yates, seconded by Commissioner Wallin, moved to approve out-of-State travel for Ms. Keron Poteat as presented by Mr. Stephen Poulos.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

BOARD OF EQUALIZATION AND REVIEW SCHEDULE

Mr. Larry Warren, Tax Administrator, discussed the scheduling of the FY 2019 Board of Equalization and Review (E&R). Mr. Warren stated that the Board may create a special Board of Equalization and Review or, as in previous years, the Board of Commissioners may serve as the Board of Equalization and Review and include the County Manager to serve as an alternate member. The County Manager would only serve if a quorum could not be met otherwise.

Vice-Chairman Kennedy, seconded by Commissioner Turnbow, resolved to establish the Board of

Equalization and Review as follows:

MEMBERSHIP:

- Shall consist of the 5 member County Commissioners, each having one vote.
- Three members shall constitute a quorum.
- One alternate shall be appointed consisting of the County Manager.
- The alternate shall only serve to meet a quorum of the Board for a scheduled Board of Equalization and Review meeting.

POWERS AND DUTIES:

The powers and duties of this Board shall be as specified in NCGS 105-328 and Article 21 of the Machinery Act.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

Mr. Warren recommended the convening date for the Board of Equalization and Review be scheduled for Wednesday April 17, 2019, at 4:00 P.M. and the adjournment of the Board be scheduled for Thursday April 25, 2019, at 5:00 P.M. The Board discussed other meeting dates as well.

Vice-Chairman Kennedy, seconded by Commissioner Turnbow, moved to set the following dates for the Board of Equalization and Review:

- Convene on Wednesday, April 17, 2019, at 4:00 P.M.
- Meet on Thursday, April 18, 2019, from 4:00 – 7:00 P.M.
- Adjourn on Thursday, April 25, 2019, from 5:00 P.M. – 6:00 P.M.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

The Board of Equalization and Review has been compensated \$75 per meeting in the past.

Vice-Chairman Kennedy, seconded by Commissioner Turnbow, moved to establish the compensation rate for the Board of Equalization and Review at \$75.00 per meeting.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

MISCELLANEOUS ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

A. Proposed Agreement for Storage of Bodies with Watauga Medical Center, Inc.

County Manager Geouque stated that due to recent changes regarding the storage of dead bodies, the County has been working with the Health Department and Watauga Medical Center for a suitable location. The Medical Center has graciously agreed to serve as the facility. Enclosed is a copy of the agreement between the County and the Medical Center to serve as the facility for the storage of bodies. A future budget request

will be forthcoming to outfit the space with coolers to house the bodies and other potential ancillary equipment.

Board action is required to approve the agreement with the Watauga Medical Center to serve as the location for the storage of bodies in the County.

Commissioner Wallin, seconded by Commissioner Yates, moved to approve the agreement with Watauga Medical Center for the storage of bodies.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

B. Watauga Solar Lease Amendment

County Manager Geouque stated that staff was directed at the Annual Pre-Budget Retreat in February to include the proposed Watauga Solar lease on a future agenda for Board approval. As discussed, Watauga Solar wants to secure a lease with as long of a term as possible. NCGS does allow for an exception regarding the treatment of a property that is to be leased for more than ten (10) years if that property is to be leased for a solar project. Property used for solar projects can be leased for a twenty-five (25) year term.

County Manager Geouque stated that there was a potential issue in the proposed amendment as options to renew the lease exists but at the same rate of \$1,000.00 per acre/per year. The County Manager stated that the County would want to renegotiate the rates at the end of the initial twenty-five year lease.

Mr. Derek Moretz and Mr. Ged Moody, with Watauga Solar, shared that the life of the equipment is greater than twenty-five years and that is why they wanted the option to renew. Mr. Moretz proposed the amount for the renewals be changed to either \$1,500 per acre or \$250 extra per acre for the extension terms.

Mr. Moretz stated that there would be a separate contract that would define the County's electricity rates being lowered as a result of solar power generated by the project. The County Manager stated that it would be hard to move forward with an agreement if the electricity generated by the project was not purchased.

By consensus, the Board agreed to keep the project moving forward by directing staff to address the issue of the extended term rates in the proposed lease as well as defining the impact with Blue Ridge Energy and reduced electricity rates for the County. Staff is to bring an amended proposed lease along with a resolution to adopt and then publicize the intended lease with Watauga Solar, LLC. as required by Statutes.

C. Boards and Commissions

County Manager Geouque stated that each Commissioner nominates a representative to the Boone Rural Fire Protection Service District Board whose terms run concurrent with the term of the appointing Commissioner. Boone Rural Fire Service District Board members must own property and reside within that Fire Service District.

D. Announcements

County Manager Geouque announced the following:

- Senior Center will host “Coffee with Commissioners” from 10:00 A.M. – 11:00 A.M. on Friday, March 29, 2019, at the Lois E. Harrell Senior Center to allow seniors the opportunity to meet the Commissioners and ask any questions they may have.
- The Watauga Compassionate Community Initiative Conference 2019 will be held from 8:00 A.M. – 4:00 P.M. on Saturday, May 4, 2019, at Watauga High School.

PUBLIC COMMENT

The following spoke during public comment:

Mr. David Freireich with Harmony Lanes, a group started by his family advocating for the safety of pedestrians and bicyclists, requested the Board of Commissioners contact the North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) and show support to include provisions for walkers and bikers in the proposed plans for making improvements to the Bamboo/Wilson Ridge Road area. Mr. Freireich proposed that this would be a great time to consider starting an East Boone Connector for pedestrian and bicycle traffic. Mr. Freireich stated that NCDOT had indicated that NCDOT would cover 80% of the cost with the remainder to be funded by the County and the Town of Boone. Mr. Freireich stated that he was not asking for funds at this time; however, it would save money in the future if such a project was incorporated in the planned improvements.

Mr. Jeremy Bouman with Hatchet Coffee stated that he witnesses many, including high school students, walking on the road daily. Mr. Bouman also advocated for safety for pedestrians and bicyclists.

Mr. Tim Herdklotz with Boone Shine Brewing Company also advocated for an East Boone Connector focusing on safety for pedestrians and bicyclists.

County Manager Geouque stated that at a recent NCDOT meeting it was indicated that NCDOT did not have funds available for bike/pedestrian lanes and, if wanted, the County and Town would have to fund them. Mr. Geouque agreed that if they were incorporated now, they would cost less than to add later. Mr. Geouque stated that he would call Mr. Mike Pettyjohn with NCDOT to check on funding. Commissioner Wallin stated while at the public portion of the NCDOT meeting on the proposed improvements to the Bamboo/Wilson Ridge area, four NCDOT people said that NCDOT would cover the costs to build bike/pedestrian lanes if the County would maintain them. Mr. Freireich stated that Representative Ray Russell is looking for funding. It was mentioned that Mr. Cullie Tarleton, NCDOT representative for Watauga County, should be contacted as well.

After discussion and by consensus the Board directed the County Manager to submit a letter to NCDOT commenting on the proposed improvements to the Bamboo/Wilson Ridge area by the deadline date of March 8, 2019, to begin conversations including bike/pedestrian lanes to the proposed improvement plans.

CLOSED SESSION

At 9:40 A.M., Commissioner Wallin, seconded by Commissioner Turnbow, moved to enter Closed Session to discuss Attorney/Client Matters, per G. S. 143-318.11(a)(3).

VOTE: Aye-5

Nay-0

Commissioner Yates, seconded by Commissioner Wallin, moved to resume the open meeting at 11:43 A.M.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

ADJOURN

Commissioner Wallin, seconded by Commissioner Turnbow, moved to adjourn the meeting at 11:43 A.M.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

John Welch, Chairman

ATTEST:

Anita J. Fogle, Clerk to the Board

Watauga County Board of Commissioners

MINUTES

WATAUGA COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS TUESDAY, MARCH 19, 2019

The Watauga County Board of Commissioners held a regular meeting, as scheduled, on Tuesday, March 19, 2019, at 5:30 P.M. in the Commissioners' Board Room of the Watauga County Administration Building, Boone, North Carolina.

PRESENT: John Welch, Chairman
Billy Kennedy, Vice-Chairman
Charlie Wallin, Commissioner
Perry Yates, Commissioner
Andrea Capua, County Attorney
Deron Geouque, County Manager
Anita J. Fogle, Clerk to the Board

Commissioner Yates opened with a prayer and Vice-Chairman Kennedy led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Chairman Welch announced that Commissioner Turnbow was not able to be at the meeting.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Vice-Chairman Kennedy called for additions and/or corrections to the March 5, 2019, regular meeting and closed session minutes.

Commissioner Yates, seconded by Vice-Chairman Kennedy, moved to approve the March 5, 2019, regular meeting minutes as presented.

VOTE: Aye-4(Welch, Kennedy, Wallin, Yates)
Nay-0
Absent-1(Turnbow)

Commissioner Yates, seconded by Vice-Chairman Kennedy, moved to approve the March 19, 2019, closed session minutes as presented.

VOTE: Aye-4(Welch, Kennedy, Wallin, Yates)
Nay-0
Absent-1(Turnbow)

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Vice-Chairman Kennedy called for additions and/or corrections to the March 19, 2019, agenda.

County Manager Geouque requested to withdraw the Proposed Agreement with Advanced Disposal and Proposed Agreement with Custom Ecology, Inc. under Sanitation Matters from the agenda.

Vice-Chairman Kennedy requested to add the following announcement: Appalachian Regional Healthcare System will host a Town Hall meeting from 6:00 - 7:30 P.M. on Thursday, March 21, 2019, in the Auditorium at Watauga Medical Center to discuss Medicaid expansion NC Senator Deanna Ballard and NC Representative Ray Russell will be in attendance.

Commissioner Wallin, seconded by Vice-Chairman Kennedy, moved to approve the February 19, 2019, agenda as amended.

VOTE: Aye-4(Welch, Kennedy, Wallin, Yates)
Nay-0
Absent-1(Turnbow)

WATAUGA COUNTY SCHOOLS MATTERS

A. Lottery Funds Request

Dr. Scott Elliot, Watauga County Schools Superintendent, requested the release of \$144,200 in funds from the State Education Lottery Fund. \$95,000 was requested to expand access control systems in all schools, \$30,000 for the continuation of carpet and tile replacement throughout all schools, and \$19,200 for the addition of management systems in all schools for registering and monitoring all visitors to ensure safety for everyone in the building.

Commissioner Yates, seconded by Commissioner Wallin, moved to approve the release of \$144,200 in funds from the State Education Lottery Fund as requested by Dr. Elliot.

VOTE: Aye-4(Welch, Kennedy, Wallin, Yates)
Nay-0
Absent-1(Turnbow)

B. Proposed Resolution Approving the Contract Price for the Purchase of Real Property for A Future Valle Crucis School

Dr. Scott Elliott, Watauga County School Superintendent, stated that the School Board has long range plans to replace both Hardin Park Elementary School and Valle Crucis Elementary School. Hardin Park will be built on site and the Board has been looking for property for the construction of a new Valle Crucis School. With limited properties available, the School Board has made an offer on a 14.4 acre tract in the amount of \$1,105,000 near the location of the current school. Dr. Elliot presented a proposed resolution stating the Board of Commissioners approve the purchase price for 14.4 acre tract. School Board members Ron Henries, Brenda Reece, and Gary Childers were also present for the request.

Vice-Chairman Kennedy, seconded by Commissioner Yates, moved to adopt the resolution approving the proposed purchase price of One Million One Hundred Five Thousand and No/100 Dollars (\$1,105,000.00) for an 14.4 acre property for the construction of a new Valle Crucis Elementary School in accordance with G.S. §115C-426 and as requested by Dr. Elliot on behalf of the School Board.

VOTE: Aye-4(Welch, Kennedy, Wallin, Yates)
Nay-0
Absent-1(Turnbow)

PROPOSED RESOLUTION SUPPORTING JUVENILE CRIME PREVENTION COUNCIL (JCPC) ALLOCATION EXPANSION

Dr. Paul Holden, Juvenile Crime Prevention Council (JCPC) Chairman, presented a proposed resolution stating that Watauga County fully supports an adequate and timely increase of local Juvenile Crime Prevention funding to ensure program expansion and successful implementation of the Juvenile Justice Reinvestment Act Raise the Age Legislation, set for December 1, 2019.

Vice-Chairman Kennedy, seconded by Commissioner Wallin, moved to adopt the resolution as presented by Dr. Holden.

VOTE: Aye-4(Welch, Kennedy, Wallin, Yates)
Nay-0
Absent-1(Turnbow)

BID AWARD REQUEST FOR NEW FRONT-END LOAD TRASH TRUCK AND NEW ROLL-OFF TRASH TRUCK

On behalf of Operation Services Director, Mr. Rex Buck, County Manager Geouque requested the authorization to purchase one (1) new Front-End Load Trash Truck in the amount of \$259,553 and one (1) new Roll-Off Trash Truck in the amount of \$166,297. Adequate funds are available in the current Sanitation budget to cover the expense.

Commissioner Yates, seconded by Commissioner Wallin, moved to authorize the purchase of one (1) new Front-End Load Trash Truck in the amount of \$259,553 and one (1) new Roll-Off Trash Truck in the amount of \$166,297 as presented by the County Manager.

VOTE: Aye-4(Welch, Kennedy, Wallin, Yates)
Nay-0
Absent-1(Turnbow)

TAX MATTERS

A. Monthly Collections Report

Tax Administrator, Mr. Larry Warren, presented the Tax Collections Report for the month of February 2019. The report was presented for information only and, therefore, no action was required.

B. Refunds and Releases

Mr. Warren presented the Refunds and Releases Report for February 2019 for Board approval:

TO BE TYPED IN MINUTE BOOK

Vice-Chairman Kennedy, seconded by Commissioner Yates, moved to approve the Refunds and Releases Report for February 2019 as presented.

VOTE: Aye-4(Welch, Kennedy, Wallin, Yates)
Nay-0
Absent-1(Turnbow)

Chairman Welch called for a recess at 5:54 P.M. as the County Manager had stepped out of the meeting to attend to County business. Chairman Welch called the meeting back to order at 5:55 P.M.

MISCELLANEOUS ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

A. Watauga Solar Lease Amendment

County Attorney Capua stated that extensions could not be included in the proposed lease past the twenty-five year lease in accordance with Statutes.

County Manager Geouque returned to the meeting and presented a copy of a proposed resolution authorizing the lease of a portion of the landfill property to Encore T\Renewable Energy. Property owned by the County may be leased or rented for such terms and upon such conditions as the Board may determine, for up to ten (10) years or twenty-five (25) years for a renewable energy project. Property may be rented or leased only pursuant to a resolution of the Board authorizing the execution of the lease or rental agreement adopted at a regular Board meeting upon 10 days' public notice. Notice shall be given by publication describing the property to be leased or rented, stating the annual rental or lease payments, and announcing the Board's intent to authorize the lease or rental at its next regular meeting.

Commissioner Yates, seconded by Vice-Chairman Kennedy, moved to adopt the attached resolution and approve the lease at a future meeting after the ten day public notice time.

VOTE: Aye-4(Welch, Kennedy, Wallin, Yates)
Nay-0
Absent-1(Turnbow)

B. NCDOT U-5603 (NC 105 Improvements)

County Manager Geouque stated that on March 14, 2019, the North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) held a public officials meeting to unveil the conceptual revisions to the NC 105 project. The NCDOT is requesting the County and Town give an up or down vote on the proposed changes. If either the County or Town vote no, the project would be stopped and moved back on the funding priority list.

NCDOT stressed that time was of the essence and the project was already six (6) months behind schedule due to the revision process. The County Manager suggested two (2) options: Option one (1) is to approve the conceptual revisions as presented by the NCDOT so that further detailed plans may be created; and Option two (2) is to review the changes more thoroughly that were unveiled at the March 14 meeting and take a vote at the April 2, 2019, Board meeting.

After discussion, Commissioner Yates, seconded by Vice-Chairman Kennedy, moved to support the revised plans including the option for right-turns only in and out of Highland Avenue from and onto NC Hwy 105.

VOTE: Aye-4(Welch, Kennedy, Wallin, Yates)
Nay-0
Absent-1(Turnbow)

C. Boards and Commissions

County Manager presented the following for consideration:

Jury Commission

Biannually, a Jury Commission is empanelled for a two-year term. Of the three member panel, one member is appointed by the Board of Commissioners. The term of Mr. Jerry Dotson expires June 30, 2019. The new term for the appointment will be July 1, 2019, through June 30, 2021. Assistant Clerk of Court Stephanie Dalton has stated that Mr. Dotson is willing to continue to serve if so appointed. This is a first reading and, therefore, no action is required at this time.

Commissioner Wallin, seconded by Vice-Chairman Kennedy, moved to waive the second reading and reappoint Mr. Jerry Dotson to serve on the Jury Commission from July 1, 2019, until June 30, 2021.

VOTE: Aye-4(Welch, Kennedy, Wallin, Yates)
Nay-0
Absent-1(Turnbow)

Boone Rural Fire Protection Service District Board

Each Commissioner nominates a representative to the Boone Rural Fire Protection Service District Board whose terms run concurrent with the term of the appointing Commissioner. Boone Rural Fire Service District Board members must own property and reside within that Fire Service District.

D. Announcements

County Manager Geouque announced the following:

- Appalachian Regional Healthcare System will host a Town Hall meeting from 6:00 - 7:30 P.M. on Thursday, March 21, 2019, in the Auditorium at Watauga Medical Center to discuss Medicaid expansion NC Senator Deanna Ballard and NC Representative Ray Russell will be in attendance.
- The Watauga Compassionate Community Initiative Conference 2019 will be held from 8:00 A.M. – 4:00 P.M. on Saturday, May 4, 2019, at Watauga High School.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Mr. Joe Salamone with Republic Services stated that his company had been providing services to the County for ten years. Mr. Salamone stated that seeing proposed bid awards for trash services to another company on the agenda was taken personally and was not handled professionally. Mr. Salamone stated that his company should not have contacted Board members over the weekend and thanked the Board for time to clear communications.

CLOSED SESSION

At 6:09 P.M., Commissioner Wallin, seconded by Vice-Chairman Kennedy, moved to enter Closed Session to discuss Attorney/Client Matters, per G. S. 143-318.11(a)(3).

VOTE: Aye-4(Welch, Kennedy, Wallin, Yates)
Nay-0
Absent-1(Turnbow)

Commissioner Yates, seconded by Commissioner Wallin, moved to resume the open meeting at 7:12 P.M.

VOTE: Aye-4(Welch, Kennedy, Wallin, Yates)

Nay-0
Absent-1(Turnbow)

ADJOURN

Vice-Chairman Kennedy, seconded by Commissioner Wallin, moved to adjourn the meeting at 7:13 P.M.

VOTE: Aye-4(Welch, Kennedy, Wallin, Yates)
Nay-0
Absent-1(Turnbow)

John Welch, Chairman

ATTEST:

Anita J. Fogle, Clerk to the Board

Watauga County Board of Commissioners

MINUTES

WATAUGA COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS TUESDAY, MAY 7, 2019

The Watauga County Board of Commissioners held a regular meeting, as scheduled, on Tuesday, May 7, 2019, at 8:30 A.M. in the Commissioners' Board Room of the Watauga County Administration Building, Boone, North Carolina.

PRESENT: John Welch, Chairman
Billy Kennedy, Vice-Chairman
Larry Turnbow, Commissioner
Charlie Wallin, Commissioner
Perry Yates, Commissioner
Anthony di Santi, County Attorney
Andrea Capua, County Attorney
Deron Geouque, County Manager
Anita J. Fogle, Clerk to the Board

Chairman Welch called the meeting to order at 8:35 A.M.

Commissioner Wallin opened with a prayer and Commissioner Turnbow led the Pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Chairman Welch called for additions and/or corrections to the April 16, 2019, regular meeting and closed session minutes.

Vice-Chairman Kennedy, seconded by Commissioner Wallin, moved to approve the April 16, 2019, regular meeting minutes as presented.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

Vice-Chairman Kennedy, seconded by Commissioner Wallin, moved to approve the April 16, 2019, closed session minutes as presented.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Chairman Welch called for additions and/or corrections to the May 7, 2019, agenda.

County Manager Geouque requested to add Land Acquisition, per G. S. 143-318.11(a)(5)(i) to the scheduled closed session.

Commissioner Yates requested to add discussion regarding a disposal issue at Sanitation due to recent citizen calls.

Vice-Chairman Kennedy, seconded by Commissioner Turnbow, moved to approve the May 7, 2019, agenda as amended.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

PEG CHANNEL AGREEMENT WITH APPSTATE

Mr. Robert Gelber, General Manager of AppTV, presented a proposed agreement certifying AppTV as Watauga County's education PEG channel. The agreement would enable AppTV to record and store county commissioner meetings, relay local emergency alerts and open up more opportunities in the future. Mr. Gelber stated that AppTV is run by students who are preparing for careers in TV. Mr. Gelber stated that the rights to the content of recordings belonged to the current students of the program.

County Manager Geouque stated that in a separate agreement the County would have a "kill" switch so all meetings in the room (including closed sessions) would not be recorded. The County Manager stated that the County did not have staff to video the meetings and the County would not keep the taped recordings. Concerns regarding copyrights and to whom the property would belong came up during discussion.

Commissioner Yates, seconded by Commissioner Turnbow, moved to table to allow the County Attorney and County Manager to work on concerns.

Mr. Gelber stated that approval was desired in time for AppTV's state certification in early July.

PURCHASE OF EQUIPMENT FOR BODY STORAGE AT THE WATAUGA MEDICAL CENTER

Due to recent changes regarding the storage of dead bodies, the County has been working with the Health Department and Watauga Medical Center for a suitable location. The Medical Center graciously agreed to serve as the facility. The Board approved recently the agreement between the County and the Medical Center to serve as the facility for the storage of bodies. As stated previously, a future budget request was to be forthcoming to outfit the space with coolers to house the bodies and other potential ancillary equipment.

Ms. Jennifer Greene, AppHealth Director, presented a quote from Mopec in the amount of \$41,963.64 for a three person cooler which is the best option. The annual equipment monitoring service fee with Advanced Detection Solutions, LLC is in the amount of \$180. County Manager Geouque stated that this is a onetime cost (with the exception of the annual monitoring fee) and recommended funds for the coolers will be allocated from the professional services line item.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

COMMUNITY RECREATION CENTER CHANGE ORDER #3

Mr. Chad Roberson, ClarkNexsen, gave a brief progress update on the construction of the Community Recreation Center. Mr. Roberson stated that the steel erection continues, Phase II demolition is set to begin in the next thirty days, and the completion date is April 21, 2020.

Mr. Roberson also presented Change Order #3 for the Community Recreation Center. The change order reconciles the alternates that were delayed in their actual approval until the project progressed to a point where the foundation work was complete and steel was starting to be erected. To date the budget summary indicates no increase in the total project cost and an owner contingency balance of \$776,107.

Vice-Chairman Kennedy, seconded by Commissioner Turnbow, moved to approve Change Order # 3 for the Community Recreation Center as presented.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION OFFICE REQUEST TO EXTEND OFFICE HOURS

Mr. Denny Norris, Watauga County Soil and Water Conservation District Chairman, requested approval to a change in their hours of operations. Several years ago the Department changed the hours of operation to 7:30 A.M. to 5:00 P.M. from 8:00 A.M. to 5:00 P.M. Mr. Norris requested the hours be changed to 7:30 A.M. to 5:30 P.M. Mr. Norris stated that the hours will be helpful to many farmers who also work at other jobs. Mr. Norris stated that the hour change would only be until daylight savings time ends.

Vice-Chairman Kennedy, seconded by Commissioner Turnbow, moved to approve the hours of operation for the Soil and Water Conservation Office be set at 7:30 A.M. to 5:30 P.M. until daylight savings time ends as presented by Mr. Norris.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

UPDATED NC DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES (DHHS)/COUNTY MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING (MOU) PURSUANT TO G. S. 108A-74

On behalf of Mr. Tom Hughes, DSS Director, County Manager Geouque presented an updated Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Department of Health and Human Services for all social services programs. The County Manager stated that the current version is a little friendlier than the original version. The MOU does not allow for the County to affix any documentation not included as part of the original document. The County Manager stated that Mr. Hughes recommended approval of the MOU as presented.

County Manager Geouque stated that the Board could table consideration, not accept the MOU, or send a letter to the State with concerns regarding the MOU.

After discussion, Chairman Welch tabled consideration to allow time for review and consultation from the County Attorney.

PROPOSED UPGRADE TO RECREATION SOFTWARE

Mr. Stephen Poulos, Parks and Recreation Director, presented a proposed software upgrade with Vermont Systems Recreation and Parks Software to the current system used by the Department in preparation for the new Community Recreation Center (CRC) opening. The upgrade will be required to enter and track memberships and schedule the facilities at the CRC. The upgrade and training will cost approximately \$35,816 and require an annual maintenance fee of \$3,366.

Commissioner Yates, seconded by Vice-Chairman Kennedy, moved to approve the software upgrade, training, and annual maintenance fee as presented by Mr. Poulos.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

MAINTENANCE MATTERS

A. Request for Exemption from Quality Based Selection Process for the Procurement of Engineering Services

Mr. Robert Marsh, Maintenance Director, requested the exemption of the Complex 1 field reorientation and new courts project from N.C. General Statute 143-64.31. Timmons Group designed the Anne Marie fields located adjacent to the complex field. Due to Timmons Group's working knowledge of the project and previous work for the county; staff would recommend the Board exempt this project from N.C. General Statute 143-64.31 and select Timmons Group for the final design, bidding, and construction administration as they would be the most qualified for the project.

Vice-Chairman Kennedy, seconded by Commissioner Turnbow, moved to exempt Complex 1 field reorientation and new courts project from N.C. General Statute 143-64.31 and select Timmons Group for the final design, bidding, and construction administration for the project.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

B. Request to Hire Timmons Group for Design of New Recreational Facilities (Tennis and Basketball Courts)

Mr. Marsh presented a proposed contract in the amount of \$33,100 with Timmons Group for engineering and design of the outdoor facilities at the new Community Recreation Center. Mr. Marsh stated that the County was very satisfied with services provided by the Timmons Group for the baseball fields in earlier projects.

Commissioner Yates, seconded by Commissioner Wallin, moved to contract with the Timmons Group in the amount of \$33,100 for the recreational facilities at the new Community Recreation Center as presented by Mr. Marsh.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

REQUEST TO ACCEPT NC DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL AND CULTURAL RESOURCES GRANT FOR RENOVATIONS AND IMPROVEMENTS TO THE WESTERN WATAUGA COMMUNITY CENTER

Ms. Misty Watson, Finance Director, requested acceptance of a grant awarded by the North Carolina Department of Natural and Cultural Resources in the amount of \$30,000 for the Western Watauga Community Center. Senator Ballard was instrumental in the grant award to the County. The funds will be utilized to upgrade lighting, HVAC replacement, and restroom renovations.

Commissioner Turnbow, seconded by Vice-Chairman Kennedy, moved to approve the grant with the North Carolina Department of Natural and Cultural Resources in the amount of \$30,000 for renovations at the Western Watauga Community Center.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

MISCELLANEOUS ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

A. Presentation of the FY 2020 Capital Improvement Plan (CIP)

The County Manager presented the FY 2019-2020 Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) for review prior to discussion during the upcoming budget work sessions.

B. Presentation of the Manager's FY 2020 Recommended Budget

The County Manager presented his Recommended FY 2020 Budget and reviewed highlights. He announced upcoming budget work sessions scheduled on Wednesday, May 8, 2019, beginning at 2:00 P.M. and Thursday, May 9, 2019 at 9:00 A.M. A public hearing will be held on May 21, 2019, at 5:30 P.M. to allow citizen comment on the proposed budget.

C. Proposed Lease Renewal with Cove Creek Preservation and Development (CCP&D)

County Manager Geouque presented a proposed lease extension for the Old Cove Creek School property, as requested by the Cove Creek Preservation and Development (CCP&D). Property owned by the County may be leased or rented for such terms and upon such conditions as the Board may determine, for up to ten (10) years. Property may be rented or leased only pursuant to a resolution of the Board authorizing the execution of the lease or rental agreement adopted at a regular Board meeting upon 10 days' public notice. The notice has been given.

Vice-Chairman Kennedy requested wording be added requiring CCP&D to get County approval prior to cutting trees on the property.

Commissioner Turnbow, seconded by Commissioner Yates, moved to approve the lease subject to the addition of the clause regarding CCP&D obtaining County permission to cut trees.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

D. Proposed Appalachian Enterprise Center Lease Renewal with NC Works

County Manager Geouque presented a proposed lease with the High Country Workforce Development Board (HCWDB) for a portion of the Appalachian Enterprise Center (AEC). Property owned by the County may be leased or rented for such terms and upon such conditions as the Board may determine, for up to ten (10) years. Property may be rented or leased only pursuant to a resolution of the Board authorizing the execution of the lease or rental agreement adopted at a regular Board meeting upon 10 days' public notice. The notice has been given.

Vice-Chairman Kennedy, seconded by Commissioner Wallin, moved to approve the lease as presented by the County Manager.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

E. Bid Award for Re-turfing of One of the Two Fields At Ted Mackorell Soccer Complex

Commissioner Wallin, seconded by Vice-Chairman Kennedy, moved to recuse Chairman Welch from discussion of this topic as he is an employee of Appalachian State University.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

Commissioner Turnbow, seconded by Vice-Chairman Kennedy, moved to recuse Commissioner Wallin from discussion of this topic as he is an employee of Appalachian State University.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

County Manager Geouque stated that a committee consisting of County and ASU staff, along with High Country Soccer Association members has been meeting to select a vendor to replace the turf at one of the two soccer fields at the complex. The other field will be replaced in the next five (5) years. The current turf is approximately eleven (11) years old. The committee has met multiple times over the past several months reviewing and analyzing the different vendors with each given the opportunity to meet to discuss their product. High Country Soccer handled the bid process. Three bids were received from AstroTurf, FieldTurf, and Medallion. AstroTurf's bid in the amount of \$411,000 was selected as the committee's recommendation based on the maintenance package and a sweeper/brush that was included. The County Manager stated that funds would be allocated from the administrative contingency. The "A" on the field for Appalachian State University will be paid for in full by Appalachian State University.

After discussion, Commissioner Turnbow, seconded by Commissioner Yates, moved to accept AstroTurf's bid in the amount of \$411,000 with the County to pay one-third (1/3), in the amount of \$137,000, and allocate the funds from the administrative contingency.

VOTE: Aye-3(Kennedy, Turnbow, Yates)
Nay-0
Recused-2(Welch, Wallin)

Commissioner Turnbow, seconded by Commissioner Yates, moved to reinstate Chairman Welch and Commissioner Wallin to the meeting.

VOTE: Aye-3(Kennedy, Turnbow, Yates)
Nay-0
Recused-2(Welch, Wallin)

F. Boards and Commissions

County Manager Geouque share the following for consideration:

Economic Development Commission

Three (3) terms on the Economic Development Commission will expire in June. Mr. Tad Dolbier has served one (1) term, is eligible for another, and would like to be reappointed. The terms of Mr. Doug McGuire and Mr. Ray Cameron are also expiring. Mr. McGuire has not attended a meeting since January, 2017. Mr. Cameron has not attended since January, 2018, and had previously informed me of his intention to move towards retirement and to be in town less frequently. During the past several months, two (2) volunteer applications have been received and are attached. Also attached is a current roster. Terms are three (3) years with a limit of two (2) consecutive terms. This was a first reading and, therefore, no action was required nor taken.

Boone Rural Fire Protection Service District Board

Each Commissioner nominates a representative to the Boone Rural Fire Protection Service District Board whose terms run concurrent with the term of the appointing Commissioner. Boone Rural Fire Service District Board members must own property and reside within that Fire Service District. Commissioner Wallin nominated Ms. Mary Cavanaugh to serve as his representative.

Commissioner Yates, seconded by Vice-Chairman Kennedy, moved to appoint Ms. Mary Cavanaugh as Commissioner Wallin's representative to the Boone Rural Fire Protection Service District Board.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

G. Announcements

County Manager Geouque announced the following:

- Budget Work Sessions are scheduled for Wednesday, May 8, 2019, beginning at 2:00 P.M. and Thursday, May 9, 2019, beginning at 9:00 A.M. The Work Sessions will be held in the Commissioners' Board Room.
- The Trustees of Caldwell Community College & Technical Institute invites the Board of Commissioners to a meeting on Wednesday, May 15, 2019, at 6:00 P.M. at the Watauga Instructional Facility on Hwy 105 Bypass, Boone NC, in Room 112.
- A public hearing will be held on Tuesday, May 21, 2019, beginning at 5:30 P.M. to allow citizen comment on the FY 2020 Proposed Budget.

- County Manager Geouque stated that May 17 and May 24 were potentially good dates for a special meeting with Senator Ballard and Representative Russell. By consensus the Board agreed the May 17 date would work best.
- The Military Officers Association of America's 12th Annual Memorial Day Program will be held at Boone Mall on Monday, May 27, 2019, with the ceremony commencing at 10:30 A.M.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Mr. George Bartholomew shared concerns regarding the Tourism Development Authority's plans for improvements to Howard's Knob Park.

Mr. Eric Plagg, Chairperson for the Town of Boone Historic Preservation Board, requested the County and Town of Boone work together for solutions for the Turner house on County owned property located adjacent to the County Administration Building in Downtown Boone.

County Manager Geouque stated that the County has sent letters to the Town regarding the house and the Town of Boone plans to discuss the issue at their next meeting.

Mr. Wright Tilley, Executive Director of Watauga County Tourism Development Authority (TDA), stated that Destination By Design, who is designing the improvements at Howard's Knob Park, recently met with homeowners located near the project and is working on renovations to their design which will be reported to the TDA.

CLOSED SESSION

At 10:37 A.M., Commissioner Wallin, seconded by Commissioner Turnbow, moved to enter Closed Session to discuss Attorney/Client Matters, per G. S. 143-318.11(a)(3) and Land Acquisition, per G. S. 143-318.11(a)(5)(i).

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

Commissioner Yates, seconded by Vice-Chairman Kennedy, moved to resume the open meeting at 11:57 A.M.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

Commissioner Yates stated that Mr. Steve Loflin had sent a letter stating dissatisfaction with the Board of Equalization and Review's decision regarding property he owns. County Manager Geouque stated that he would pass the letter along to the Tax Administrator and let him know that the Board of Commissioners reinforce the Board of Equalization and Review's decision.

ADJOURN

Vice-Chairman Kennedy, seconded by Commissioner Yates, moved to adjourn the meeting at 12:01 P.M.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

John Welch, Chairman

ATTEST:

Anita J. Fogle, Clerk to the Board

Watauga County Board of Commissioners

MINUTES

WATAUGA COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS TUESDAY, JUNE 18, 2019

The Watauga County Board of Commissioners held a regular meeting, as scheduled, on Tuesday, June 18, 2019, at 5:30 P.M. in the Commissioners' Board Room of the Watauga County Administration Building, Boone, North Carolina.

PRESENT: John Welch, Chairman
Billy Kennedy, Vice-Chairman
Larry Turnbow, Commissioner
Charlie Wallin, Commissioner
Perry Yates, Commissioner
Andrea Capua, County Attorney
Deron Geouque, County Manager
Anita J. Fogle, Clerk to the Board

Chairman Welch called the meeting to order at 5:32 P.M.

Commissioner Wallin opened with a prayer and Commissioner Turnbow led the Pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Chairman Welch called for additions and/or corrections to the June 4, 2019, regular meeting and closed session minutes.

Vice-Chairman Kennedy, seconded by Commissioner Turnbow, moved to approve the June 4, 2019, regular meeting minutes as presented.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

Vice-Chairman Kennedy, seconded by Commissioner Turnbow, moved to approve the June 4, 2019, closed session minutes as presented.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Chairman Welch called for additions and/or corrections to the June 18, 2019, agenda.

County Manager Geouque requested to add an appointment to the Caldwell Community College Board of Trustees.

Commissioner Turnbow requested to add Ms. Crystal Kelly to the agenda to give an update on the Pritzker Children's Initiative (PCI).

Commissioner Turnbow, seconded by Vice-Chairman Kennedy, moved to approve the June 18, 2019, agenda as amended.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

W.A.M.Y. COMMUNITY ACTION, INC., MATTERS

A. Update Report

Ms. Melissa Soto, Director of W.A.M.Y Community Action, Inc., shared an update on recent activities of the organization. Ms. Soto shared that W.A.M.Y. is helping citizens with the following needs: childcare (availability and affordability), employment & education (higher paying positions), housing (affordable and standard), transportation (outside of city limits), and senior services (for those who don't qualify for services). The report was given for information only and, therefore, no action was required.

B. Letter of Support Request for A Housing Preservation Grant Application

Ms. Soto stated that W.A.M.Y Community Action, Inc. is applying for a Housing Preservation Grant to allow for repairs and rehabilitation on very low-income family homes. W.A.M.Y. has successfully utilized this grant for the last two years by working on thirteen homes. Ms. Soto stated that they would like to reapply for the grant and, if awarded, planned to provide this service to fifteen homes of low income citizens. Currently, they use the Housing Preservation grant to do repair work on homes, such as roofs, plumbing and electrical repairs, or mold removal. Once repairs are done W.A.M.Y. also follows up with weatherization of the homes.

As part of the grant application, W.A.M.Y must demonstrate the support of County officials for this type of work and show this is not a duplication of another program operated by the County. Ms. Soto presented a proposed letter of support requiring the Board of County Commissioners' Chairman's signature. The application is due July 8. Ms. Soto stated that there was no match required.

Commissioner Wallin, seconded by Commissioner Yates, moved to support W.A.M.Y.'s grant application and approve the support letter for signature of the Chairman.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

COOPERATIVE EXTENSION UPDATE

Mr. Richard Boylan, Area Specialized Agent, Agriculture, with Cooperative Extension, shared an update on the following Cooperative Extension activities: recent developments in local hemp production and regulations; recent educational outreach to farmers via the NCA&T AgriShop, the Big Dreams, Small Farms

Workshop, and similar Extension classes; progress by Watauga growers on their AgOptions grant projects; and an Innovative IPM Grant proposal secured by Extension for growers in Watauga, Ashe, and Avery Counties. The report was for information only and, therefore, no action was required.

ROCKY KNOB PARK'S RECREATION TRAILS PROGRAM GRANT APPLICATION REQUEST

Mr. Kristian Jackson, Rocky Knob Trail Boss, requested permission to proceed with an application for the Recreational Trails Program (RTP) Grant. Mr. Jackson stated that the project scored highly during the pre-application process and has met the environmental review. The Tourism Development Authority (TDA) agreed to provide the twenty-five percent (25%) match of the requested \$100,000, if funded. Mr. Jackson stated that a public hearing was not required since the request was presented at a public meeting.

Commissioner Turnbow, seconded by Vice-Chairman Kennedy, moved to authorize the submission of the grant with the matching funds to be provided by the Watauga County Tourism Development Authority (TDA).

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

APPALCART MATTERS

A. Proposed Transportation Contracts

Mr. Craig Hughes, AppalCART Director, presented the contracts for transportation services for the Project on Aging and Social Services Departments for FY 2020. The proposed rates for the Project on Aging, Department of Social Services, and other county functions are \$2.28 per direct mile. The \$1.45 rate had previously been the same for the last four (4) years. Mr. Hughes stated that, in 2018, AppalCART billed using service miles. In 2019, the County, the Human Service Agencies, and AppalCART agreed to change to direct miles and try the rate of \$1.45 per direct mile. Medicaid will only reimburse for direct miles. As FY 2019 progressed, staff realized that AppalCART was not billing Medicaid for as many miles as previous years due to the change in mileage calculation causing the billing to be substantially below budgeted amounts and previous years' totals. Mr. Hughes explained that AppalCART was using a rate that covers the cost of providing the service and has calculated the \$2.28 per direct mile rate to be comparable to the \$1.45 per service mile rate from FY 2018. Mr. Hughes stated that as of April 15, 2019, AppalCART has driven an estimated 213,464 service miles and totaled 135,802 direct miles.

Vice-Chairman Kennedy, seconded by Commissioner Wallin, moved to approve contracts with AppalCART for the Department of Social Services, Watauga County, and the Project on Aging as presented by Mr. Craig Hughes.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

B. Proposed Project on Aging Meal Delivery Contracts

Mr. Hughes presented a contract at the rate of \$1.45 per direct mile for the delivery of meals for the Project on Aging. Mr. Hughes stated that this is one of the rare instances that direct miles and service miles are about

the same. Thus, the rate of \$1.45 per mile as opposed to the \$2.28 rate proposed in the contracts just adopted.

Vice-Chairman Kennedy, seconded by Commissioner Wallin, moved to approve the meal delivery contract for Project on Aging at a rate of \$1.45 per mile.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

REQUEST TO ADD A STORAGE SHED AT THE MAIN LIBRARY FACILITY

Ms. Monica Caruso, Head Librarian, requested approval to locate a storage shed adjacent to the back parking area at the current library facility. Since the County is the landowner, Board approval is required. Ms. Caruso stated that she had a site plan developed by Ioncon and has spoken to Appalachian State University where a class of students will build the shed during as a one week project. Confirmation was still needed as to if the Appalachian State University Physical Plant would deliver the shed or she would need the County Maintenance Department to do so. Ms. Caruso stated that she has been in communication with Mr. Robert Marsh, Maintenance Director, in regards to the project. Commissioner Yates suggested making the shed 8 x 8 feet in place of 5 x 6 feet since the building materials come in 8 x 8 feet sheets. Ms. Caruso stated that most of the paperwork for Town of Boone permits has been filled out and the permit cost is expected to be \$200. County Manager Geouque suggested Ms. Caruso ask the Town of Boone to waive the permit fee since they do not contribute to the Library's budget. Ms. Caruso stated that funds are available in the Library budget to cover all costs.

Commissioner Turnbow, seconded by Commissioner Yates, moved to approve the placement of a storage shed at the County owned Library site contingent upon Ms. Caruso working with Mr. Robert Marsh and County Manager Geouque to find a suitable site for the shed and contingent upon Ms. Caruso requesting the Town of Boone waive their permit fee for the shed.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

UPDATE ON THE PRITZKER CHILDREN'S INITIATIVE (PCI)

Ms. Crystal Kelly gave an update on the Pritzker Children's Initiative. Leveraged funds will be used to assist community stakeholders in providing high quality childcare as well as develop a system wide approach starting at birth through Family Connects where a nurse is available to all families for the first three months of a child's life which will provide a referral system and safety net for all children. Blue Cross and Blue Shield is providing \$60,000 to train nurses in Watauga County through a partnership with Watauga Medical Center and App Health Care.

Ms. Kelly also shared information on the National Collaborative for Infants and Toddlers (NCIT) all-day peer learning exchange in Las Vegas, Nevada, on Thursday, July 11, 2019. This is an in-person, collaborative learning opportunity for the eight-county cohort, including Watauga County, who are supporting projects through the NCIT to convene as they implement their local prenatal-to-three initiatives and impact the healthy development of infants and toddlers. Ms. Kelly requested a Commissioner or Commissioner-elect attend the meeting on behalf of Watauga County. The National Association of Counties (NACo) will cover the travel, lodging and meal expenses for one county official and the project's primary point of contact. In order to maintain equity, counties may choose to invite an optional third community representative; however, NACo

cannot cover the travel, accommodation or meal expenses for that optional participant.

Vice-Chairman Kennedy stated that he would like to attend but would have to check his availability prior to committing. By request of the Commissioners, County Manager Geouque stated that he would consider attending if the Vice-Chairman wasn't available.

REQUEST FOR EXTENSION OF MOWING AND WEEKEND CUSTODIAL CONTRACTS

Mr. Robert Marsh, Maintenance Director, presented a proposed contract extension for two years with a three percent increase in costs for Estate Maintenance mowing and weekend janitorial services. The current rates are \$80,850 for mowing and \$27,455 for weekend janitorial services. The overall increase in total amounts will be reduced; however, due to the deletion of several properties being serviced. The new rates, with the increase included, is \$80,708.74 for mowing and \$28,278.65 for weekend janitorial services. Mr. Marsh stated that adequate funds are available in the Maintenance Department's Fiscal Year 2020 budget.

Commissioner Yates, seconded by Commissioner Turnbow, moved to approve the two year contract extension with the three percent (3%) increase in costs for Estate Maintenance with the annual rates of \$80,708.74 for mowing and \$28,278.65 for weekend janitorial services.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

DISCUSSION OF STATE TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PLAN (STIP)

Mr. Joe Furman, Planning and Inspections Director, stated that the 2020-2029 State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) has been being formulated and was scheduled for adoption in August 2019. The 2022-2031 STIP is also currently being worked on. Mr. Furman presented a revision of a memo that was sent to the Board in March with updated information that will require action at the July 2019 Board meeting. Mr. Furman provided the information early so that the Board will have time to consider options. Watauga County has been asked to submit four (4) new road and/or public transportation projects, plus greenway projects if the Board is so inclined. Mr. Furman stated that AppalCART also had substantial capital needs. Mr. Furman stated that the Town of Boone was to choose one project and the County needed to choose four projects in addition to the Town's choice. Mr. Furman stated that previous projects were carried over and not required to be resubmitted. The report was given for information only with action to be requested at the July meeting.

TAX MATTERS

A. Monthly Collections Report

Tax Administrator, Mr. Larry Warren, presented the Tax Collections Report for the month of May 2019. The report was presented for information only and, therefore, no action was required.

B. Refunds and Releases

Mr. Warren presented the Refunds and Releases Report for May 2019 for Board approval:

Vice-Chairman Kennedy, seconded by Commissioner Turnbow, moved to approve the Refunds and Releases Report for May 2019 as presented.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

BUDGET AMENDMENTS

Ms. Misty Watson, Finance Director, reviewed the following budget amendments:

Account #	Description	Debit	Credit
663740-350000	Solid Waste Tipping Fees		\$300,000
663991-399100	Fund Balance Appropriated		\$100,000
667420-469568	Contracted Services – Waste Hauling	\$380,000	
667420-469569	NC Solid Waste Surcharge	\$20,000	

The amendment recognized additional projected solid waste tipping fees and contracted services-waste hauling above original budget.

104283-457006	Middle Fork Greenway	\$50,000	
103980-398121	Transfer from Capital Projects Fund		\$50,000
219800-498010	Transfer to General Fund	\$50,000	
213991-399101	Appropriated fund balance		\$50,000

The amendment allocated funds for the Middle Fork Greenway project from CIP set aside funds for projects as requested by the Economic Development Commission as approved at the June 4, 2019, Board meeting.

103980-398121	Transfer from Capital Projects Fund		\$100,000
104920-463000	General Appropriation	\$100,000	
213991-399101	Appropriated Fund Balance		\$100,000
219800-498010	Transfer to General Fund	\$100,000	

The amendment allocated funds to be utilized by the Appalachian Theatre for furniture, fixtures, and equipment from the CIP set aside funds for projects as requested by the Economic Development Commission as approved at the February 5, 2019, Board meeting.

104199-499100	Administrative Contingency		\$137,000
104283-457001	Capital Outlay – Land Improvements	\$137,000	

The amendment allocated funds to be used for the replacement of the turf at one soccer field at the Ted Mackorell Soccer Complex as approved at the May 7, 2019, Board meeting.

Commissioner Yates, seconded by Commissioner Wallin, moved to approve the budget amendments as presented by Ms. Watson.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

MISCELLANEOUS ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

A. Proposed Frontier Natural Gas Agreement

County Manager Geouque stated that at a previous Board meeting, staff discussed the option to run natural gas to the County's detention center. The total cost to run the line is approximately \$19,000 of which Frontier will provide a zero interest loan for thirty-six (36) months to cover the cost. Annual cost savings, once using natural gas, is anticipated to be \$4,660.88. The County Manager stated that adequate funds were allocated in the FY 2019-2020 budget for the project.

Commissioner Turnbow, seconded by Commissioner Yates, moved to authorize the commercial agreement with Frontier Natural gas, the \$19,000 zero interest loan and the process of running the new line to the detention center.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

B. North Carolina Music Hall of Fame & Museum (NCMHOF) Request

County Manager Geouque stated that the North Carolina Music Hall of Fame & Museum (NCMHOF) is hosting the 11th Annual Red Carpet Induction Ceremony on October 17, 2019, from the Gem Theatre in Kannapolis, NC. The NCMHOF is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization that, each year in October, celebrates a brand new class of inductees. This year they are inducting Elizabeth Cotten, Merle Watson, Mitch Easter, Big Daddy Kane, and 9th Wonder into the NCMHOF.

Mr. Geouque stated that the NCMHOF are reaching out to each city, or in this case the County, that the inductees are from to request their participation and representation for this statewide honor. Induction into the State's Hall of Fame is a major milestone in the career of a music industry professional. Since Deep Gap is considered an unincorporated community they are requesting the County to participate with the NCMHOF and its inductee.

The County Manager stated that the NCMHOF is requesting the County participate in the following: provide a proclamation in honor of Mr. Watson's induction to be presented at the Induction Ceremony; become a sponsor of our Induction Ceremony event at the \$1,000 or \$5,000 level; help promote the Induction of Mr. Watson who is a native of Watauga County (via website/social media); and provide an official statement to be used in their promotions.

The NCMHOF has partnered with "Come Hear North Carolina" and the NC Department of Natural and Cultural Resources this year due to Governor Roy Cooper's declaration of 2019 becoming the "Year of Music." The Ceremony will be filmed by the NC Department of Natural and Cultural Resources for livestream and promotions will coincide with the campaign Come Hear North Carolina.

County Manager Geouque stated that he had spoken with Mr. Wright Tilley, Watauga County Tourism

Development Authority (TDA), who stated that the TDA may be interested in funding the sponsorship fees. The County Manager will prepare a proclamation.

C. Boards and Commissions

County Manager Geouque presented the following for consideration:

Caldwell Community College & Technical Institute (CCC&TI) Board of Trustees

Mr. Billy Ralph Winkler's term on the CCC&TI Board of Trustees expires on June 30, 2019. Dr. Mark Poarch, President of CCC&TI, had stated, via email, that Mr. Winkler has been an extremely valuable member who currently serves as a member of the Board's Building and Grounds Committee and Policy and Legislative Committee. Dr. Poarch had also stated that Mr. Winkler always demonstrates an unwavering commitment to the Board, the College, and students through his faithful attendance at Board meetings and College functions and is a true champion of education and works tirelessly to create opportunities that will improve the lives of Watauga County students. Dr. Poarch stated that Mr. Winkler was excited about the possibility of being reappointed to the CCC&TI Board of Trustees for an additional term.

Commissioner Yates, seconded by Commissioner Turnbow, moved to waive the second reading and reappoint Mr. Billy Ralph Winkler to the Caldwell Community College and Technical Institute Board of Trustees with his term to expire in 2023.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

Social Services Board

Ms. Dawn Ward's term on the Social Services Advisory Board is set to expire in August. Ms. Ward is willing to continue to serve an additional four-year term if so reappointed.

Commissioner Yates, seconded by Commissioner Turnbow, moved to waive the second reading and reappoint Ms. Dawn Ward to the Social Services Advisory Board with her term to expire in 2023.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

D. Announcements

County Manager Geouque announced the following:

- The Boone Area Sports Commission will be hosting a Professional USL 2 Soccer Match at the Ted Mackorell Soccer Complex on Tuesday, July 9, 2019, 5:30 pm.
- The 112th NCACC Annual Conference will be held August 22-24, 2019, in Guilford County. Visit <http://www.ncacc.org/775/2019-Annual-Conference> (<http://www.ncacc.org/775/2019-Annual-Conference>) for full information.
- Dr. Michelle Osborne, NC Department of Insurance Chief Deputy, will hold a Town Hall Meeting as a part of the Department's disaster response and recovery initiative on July 10, 2019, at 7:00 P.M. in the Watauga High School Auditorium.

The meeting will hold discussion on the following:

- v What to do before, during and after a disaster so that residents' properties are protected and/or covered in the event of storm damage.
- v The importance of flood insurance so that residents can alleviate the suffering from extreme property loss due to flooding like that which was experienced last year. Standard homeowners' insurance policies do not cover flood damage. It is important that everyone carries adequate insurance in order to recover after a disaster, and it is important for citizens to know that they have options regarding coverage.
- v The NCDOT's vast functions and provide contact information in the event of any claim question.
- v The Town Hall Meeting will also address concerns about denied health insurance claims and give information about the Department's SHIP program that assists people with Medicare questions.

- Chairman Welch announced that the North Carolina Department of Transportation and the Blue Star Mothers of the High Country NC10 will hold a Dedication Ceremony for the Sgt. Dillon C. Baldrige Bridge on Thursday, June 20, 2019, at 1:00 P.M. at the new bridge located at Highways US-221 & US-421.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment.

CLOSED SESSION

At 6:40 P.M., Vice-Chairman Kennedy, seconded by Commissioner Turnbow, moved to enter Closed Session to discuss Attorney/Client Matters, per G. S. 143-318.11(a)(3) and Land Acquisition, per G. S. 143-318.11(a)(5)(i).

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

Commissioner Turnbow, seconded by Vice-Chairman Kennedy, moved to resume the open meeting at 8:06 P.M.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

ADJOURN

Commissioner Turnbow, seconded by Commissioner Wallin, moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:06 P.M.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

John Welch, Chairman

ATTEST:

Anita J. Fogle, Clerk to the Board

Watauga County Board of Commissioners

MINUTES

WATAUGA COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

TUESDAY, JULY 23, 2019

The Watauga County Board of Commissioners held a regular meeting, as scheduled, on Tuesday, July 23, 2019, at 5:30 P.M. in the Commissioners' Board Room of the Watauga County Administration Building, Boone, North Carolina.

PRESENT: John Welch, Chairman
Billy Kennedy, Vice-Chairman
Larry Turnbow, Commissioner
Charlie Wallin, Commissioner
Perry Yates, Commissioner
Andrea Capua, County Attorney
Deron Geouque, County Manager
Anita J. Fogle, Clerk to the Board

Chairman Welch called the meeting to order at 5:35 P.M.

Commissioner Yates opened with a prayer and Vice-Chairman Kennedy led the Pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Chairman Welch called for additions and/or corrections to the June 18, 2019, regular meeting and closed session minutes.

Vice-Chairman Kennedy, seconded by Commissioner Turnbow, moved to approve the June 18, 2019, regular meeting minutes as presented.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

Vice-Chairman Kennedy, seconded by Commissioner Turnbow, moved to approve the June 18, 2019, closed session minutes as presented.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Chairman Welch called for additions and/or corrections to the July 23, 2019, agenda.

County Manager Geouque requested to add the following: a proposed proclamation honoring Cove Creek Volunteer Fire Department's 50th Anniversary, an Economic Development Commission funding request, and the

reappointment of the Tax Assessor. Commissioner Yates requested to add a request for the North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) to Clear Road Right of Ways.

Vice-Chairman Kennedy, seconded by Commissioner Turnbow, moved to approve the July 23, 2019, agenda as amended.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

SHERIFF'S OFFICE MATTERS

A. Request for Declaration of Surplus and Sale – WCSO K-9

Major Kelly Redmon requested to declare “Tanner,” a K-9 police dog as surplus and sold to its handler, Lt. Wes Hawkins. Major Redmon stated that Tanner had been taken out of service by the Sheriff’s Office on July 1, 2019, due to having bone cancer in his right hind leg. Tanner has since had surgery to have the leg removed. General Statutes allow for the dog to be sold for a negotiated price by order of the Board of Commissioners.

A proposed resolution authorizing the sale was presented for consideration. If the resolution is adopted and the sale of the K-9 advertised for ten days, then the sale can be carried out. Major Redmon requested that the dog be declared surplus and sold for a fee of \$1.00 to its handler, Lt. Wes Hawkins. Since the K-9 has been trained for duty, it would be best for an experienced handler to have ownership. Upon completion of the ten day notice, the K-9, Tanner, will be presented to Lt. Wes Hawkins who will bare all future expenses related to the medical, care and housing of the K-9 known as Tanner.

Commissioner Yates, seconded by Commissioner Turnbow, moved to declare the K-9 police dog, known as Tanner, surplus; to adopt the resolution; and to direct staff to advertise for ten days prior to the sale.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

B. Request to Purchase Two New AFIS Fingerprint Stations

Major Redmon requested approval of the purchase of two new Automated Fingerprint Identification System (AFIS) stations from IDEMIA to replace the two current stations. The stations are used multiple times daily for fingerprinting arrestees and among other uses for applicants for gun permits, IT applications, tax processing, employment, adoptions. The cost of each station was \$20,875. Adequate funds are included in the Sheriff’s Office budget to cover the expense.

Vice-Chairman Kennedy, seconded by Commissioner Turnbow, moved to approve the purchase of the two new Automated Fingerprint Identification System (AFIS) stations from IDEMIA, at a total cost of \$41,750, as presented by Major Redmon.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

PROPOSED CAMERA AND ACCESS CONTROL FOR THE COMMUNITY RECREATION CENTER

Mr. Drew Eggers, IT Director, presented bids for cameras and access controls for the new Community Recreation Center (CRC). The CRC budget includes funds for the purchases. Three proposals were received for the security camera system and two for the door access control system. Creekside Electric, a local company, indicated interest in both proposals but did not submit bids for either. Mr. Eggers stated that staff recommended the acceptance of bids submitted by the lowest responsive bidder, Freedom Electric, for both the cameras, in the amount of \$25,099, and access controls, in the amount of \$20,499.

Vice-Chairman Kennedy, seconded by Commissioner Turnbow, moved to accept the bid from Freedom Electric for the security camera system, in the amount of \$25,099, and the bid from Freedom Electric for the door access control system, in the amount of \$20,499.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

STATE TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PLAN (STIP)

Mr. Joe Furman, Planning and Inspections Director, discussed the 2022-2031 State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) projects. Mr. Furman stated that the County will be asked to submit four (4) new road and/or public transportation projects, plus greenway projects.

Mr. Furman recommended the following three (3) road projects:

105 Bypass (NCSR 1107): widen to three lanes (center turn lane) with five foot paved shoulder which will accommodate bicycles.

NC Hwy 105 from the end of the funded project at Old Shulls Mill Road to the existing climbing lanes that begin at J H Mclean Road: widen to three lanes (center turn lane) with five foot paved shoulder as above. A preliminary look on GIS at this type of improvement shows little if any impact on buildings in Foscoe, and would improve the traffic flow.

NC Hwy 194 from Howard's Creek Road to Castle Ford Road: "Modernization," i.e. widen the existing lanes to twelve feet and add four foot paved shoulders which will accommodate bicycles.

Mr. Furman shared the following recommendations from Ms. Wendy Patoprsty with Blue Ridge Conservancy for greenway projects:

Section 3: From Sterling Creek Park South through Aho Bridge underpass = \$3.9 million and includes design, engineering, two bridges, secondary road crossing, grading, paving, stream restoration, property acquisition, parking are trailhead, vegetation, and signage.

Section 5: From Niley Cook to Fairway Drive = \$2.9 million and includes design, engineering, permitting, boardwalk, safe at-grade secondary road crossings, rock blasting, guardrail, greenway grading, paving, and signage.

Mr. Furman stated that Ms. Patoprsty had indicated that the Middle Fork Greenway and partners agreed to fundraise for the 20% match required for the STIP.

Mr. Furman shared the following recommendation from Mr. Craig Hughes, Executive Director of AppalCART, for a transportation project:

Expand the bus fleet at AppalCART by purchasing ten buses. The total project cost would be \$5 million with NCDOT funding \$4.5 million and the local share being \$500,000. Mr. Furman stated that Appalachian State University has agreed to fund the local share portion of the project.

Mr. Furman stated that he did not have a fourth road project to recommend at this time as other projects were included in the Watauga County Comprehensive Transportation Plan or being included by the Town of Boone.

Vice-Chairman Kennedy, seconded by Commissioner Turnbow, moved to submit the following projects to the North Carolina State Transportation Improvement Program:

Road Projects:

105 Bypass (NCSR 1107): widen to three lanes (center turn lane) with five foot paved shoulder which will accommodate bicycles.

NC Hwy 105 from the end of the funded project at Old Shulls Mill Road to the existing climbing lanes that begin at J H Mclean Road: widen to three lanes (center turn lane) with five foot paved shoulder as above. A preliminary look on GIS at this type of improvement shows little if any impact on buildings in Foscoe, and would improve the traffic flow.

NC Hwy 194 from Howard's Creek Road to Castle Ford Road: "Modernization," i.e. widen the existing lanes to twelve feet and add four foot paved shoulders which will accommodate bicycles.

Greenway Projects:

Section 3: From Sterling Creek Park South through Aho Bridge underpass = \$3.9 million and includes design, engineering, two bridges, secondary road crossing, grading, paving, stream restoration, property acquisition, parking are trailhead, vegetation, and signage.

Section 5: From Niley Cook to Fairway Drive = \$2.9 million and includes design, engineering, permitting, boardwalk, safe at-grade secondary road crossings, rock blasting, guardrail, greenway grading, paving, and signage.

Transportation Project:

Expand the bus fleet at AppalCART by purchasing ten buses. The total project cost would be \$5 million with NCDOT funding \$4.5 million and the local share being \$500,000. Mr. Furman stated that Appalachian State University has agreed to fund the local share portion of the project.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT FUNDING REQUEST

In May 2018, the Board voted to approve a \$20,000 allocation from the Economic Development Commission (EDC) Capital Reserve account which would be used to move forward with a project shining a spotlight on the High Country by producing six to eight short video vignettes featuring locals which highlight the beauty of the mountains.

Mr. Joe Furman, Economic Development Director, shared that the "Boonies" episodes of the videos have been broadcast in approximately 8,384,370 households and can still be seen on Public Broadcast Systems (PBS) and YouTube. Mr. Furman stated that the EDC met on July 11 and voted to recommend a second year of funding, in the amount of \$20,000, from the Economic Development Commission Capital Reserve Account to again contract

with Artemis Independent to produce three or more “Boonies” videos.

Commissioner Yates, seconded by Commissioner Wallin, moved to approve the \$20,000 expenditure with funds to be allocated from the Economic Development Commission Capital Reserve account to move forward with the project as presented by Mr. Furman.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

PROPOSED WORK FIRST COUNTY PLAN FOR 2019-2021

Mr. Tom Hughes, Social Services Director, presented the Work First County Plan for 2019-2021. Mr. Hughes shared the following changes made to the Plan in submitting it for the meeting: on page 4, correcting the spelling of the word “Conditions” in the header; on page 4, changing 4.1% to 4.0% in the first sentence of the second paragraph; on page 10, changing Smoky Mountain Center to Vaya Health; and on page 11, \$381,217 changes to \$348,801 in the first paragraph and \$500.00 changes to \$600.00 at the bottom of the same page. Mr. Hughes shared how the plan functions to benefit people by helping get them from a bad place to a better place.

Mr. Hughes stated that the Social Services Advisory Board has approved the plan; however, he would present the changes to that Board prior to submitting it to the State Office of Social Services.

Vice-Chairman Kennedy, seconded by Commissioner Wallin, moved to adopt the County Work First Plan for 2019-2021.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

PROPOSED COURTROOM #2 RENOVATION PROPOSAL

Mr. Robert Marsh, Maintenance Director, requested the exemption of the Courtroom #2 renovations project from N.C. General Statute 143-64.31. Hemphill Associates designed the previous Courthouse renovation project. Due to Hemphill-Randel Associates working knowledge of Courthouse projects and their previous work for the County; Mr. Marsh stated that staff recommended the Board exempt this project from N.C. General Statute 143-64.31 and select Hemphill-Randel Associates for the design and engineering services for the Courtroom #2 renovations project.

Commissioner Yates, seconded by Vice-Chairman Kennedy, moved to exempt Courtroom #2 renovations project from N.C. General Statute 143-64.31 and select Hemphill-Randel Associates for the design and engineering services, in the amount of \$18,800, for the project.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

Mr. Robert Marsh, Maintenance Director, presented a contract with Hemphill-Randel Associates for the design and engineering work for the Courtroom #2 renovations. Hemphill-Randel Associates is very familiar to the county having completed the last major renovation to the courthouse. Hemphill-Randel Associates fees for the project is \$18,800. The estimate for the construction of the proposed renovations was \$126,800 which was considerably less than the initial projected amount of \$350,000. Staff believes the total project cost will be less with the utilization of in house staff to do a majority of the work.

Commissioner Yates, seconded by Commissioner Turnbow, moved to select Hemphill-Randel Associates for the design and engineering services, in the amount of \$18,800, for the project.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

TAX MATTERS

A. Monthly Collections Report

Tax Administrator, Mr. Larry Warren, presented the Tax Collections Report for the month of June 2019. The report was presented for information only and, therefore, no action was required.

B. Refunds and Releases

Mr. Warren presented the Refunds and Releases Report for June 2019 for Board approval:

TO BE TYPED IN MINUTE BOOK

Vice-Chairman Kennedy, seconded by Commissioner Turnbow, moved to approve the Refunds and Releases Report for June 2019 as presented.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

C. Annual Settlement of Tax Collector

Tax Administrator Warren presented the following Annual Settlement Statements for Fiscal Year 2019 for Board approval:

TO BE TYPED IN MINUTE BOOK

Vice-Chairman Kennedy, seconded by Commissioner Wallin, moved to approve the Annual Settlement Statements for Fiscal Year 2019.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

Vice-Chairman Kennedy, seconded by Commissioner Wallin, moved to accept the Tax Administrator's "Oath as to Diligent Effort to Collect Taxes."

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

D. Oath to Collect Taxes

Mr. Warren presented a proposed order granting authorization to collect taxes for Fiscal Year 2020. Once approved, a sworn oath would be administered to Tax Administrator Warren.

Vice-Chairman Kennedy, seconded by Commissioner Yates, moved to grant authorization for Tax Administrator Warren to collect taxes for Fiscal Year 2020.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

E. Reappointment of the Tax Assessor

County Manager Geouque stated that Mr. Larry Warren, Acting Tax Administrator, is in compliance with continuing education hours and is eligible for reappointment as Tax Administrator. The County Manager stated that the Board has the option of appointing Mr. Warren to a term of either two or four years.

Commissioner Turnbow, seconded by Commissioner Yates, moved to reappoint Mr. Larry Warren to a four-year term as Tax Administrator to commence retroactively on July 1, 2019.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

BUDGET AMENDMENTS

Ms. Misty Watson, Finance Director, reviewed the following budget amendments:

Account #	Description	Debit	Credit
105911-471000	NC Lottery Funds		\$167,000
105911-470043	Roof Renovations	\$167,000	

The amendment allocated funds for NC Lottery projects as requested by the Watauga County Schools and approved by the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction (NCDPI).

Commissioner Turnbow, seconded by Commissioner Wallin, moved to approve the budget amendments as presented by Ms. Watson.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

MISCELLANEOUS ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

A. Proposed License Agreement Renewal – American Red Cross

County Manager Geouque stated that the American Red Cross had requested consideration of renewing their existing license agreement for office space at the County's Health Department building. The current license agreement is for two (2) years and began March 23, 2018, and ends March 31, 2020. Staff is unclear as to why the Red Cross would like to initiate the process so early. Mr. Geouque recommended waiting until closer to the expiration of the current license agreement to begin the renewal process which would begin with the Board adopting a resolution and allowing 10 days to pass before officially approving the license agreement.

Commissioner Yates, seconded by Commissioner Turnbow, moved to table discussion and to direct the County Manager to bring a resolution for the proposed renewal to a future meeting for consideration of beginning the renewal process.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

B. Proposed Renewal of ASU Greenhouse Lease

County Manager Geouque stated that the Appalachian State University Foundation requested the renewal of the lease for greenhouse space located at the Watauga County Landfill. Mr. Geouque stated that property owned by the County may be leased or rented for such terms and upon such conditions as the Board may determine, for up to ten (10) years. Property may be rented or leased only pursuant to a resolution of the Board authorizing the execution of the lease or rental agreement adopted at a regular Board meeting upon 10 days' public notice. Notice shall be given by publication describing the property to be leased or rented, stating the annual rental or lease payments, and announcing the Board's intent to authorize the lease or rental at its next regular meeting. County Attorney Capua stated that County Attorney di Santi had reviewed the lease. The County Manager stated that if the proposed resolution was adopted, the lease could be considered for approval at the August 20, 2019, meeting allowing time to fulfill the advertisement requirement.

Commissioner Turnbow, seconded by Vice-Chairman Kennedy, moved to adopt the proposed resolution and direct staff to fulfill the advertisement requirement.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

C. Proposed Proclamation Honoring the 50th Anniversary of Cove Creek Volunteer Fire Department

Chairman Welch presented and read a proposed proclamation in honor of the 50th Anniversary of the Cove Creek Volunteer Fire Department.

Vice-Chairman Kennedy, seconded by Commissioner Turnbow, moved to adopt the proclamation as presented.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

D. Proposed Proclamation Honoring Merle Watson

County Manager Geouque presented and read a proposed proclamation in honor of Merle Watson's induction into the North Carolina Music Hall of Fame & Museum. The 11th Annual Induction Ceremony will be held on October 17, 2019, in the Gem Theatre in Kannapolis, NC, at which time the proclamation will be presented.

Commissioner Yates, seconded by Commissioner Turnbow, moved to adopt the proclamation as presented.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

E. Appointment of the North Carolina Association of County Commissioners' (NCACC) Annual Conference Voting Delegate

County Manager Geouque stated that the North Carolina Association of County Commissioners' (NCACC) Annual Conference is scheduled for August 22-24, 2019, in Guilford County. Each county in attendance is required to select a voting member for representation at the Annual Business Meeting which is conducted as a part

of the conference. Submission of the voting delegate is due August 16, 2019.

Commissioner Yates, seconded by Commissioner Turnbow, moved to appoint Commissioner Wallin as the Watauga County voting member at the North Carolina Association of County Commissioners' Annual Conference Business Meeting.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

F. Request for the North Carolina Department of Transportation to Clear Road Right-of-Ways

Commissioner Yates stated that there have been several incidents recently in the County where fallen trees and/or limbs have blocked roadways in the area. The Fire Departments and/or citizens have been left to make the roads passable; however, the Department of Transportation's (DOT) right-of-ways have remained blocked. Also, it does not appear that the DOT has performed tree trimming recently either. Commissioner Yates asked if the Board could request DOT to make roadways safe to pass through by clearing their right-of-ways.

By consensus, the Board agreed, to direct the County Manager to set up a meeting with Mr. Kevin Whittington, DOT Highway Maintenance Engineer in Watauga County, to discuss the matter.

G. Announcements

County Manager Geouque announced the following:

- The 112th NCACC Annual Conference will be held August 22-24, 2019, in Guilford County. Visit <http://www.ncacc.org/775/2019-Annual-Conference> (<http://www.ncacc.org/775/2019-Annual-Conference>) for full information.
- The Board of Commissioners is invited to the Watauga County Community Recreation Center's Topping Out Gathering to sign the final steel beam prior to being set into place. The event will be held on the construction site starting at 11:00 A.M. on Wednesday, July 31, 2019.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Ms. Kendra Sink with the Back 2 School Festival, which is a 501(c)3, requested funding in support of this year's event in August. Ms. Sink stated that over one thousand children benefit from the Festival.

Commissioner Turnbow, seconded by Vice-Chairman Kennedy, moved to amend the agenda to allow for discussion of the Back 2 School funding request.

VOTE: Aye-4(Welch, Kennedy, Turnbow, Wallin)
Nay-1(Yates)

County Manager Geouque stated that, in the past, the Board was advised that if the vote was not unanimous items could not be added to the agenda.

Chairman Welch directed the County Manager to place Ms. Sink's funding request for the Back 2 School Festival on the August 6, 2019, Board of Commissioners meeting agenda.

CLOSED SESSION

At 6:39 P.M., Vice-Chairman Kennedy, seconded by Commissioner Wallin, moved to enter Closed Session to discuss Attorney/Client Matters, per G. S. 143-318.11(a)(3) and Land Acquisition, per G. S. 143-318.11(a)(5)(i).

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

Vice-Chairman Kennedy, seconded by Commissioner Yates, moved to resume the open meeting at 7:25 P.M.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

ADJOURN

Commissioner Wallin, seconded by Commissioner Turnbow, moved to adjourn the meeting at 7:25 P.M.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

John Welch, Chairman

ATTEST:

Anita J. Fogle, Clerk to the Board

Watauga County Board of Commissioners

MINUTES

WATAUGA COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS TUESDAY, AUGUST 6, 2019

The Watauga County Board of Commissioners held a regular meeting, as scheduled, on Tuesday, August 6, 2019, at 8:30 A.M. in the Commissioners' Board Room of the Watauga County Administration Building, Boone, North Carolina.

PRESENT: John Welch, Chairman
Billy Kennedy, Vice-Chairman
Larry Turnbow, Commissioner
Charlie Wallin, Commissioner
Perry Yates, Commissioner
Andrea Capua, County Attorney
Deron Geouque, County Manager
Anita J. Fogle, Clerk to the Board

Chairman Welch called the meeting to order at 8:31 A.M.

Commissioner Wallin opened with a prayer and Commissioner Turnbow led the Pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Chairman Welch called for additions and/or corrections to the July 23, 2019, regular meeting and closed session minutes.

Vice-Chairman Kennedy, seconded by Commissioner Turnbow, moved to approve the July 23, 2019, regular meeting minutes as presented.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

Vice-Chairman Kennedy requested to take action after closed session on the July 23, 2019, closed session minutes to allow for the review of proposed amendments.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Chairman Welch called for additions and/or corrections to the August 6, 2019, agenda.

Vice-Chairman Kennedy, seconded by Commissioner Wallin, moved to approve the August 6, 2019, agenda as presented.

VOTE: Aye-5

BACK 2 SCHOOL FUNDING REQUEST

Ms. Kendra Sink, Back 2 School Festival Coordinator, stated that this will be the seventh year the Back 2 School Festival has been held and the first year as a 501(c)(3) non-profit. It will be held on Saturday, August 10, from 10:00 A.M. to 1:00 P.M. Ms. Sink stated that Rumples Church has also dedicated a room for the Back 2 School Festival to keep stocked throughout the year and to be used for students as referred by school counselors. This could be new students or students who have used the supplies given at the Festival. Ms. Sink shared the checks and balances used to ensure that only children of parents who are struggling to meet their needs receive the services. Ms. Sink stated that \$4,700 was needed to meet the current year Festival's funding goal.

After discussion, the Board agreed to allocate \$4,700 to the Back 2 School Festival with funds to be allocated from the Administrative Contingency line.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

[Clerk's Note: After closed session, the Board took further action to increase the amount to be given to the Back 2 School Festival to \$5,000.]

PARKS AND RECREATION OUT-OF-STATE TRAVEL REQUEST

Mr. Stephen Poulos, Parks and Recreation Director, requested to travel out-of-state to attend the North Carolina and South Carolina joint conference for the Recreation and Parks Association which will be held in Myrtle Beach, South Carolina. Mr. Poulos stated that he has been provided lodging and, therefore, the only expense to the County is the \$275 registration fee.

Commissioner Yates, seconded by Commissioner Turnbow, moved to approve the out-of-state travel request as presented by Mr. Poulos.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

BUDGET AMENDMENTS

On behalf of Finance Director Misty Watson, County Manager Geouque reviewed the following budget amendments:

Account #	Description	Debit	Credit
105911-471000	NC Lottery Funds	\$167,000	
103300-349909	Lottery Projects		\$167,000

The amendment allocated funds for NC Lottery projects as requested by Watauga County Schools and approved by the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction. The expenditures were for the roof renovations and were recognized at the July 23, 2019, Board meeting. The above budget amendment recognizes the revenues for Fiscal Year 2019.

103980-398121	Transfer from Capital Projects Fund		\$20,000
104920-463000	General Appropriation	\$20,000	
213991-399101	Appropriated Fund Balance		\$20,000
219800-498010	Transfer to General Fund	\$20,000	

The amendment allocated funds from Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) set aside funds for projects as requested by the Economic Development Commission to be utilized for the “Boonies” project and was approved by the Board of Commissioners on July 23, 2019.

104311-451000	Capital Outlay – Furniture and Equipment	\$100,000	
103980-398121	Transfer from Capital Projects		\$100,000
213991-399101	Appropriated Fund Balance		\$100,000
219800-498010	Transfer to General Fund	\$100,000	

The amendment allocated funds from Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) set aside funds for projects as requested by Emergency Management for Fiscal Year 2020.

Commissioner Turnbow, seconded by Vice-Chairman Kennedy, moved to approve the budget amendments as presented by County Manager Geouque.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

MISCELLANEOUS ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

A. Boards and Commissions

County Manager Geouque presented the following:

Watauga County Nursing Home Community Advisory Committee

Regional Ombudsman, Ms. Stevie John, had requested that Ms. Barbara Hunsucker be considered for appointment to serve on the Watauga County Nursing Home Community Advisory Committee for a three-year term. This was a first reading.

Commissioner Yates, seconded by Vice-Chairman Kennedy, moved to waive the second reading and appoint Ms. Barbara Hunsucker to the Watauga County Nursing Home Community Advisory Committee for a three-year term.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

Workforce Development Board

Mr. Keith Deveraux, Director of High Country Council of Governments Work Force Development Board, had requested the reappointment of Ms. Tara Brossa for a two-year term ending on June 30, 2021. This was a first reading.

Commissioner Yates, seconded by Vice-Chairman Kennedy, moved to waive the second reading and reappoint Ms. Tara Brossa as a Watauga County representative on the High Country Council of Governments Work Force Development Board with her term ending on June 30, 2021.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

Valle Crucis Historic Preservation Commission

The Valle Crucis Historic Preservation Commission terms of Ms. Maria Hyde, who is the Chair and lives in the district, and Mr. Allen Culler, who is the Vice-Chair and a Community Council member, will expire on August 31. Both are willing to be reappointed to three-year terms. Three members live in the district and two members must be Community Council members as well. These were first readings.

Commissioner Yates, seconded by Vice-Chairman Kennedy, moved to waive the second reading and reappoint both Ms. Maria Hyde and Mr. Allen Culler to the Valle Crucis Historic Preservation Commission for three-year terms each.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

B. Announcements

County Manager Geouque announced the following:

- The 112th NCACC Annual Conference will be held August 22-24, 2019, in Guilford County. Visit <http://www.ncacc.org/775/2019-Annual-Conference> (<http://www.ncacc.org/775/2019-Annual-Conference>) for full information.
- The High Country Council of Governments' Annual Banquet is scheduled for Friday, September 6, 2019, at Linville Ridge.

Chairman Welch announced that local law enforcement agencies, including the Sheriff's Office, are hosting an inaugural National Night Out event in Watauga County in the 36th year of the national event. National Night Out is an annual community-building campaign that promotes police-community partnerships and neighborhood camaraderie to make our neighborhoods safer, more caring places to live. It is on August 6, 2019, at the Peacock Lot on Rivers Street from 5:00 to 8:00 P.M. The event is free and will host fun and games for kids.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment.

CLOSED SESSION

At 9:03 A.M., Commissioner Turnbow, seconded by Commissioner Wallin, moved to enter Closed Session to discuss Attorney/Client Matters, per G. S. 143-318.11(a)(3), and Land Acquisition, per G. S. 143-318.11(a)(5)(i).

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

Commissioner Turnbow, seconded by Vice-Chairman Kennedy, moved to resume the open meeting at 10:00 A.M.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

ACTION AFTER CLOSED SESSION

Commissioner Yates, seconded by Vice-Chairman Kennedy, moved to approve the July 23, 2019, closed session minutes as amended.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

Commissioner Turnbow, seconded by Commissioner Yates, moved to increase the amount of funds to the Back 2 School Festival from \$4,700 to \$5,000 with the funds to be allocated from the Administrative Contingency Fund.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

ADJOURN

Vice-Chairman Kennedy, seconded by Commissioner Wallin, moved to adjourn the meeting at 10:02 A.M.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

John Welch, Chairman

ATTEST:

Anita J. Fogle, Clerk to the Board

Watauga County Board of Commissioners

MINUTES

WATAUGA COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 17, 2019

The Watauga County Board of Commissioners held a regular meeting, as scheduled, on Tuesday, September 17, 2019, at 5:30 P.M. in the Commissioners' Board Room of the Watauga County Administration Building, Boone, North Carolina.

PRESENT: John Welch, Chairman
Billy Kennedy, Vice-Chairman
Larry Turnbow, Commissioner
Charlie Wallin, Commissioner
Perry Yates, Commissioner
Anthony di Santi, County Attorney
Deron Geouque, County Manager
Anita J. Fogle, Clerk to the Board

Chairman Welch called the meeting to order at 5:30 P.M.

Commissioner Yates opened with a prayer and Vice-Commissioner Kennedy led the Pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Chairman Welch called for additions and/or corrections to the September 3, 2019, regular meeting, closed session, and special meeting minutes.

Vice-Chairman Kennedy, seconded by Commissioner Yates, moved to approve the September 3, 2019, regular meeting minutes as presented.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

Vice-Chairman Kennedy, seconded by Commissioner Yates, moved to approve the September 3, 2019, closed session minutes as presented.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

Vice-Chairman Kennedy, seconded by Commissioner Yates, moved to approve the September 3, 2019, special meeting minutes as presented.

VOTE: Aye-5

Nay-0

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Chairman Welch called for additions and/or corrections to the September 17, 2019, agenda.

Commissioner Wallin, seconded by Commissioner Turnbow, moved to approve the September 17, 2019, agenda as presented.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

UPDATE ON THE PRITZKER CHILDREN'S INITIATIVE (PCI)

Ms. Crystal Kelly gave a presentation on the Pritzker Children's Initiative and thanked the Board for the investments made in our children. Ms. Kelly shared that the County has 1,100 children under the age of three with 25% in childcare facilities. Ms. Kelly stated that the initiative strives to build stronger supports through Family Connects. Ms. Kelly reported that 75% of the teachers at childcare facilities in Watauga County stayed in the same center during the first year and 90% stayed in the same field.

Ms. Kelly shared a request that was made at the National Association of Counties (NACo) Conference in July for local Governments to ponder. The request was to set precedence by developing an early childhood education fund. The goal was to go beyond funding programs and to learn how to build out systems of support so our young children will not need services in the future such as foster care, for example. The initiative plans to address quality and access to support systems by working at a State level for subsidies for teacher education.

Chairman Welch shared appreciation for the work Ms. Kelly and the Children's Council are doing and stated that the Board would discuss the NACo request during the Fiscal Year 2021 Annual Pre-Budget Retreat. The presentation was given for information only and, therefore, no action was required.

PUBLIC HEARING REQUEST FOR CITIZEN COMMENT ON PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO THE VALLE CRUCIS HISTORIC DISTRICT ORDINANCE

Mr. Joe Furman, Planning and Inspections Director, requested a public hearing be scheduled for October 15, 2019, to consider proposed text amendments to the Valle Crucis Historic District Ordinance as submitted by the Board of Commissioners. Mr. Furman stated that, per General Statute 153A-323, the public hearing is required to be held prior to amending the ordinance. The proposed amendments will be reviewed by the Planning Board and the Valle Crucis Historic District Commission prior to the public hearing.

Vice-Chairman Kennedy, seconded by Commissioner Yates, moved to schedule the public hearing for Tuesday, October 15, 2019, at 5:30 P.M. to allow for public comment on proposed amendments to the Valle Crucis Historic District Ordinance.

Commissioner Welch stated that the Ordinance covers the entire Valle Crucis Historic District not just the proposed location of the new Valle Crucis School.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

PROPOSED RENEWALS OF EMERGENCY SERVICES MAINTENANCE AGREEMENTS

A. Hyper-Reach

B. Mobile Communications of America

County Manager Geouque, on behalf of Mr. Will Holt, Emergency Services Director, presented a proposed service contract with Hyper-Reach and three maintenance contracts with Mobile Communications of America for the County's E911 and Emergency Management Radio systems. The Hyper-Reach service agreement will replace the County's current contract with Code Red which will change our emergency notification system to a new vendor with matching services. The Hyper-Reach agreement is \$7,000 annually for a total of \$21,000 on a 3 year contract. The three maintenance contracts with Mobile Communications are for Console Infrastructure Maintenance, in the amount of \$12,900, the Fixed Equipment Maintenance, in the amount of \$11,664, and the Subscribers Maintenance, in the amount of \$6,336.

Vice-Chairman Kennedy, seconded by Commissioner Yates, moved to approve the Console Infrastructure Maintenance, the Fixed Equipment Maintenance, and the Subscribers Maintenance contracts with Mobile Communications of America in the amounts of \$12,900, \$11,664, and \$6,336, respectively and the Hyper-Reach services agreement contract. Adequate funds are available in the current year budget to cover the expense.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

TAX MATTERS

A. Monthly Collections Report

Tax Administrator, Mr. Larry Warren, presented the Tax Collections Report for the month of August 2019. The report was presented for information only and, therefore, no action was required.

B. Refunds and Releases

Mr. Warren presented the Refunds and Releases Report for August 2019 for Board approval:

TO BE TYPED IN MINUTE BOOK

Commissioner Turnbow, seconded by Commissioner Wallin, moved to approve the Refunds and Releases Report for August 2019 as presented.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

C. Property Tax Appeal

Mr. Warren presented a request from a citizen who applied for Senior Exemption status for property taxes. The application was required to be filed before June 1 of each year. Staff informed the citizen that both her and her husband's income would be considered because they were still married. The citizen then proceeded to obtain her divorce in June; after the deadline date. On August 26, 2019, the citizen came in with a copy of an application where she found at the bottom of the last page a paragraph regarding "Late Application" upon showing of good cause. She stated her application was untimely because was her divorce not finalized by the deadline date of June 1. Staff's recommendation was to deny the application for 2019 in order to not set a precedent for other late filings. The citizen could still apply for the Senior Exemption status for 2020. The appeal would have been filed with the Board of Equalization and Review but, since that Board adjourned, the appeal is required to be heard by the Board of Commissioners.

Commissioner Turnbow moved to consider the application due to the change in marital status. The motion died for lack of a second.

Discussion was held regarding the application and the concerns for setting precedence.

Chairman Welch tabled further discussion to allow for Mr. Warren to provide more detailed information to be presented at the next Board of Commissioners meeting, which is scheduled for October 1, 2019.

MISCELLANEOUS ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

A. November Meeting Schedule

County Manager Geouque stated that the Election Day will be on Tuesday, November 5, this year which is the same day as a scheduled Board meeting. Board of Elections requires the use of the Commissioners' Board Room on Election Day as it serves as an official polling place. Due to the first meeting in November being necessary for items that will require Board action, Staff recommended the meeting be rescheduled to Wednesday, November 6, 2019, at 8:30 A.M.

Commissioner Turnbow, seconded by Vice-Chairman Kennedy, moved to reschedule the November 5, 2019, Board meeting to Wednesday, November 6, 2019, at 8:30 AM.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

B. Announcements

County Manager Geouque announced the following:

- The Trustees of Caldwell Community College & Technical Institute invites the Board of Commissioners to a meeting on Wednesday, September 18, 2018, at 6:00 P.M. at the Watauga Instructional Facility on Hwy 105 Bypass, Boone NC, in Room 112.
- The bonds for the refinancing of the Watauga High School loan were sold on Monday, September 16. The net savings was \$677,245, less than expected but still substantial savings, which translated to approximately \$75,000 annually for the next nine years. The interest rate dropped from 4.71% to

2.62%.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment.

CLOSED SESSION

At 6:07 P.M., Commissioner Turnbow, seconded by Commissioner Wallin, moved to enter Closed Session to discuss Attorney/Client Matters, per G. S. 143-318.11(a)(3), Land Acquisition, per G. S. 143-318.11(a)(5)(i), and Personnel Matters, per G. S. 143-318.11(a)(6).

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

Commissioner Yates, seconded by Commissioner Turnbow, moved to resume the open meeting at 7:29 P.M.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

Commissioner Wallin, seconded by Commissioner Yates, moved to amend the agenda to include a budget amendment for the payment of a water allocation fee for the new Community Recreation Center.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

POSSIBLE ACTION AFTER CLOSED SESSION

Commissioner Yates, seconded by Commissioner Wallin, moved to approve a budget amendment allocating \$500,000 from the fund balance to pay the Town of Boone, under extreme protest, water and sewer permit fees for the new Community Recreation Center.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

ADJOURN

Vice-Chairman Kennedy, seconded by Commissioner Yates, moved to adjourn the meeting at 7:31 P.M.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

John Welch, Chairman

ATTEST:

Anita J. Fogle, Clerk to the Board

Watauga County Board of Commissioners

MINUTES

WATAUGA COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS TUESDAY, OCTOBER 1, 2019

The Watauga County Board of Commissioners held a regular meeting, as scheduled, on Tuesday, October 1, 2019, at 8:30 A.M. in the Commissioners' Board Room of the Watauga County Administration Building, Boone, North Carolina.

PRESENT: John Welch, Chairman
Billy Kennedy, Vice-Chairman
Larry Turnbow, Commissioner
Charlie Wallin, Commissioner
Perry Yates, Commissioner
Andrea Capua, County Attorney
Deron Geouque, County Manager
Anita J. Fogle, Clerk to the Board

Chairman Welch called the meeting to order at 8:33 A.M.

Commissioner Wallin opened with a prayer and Commissioner Turnbow led the Pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Chairman Welch called for additions and/or corrections to the September 17, 2019, regular meeting and closed session minutes.

Vice-Chairman Kennedy, seconded by Commissioner Yates, moved to approve the September 17, 2019, regular meeting minutes as presented.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

Vice-Chairman Kennedy, seconded by Commissioner Yates, moved to approve the September 17, 2019, closed session minutes as presented.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Chairman Welch called for additions and/or corrections to the October 1, 2019, agenda.

County Manager Geouque requested to add Community Recreation Center Change Order# 5 as Change Order # 4, currently on the agenda, was broken out into two change orders.

Vice-Chairman Kennedy, seconded by Commissioner Wallin, moved to approve the October 1, 2019, agenda as amended.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

COOPERATIVE EXTENSION LIVESTOCK PROGRAM UPDATE

Mr. Eddy Labus, Cooperative Extension Agent, gave an update on the livestock program. Mr. Labus stated that beef prices are extremely low after being on a three year downward trend. The County's stock scales are loaned out and greatly used by farmers. With the poultry slaughter facility in nearby Marion, North Carolina, having closed down, the Extension is offering classes for commercial poultry producers on food safety and slaughter techniques. Mr. Labus stated that meat producers continue to fill the freezers at the Food Hub and the Extension is helping people obtain their meat license and working with producers to add value through local meat sales. The report was given for information only and, therefore, no action was required.

EMERGENCY SERVICES MATTERS

A. Proposed Resolution Approving Stewart Simmons Volunteer Fire Department's Five and Six-Mile Insurance District Boundaries

Stewart Simmons Fire Chief, Doug Berry, presented a proposed map which, upon adoption, will approve the boundary lines of the Stewart Simmons Rural Fire Five and Six-Mile district coverage. Chief Berry stated that the Fire District boundaries were not changing but, due to a second station being in operation, the insurance map has changed.

Commissioner Wallin, seconded by Commissioner Yates, moved to adopt the resolution approving the five and six-mile district coverage map as presented by Chief Berry.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

B. Priority Dispatch License Renewal Request

Mr. Will Holt, Emergency Services Director, presented a proposed renewal for the Priority Dispatch software license in the amount of \$16,800. The software is used by Fire, EMS, and Law Enforcement for processing calls utilizing a list of standardized questions to prioritize these calls. Mr. Holt stated that 911 funds will cover the expense.

Commissioner Turnbow, seconded by Vice-Chairman Kennedy, moved to approve the renewal in the amount \$16,800 with Priority Dispatch for call processing software.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

C. Proposed MobileCAD Contract

Mr. Will Holt presented a contract for \$25,505 for MobileCAD (MDIS) with Southern Software. Mr. Holt stated that this will be for patrol vehicles and will reduce radio traffic and send live data including BOLO (Be on the Lookout) Alerts. This software will raise awareness and increase safety for officers. Mr. Holt stated that 911 funds will cover \$16,438 with the remaining \$9,067 to come from County funds with adequate funds available to cover the expense.

Vice-Chairman Kennedy, seconded by Commissioner Turnbow, moved to approve the contract with Southern Software for MobileCAD in the amount of \$25,505 with \$16,438 to come from 911 funds and the remaining \$9,067 to come from County funds.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

PROPOSED ADDITIONAL APPROPRIATION OF STATE FUNDS FOR SENIOR CENTERS

Ms. Angie Boitnotte, Project on Aging Director, stated that additional Senior Center General Purpose funding was available for the County's two senior centers in the total amount of \$14,098 which requires a 25% local match. The L. E. Harrill Senior Center, as a Center of Excellence, was eligible to receive \$10,574 with a local match of \$3,525. The Western Watauga Community Center was eligible to receive \$3,524, with a local match of \$1,175. Ms. Boitnotte stated that the total local match required, in the amount of \$4,700, is present in the current Project on Aging budget.

County Attorney Capua stated that the attachment referenced in the contract was not presented with the contract. Ms. Boitnotte stated that she would obtain the attachment from the High Country Council of Governments.

Commissioner Yates, seconded by Commissioner Wallin, moved to approve the local match of \$4,700 and to accept the additional Senior Center funding in the amount of \$14,098 contingent upon receiving the attachment from the High Country Council of Government.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

MAINTENANCE MATTERS

A. Design-Build Contract Award Request for Re-roofing Projects at the Courthouse and Administration Building

Mr. Robert Marsh, Maintenance Director, stated that the County had received three responses to a bid request for roof replacements on the Courthouse and Administrative buildings. All three contractors were interviewed with each contractor being scored based on their qualifications and responses to the interview questions. After a thorough review of the contractors and their responses staff recommended the bid be awarded to Muter Construction.

If approved by the Board, Muter Construction staff will negotiate a fee for the design phase of the project. After which, Muter Construction will submit a guaranteed maximum price for the construction phase of the projects for Board approval. In the event staff is unable to negotiate a reasonable fee the next competitive contractor will be selected.

Vice-Chairman Kennedy, seconded by Commissioner Turnbow, moved to award the design-build contract for the reroofing of the Courthouse and Administration Building projects to Muter Construction and authorize staff to negotiate a fee for design services.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

B. West Annex Culvert Replacement Bid Award

Mr. Robert Marsh stated that the County's local policy requiring three (3) bids for informal projects as defined by the North Carolina General Statutes was waived at the September 3, 2019, meeting. The County requested bids to be submitted and opened on September 10, 2019, for the West Annex (Cooperative Extension Building) culvert replacement project. Approximately seven contractors were solicited and four contractors requested plans for review; however, since three (3) bids were not received, the project was re-advertised with a deadline of September 18, 2019, in an effort to obtain additional bids. Only one bid was received throughout the entire process and was opened on September 18, 2019. The bid was responsive and met all of the requirements per the bid specifications. J. W. Hampton submitted the bid in the amount of \$254,293.50 which is less than the project budget. Adequate funds are available in the current budget. Due to an urgency to start the project, staff approved J. W. Hampton's bid in the amount of \$254,293.50. Staff would request that the Board formally award the bid to J. W. Hampton in the amount of \$254,293.50.

Commissioner Yates, seconded by Commissioner Turnbow, moved to award the bid to J. W. Hampton, in the amount of \$254,293.50, for construction of the culvert replacement project at the West Annex.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

PROPERTY TAX APPEAL

Mr. Larry Warren, Tax Administrator, presented a request from a citizen to apply for Senior Exemption status at the September 17, 2019, meeting. The application was required to be filed before June 1st of each year. Staff informed the citizen that both her and her husband's income would be considered because they were still married. The citizen then proceeded to obtain her divorce in June. On August 26, 2019 the citizen came in with a copy of an application where she found at the bottom of the last page a paragraph regarding Late Application upon showing of good cause. Her reason for the submitting the untimely application was that her divorce had not been finalized by the deadline. Staff's recommendation was to deny the application for 2019 in order to not set a precedent for other late filings.

The appeal would have been filed with the Board of Equalization and Review but since this Board has adjourned the appeal is required to be heard by the Board of Commissioners. Mr. Warren presented the tax card showing that the taxpayer was the only owner on record and had always been. Her husband had never been listed as a property owner. Mr. Warren stated that she had several other assets as well.

Commissioner Turnbow, seconded by Commissioner Yates, moved to deny the appeal application based on the additional information received from Mr. Warren.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

Chairman Welch stated that the citizen could apply for the Senior Exemption status in 2020.

COMMUNITY RECREATION CENTER (CRC) MATTERS

A. Community Recreation Center Update

B. Community Recreation Center Change Order #4 & #5

Mr. Chad Roberson with Clark Nexsen updated the Board on the progress of the construction of the new Community Recreation Center. Bad weather had only impacted 35 days of the project thus far. To date \$21,542,932 has been expended with approximately \$11.4 million left in the budget. The projected finish date at this time is April 25, 2020. The Notice to Proceed for the project was given on October 9, 2018.

Mr. Roberson presented Change Orders #4 and #5 for the Community Recreation Center. The change orders reconcile modifications required due to unsuitable soils, modifications required by the regulatory review and project coordination. To date the budget summary indicates no increase in the total project cost and an owner contingency balance of \$299,157 with contractor contingency of \$611,000 and allowances of \$100,000.

Vice-Chairman Kennedy, seconded by Commissioner Turnbow, moved to approve Change Order # 4 and Change Order # 5 for the Community Recreation Center project.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

MISCELLANEOUS ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

A. Budget Amendments

County Manager Geouque reviewed the following budget amendments:

Account #	Description	Debit	Credit
103991-399100	Fund Balance Appropriated		\$500,000
109800-498099	Transfer to Rec Center Capital Project Fund	\$500,000	
493980-398000	Transfer from General Fund		\$500,000
496120-458000	Capital Outlay – Building	\$500,000	

The amendment transferred \$500,000 to the Community Recreation Center Capital Project Fund for water and sewer impact fees to the Town of Boone as approved at the September 17, 2019, Board meeting.

103991-399100	Fund Balance		\$204,165
109800-498021	Transfer to Capital Projects Fund	\$204,165	

213980-398100	Transfer from General Fund		\$204,165
219930-459122	WCS CIP-Classroom Presentation Technology	\$53,368	
219930-459122	WCS CIP-Facilities - Furniture/Equipment	\$55,603	
219930-459122	WCS CIP-Roof Maintenance	\$9,421	
219930-459122	WCS CIP-Security Cameras	\$2,929	
219930-459122	WCS CIP-HVAC/Sewer Pump Replacements	\$170	
219930-459122	WCS CIP-Gym Floor Replacements	\$8,633	
219930-459122	WCS CIP-School Kitchen/Cafeteria Equipment	\$1,176	
219930-459122	WCS CIP-Pre-K Start Up at Bethel	\$28,427	
219930-459122	WCS CIP-WHS Sealant on Track	\$2,216	
219930-459122	WCS CIP-Facilities Study Plan	\$42,222	

The amendment returned unused Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) funds from the completed projects listed above to set aside capital project funds for the schools.

103839-384000	Donation		\$331,000
104199-457001	Capital Outlay – Land	\$331,000	

The amendment recognized the donation of twelve (12) acres of land for Section 4 of the Middle Fork Greenway as approved at the December 3, 2018, Board meeting.

County Manager Geouque presented handouts showing that the Town of Boone had been paid for the water/sewer permit for the Community Recreation Center. Mr. Geouque also shared a timeline clarifying information that had recently been published in the Watauga Democrat regarding the permit fee. Discussion was held regarding the information presented.

Commissioner Turnbow, seconded by Commissioner Yates, moved to approve the budget amendments as presented by County Manager Geouque.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

B. Proposed Lease Extension for Turner Property

County Manager Geouque stated that Mr. John Turner had requested an extension of his firm's current lease with the County for the law office premises at 136 North Water Street, Boone. His request was for a maximum six month extension through May 30, 2020. He was agreeable to a monthly increase in rent from \$1,000 to \$1,500. The new monthly lease rate would be effective with the rent payable on November 30, 2019, which would be the first month of the extended term. Mr. Turner also agreed to continue to maintain the buildings and grounds through the extended term of the lease. Mr. Geouque stated that the Board could agree to the proposed terms or counter with a month to month lease agreement. Mr. Robert Marsh, Maintenance Director, has prepared to advertise for a buyer for the house on the property. Mr. Turner is aware that he would need to move as soon as possible if a buyer is found.

Vice-Chairman Kennedy, seconded by Commissioner Yates, moved to approve the lease extension through May 30, 2020, at an increased monthly rate of \$1,500, with Mr. Turner continuing to maintain the buildings and grounds through the extended term.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

C. Boards and Commissions

County Manager Geouque share the following for consideration:

Nursing Home Community Advisory Committee

Ms. Stevie John, High Country Council of Government's Regional Long-term Care Ombudsman, submitted Ms. Pat Coley's name for appointment to the Watauga County Nursing Home Community Advisory Committee. Ms. Coley is willing to serve a for one-year term if so appointed. This is a first reading.

Vice-Chairman Kennedy, seconded by Commissioner Wallin, moved to waive the second reading and appoint Ms. Pat Coley to the Nursing Home Community Advisory Committee for a one-year term.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

Board of Adjustment

The terms of Mr. David Hill, current Chairman, and Mr. Chuck Phillips, current Vice-Chairman, are set to expire in November. Both are willing to continue to serve for additional three (3) year terms. Both are at-large appointees. The Board is in the process of scheduling a meeting for the first or second week in December. In the event appointments have not been made by that time, Mr. Hill and Mr. Phillips would continue to serve until re-appointed or replaced. These are first readings and, therefore, no action was taken.

D. Announcements

County Manager Geouque announced the following:

- A public hearing will be held at 5:30 P.M. on Tuesday, October 15, 2019, to allow citizen comment on proposed amendments to the Valle Crucis Historic District Ordinance.
- The regular meeting scheduled for Tuesday, November 5, 2019, has been moved to Wednesday, November 6, 2019, due to the Commissioners Board Room being used as an official polling place for Election Day. The meeting will be at 8:30 A.M.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Mr. Bert Valery, who started a Senior Softball team five years ago, thanked the Board as well as Parks and Recreation staff for working with him and allowing the use of County fields for practices and games.

CLOSED SESSION

At 9:32 A.M., Commissioner Wallin, seconded by Vice-Chairman Kennedy, moved to enter Closed Session to discuss Attorney/Client Matters, per G. S. 143-318.11(a)(3), Land Acquisition, per G. S. 143-318.11(a)(5)(i), and Personnel Matters, per G. S. 143-318.11(a)(6).

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

Vice-Chairman Kennedy, seconded by Commissioner Turnbow, moved to resume the open meeting at 10:46 A.M.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

ACTION AFTER CLOSED SESSION

There was no action after closed session.

ADJOURN

Commissioner Turnbow, seconded by Commissioner Wallin, moved to adjourn the meeting at 10:46 A.M.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

John Welch, Chairman

ATTEST:

Anita J. Fogle, Clerk to the Board

Watauga County Board of Commissioners

MINUTES

WATAUGA COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 19, 2019

The Watauga County Board of Commissioners held a regular meeting, as scheduled, on Tuesday, November 19, 2019, at 5:30 P.M. in the Commissioners' Board Room of the Watauga County Administration Building, Boone, North Carolina.

PRESENT: John Welch, Chairman
Billy Kennedy, Vice-Chairman
Larry Turnbow, Commissioner
Charlie Wallin, Commissioner
Perry Yates, Commissioner
Anthony di Santi, County Attorney
Deron Geouque, County Manager
Anita J. Fogle, Clerk to the Board

Chairman Welch called the meeting to order at 5:30 P.M.

Commissioner Yates opened with a prayer and Vice-Commissioner Kennedy led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Chairman Welch expressed condolences to the Francis Pressly family upon his recent passing.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Chairman Welch called for additions and/or corrections to the November 6, 2019, regular meeting and closed session minutes.

Vice-Chairman Kennedy, seconded by Commissioner Wallin, moved to approve the November 6, 2019, regular meeting minutes as presented.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

Approval of the closed session minutes was tabled until later in the meeting to allow for an amendment by Vice-Chairman Kennedy to be considered.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Chairman Welch called for additions and/or corrections to the November 19, 2019, agenda.

Chairman Welch tabled Item # 5 "Proposed Amendments to the Valle Crucis Historic District Ordinance" to

allow time for the School Board to receive test results on the property it is considering for the new school.

Commissioner Yates, seconded by Commissioner Turnbow, moved to approve the November 19, 2019, agenda as amended.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

NORTH CAROLINA RECREATION AND PARKS ASSOCIATION (NCRPA) MATTERS

A. Presentation of the NCRPA Healthy Plan and Recreation Initiative Grant

Ms. Michelle Wells, Executive Director of the NC Recreation and Parks Association, presented the County with the NCRPA Healthy Plan and Recreation Initiative Grant for new playground equipment at Rocky Knob Park.

The \$70,000 grant has a fifty percent (50%) match that will be provided by the Watauga County TDA. County staff has already removed the old playground.

Ms. Michelle Wells, thanked the Board and offered congratulations to the Board for the Community Recreation Center which is currently under construction. Ms. Wells stated that the Community Recreation Center resulted from great foresight and would be a showcase for North Carolina as well as the East Coast.

B. Presentation of the NCRPA Fellow Award to Mr. Stephen Poulos

Mr. Lee Tillery, NCRPA President-Elect and Parks and Recreation Director in High Point, NC, recognized Mr. Stephen Poulos, Watauga County Parks and Recreation Director, as this year's recipient of the NCRPA Fellow Award. Mr. Tillery stated that the Fellow Award was the highest award the Association could bestow on one of its members for outstanding service and leadership.

Mr. Keith Jenkins, NCRPA President, commended the County's new Community Recreation Center. Mr. Jenkins then presented Mr. Stephen Poulos with the North Carolina Recreation and Parks Association Fellow Award. Mr. Jenkins shared that Mr. Poulos has been with Watauga County since 1992, became Director of the Department in 2002, and served as the NCRPA President in 2014. Mr. Poulos always serves and volunteers when asked.

Mr. Poulos accepted the award sharing that he credits his family, staff, and the community for supporting him throughout the years. Mr. Poulos stated that he was honored, humbled, and shocked.

Chairman Welch congratulated Mr. Poulos on behalf of the Board.

PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO THE VALLE CRUCIS HISTORIC DISTRICT ORDINANCE

This item was tabled under the amended agenda.

TAX MATTERS

A. Monthly Collections Report

Tax Administrator, Mr. Larry Warren, presented the Tax Collections Report for the month of October 2019. The report was presented for information only and, therefore, no action was required.

B. Refunds and Releases

Mr. Warren presented the Refunds and Releases Report for October 2019 for Board approval:

TO BE TYPED IN MINUTE BOOK

Vice-Chairman Kennedy, seconded by Commissioner Yates, moved to approve the Refunds and Releases Report for October 2019 as presented.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

MISCELLANEOUS ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

A. Humane Society Loan Refinance Request

County Manager Geouque stated that the Humane Society had requested to have the loan on their facility refinanced by the County. The current principal balance on the loan is \$373,355.86 and has no prepayment penalty. If the Board decided to pay off the remaining balance the principal and any accrued interest since the last payment would be due. Should the Board wish to pay off the remaining loan and issue a new loan staff would recommend the interest rate to be set at three percent (3%) with a term of ten (10) years. This arrangement would allow the County to receive a slightly higher rate than what is currently being offered in the County's investment portfolio. In addition, staff would recommend that the payments be made monthly as currently is the practice which would assist the Humane Society's cash flow. The new rate would also cut the Humane Society's monthly payment approximately into half of the current amount.

Commissioner Yates, seconded by Commissioner Turnbow, moved to approve the loan refinance for the Human Society as requested.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

By consensus, the Board directed the County Attorney and County Manager to prepare the necessary documentation for signature.

B. Boards and Commissions

County Manager Geouque presented the following:

Watauga County Planning Board

The four (4) year At-large Planning Board term of Mr. Jamie Hodges will expire in December. Mr. Hodges

does not wish to be reappointed. Volunteer Applications from Mr. David Hill, Mr. Chuck Phillips, and Ms. Kimmy Tiedemann were presented for consideration. These were first readings and, therefore, no action was taken.

C. Announcements

County Manager Geouque announced the following:

- The Annual Employee Christmas Lunch will be held at Dan'l Boone Inn on Tuesday, December 10, 2019, from 11:30 A.M. to 2:00 P.M. The first lunch group will begin at 11:30 A.M. and the second lunch group will begin at 1:00 P.M.
- The Register of Deeds, Clerk of Court, and Tax Office invites you to join them for holiday breakfast on Friday, December 13, 2019, from 8:30 to 10:00 A.M. in the hallway between the Clerk of Court and Register of Deeds offices.
- The Watauga Compassionate Community Initiative 2020 Conference will be held on Saturday, May 16, 2020, at Watauga High School. The Opening Keynote Speaker will be Brandon Wrencher and the Keynote Speaker will be Allison Sampson-Jackson. Pre-registration will begin on February 1, 2020.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Mr. Lyle Schoenfeldt shared comments regarding the new Valle Crucis School including that he is in support of a new school but questioned the proposed location.

Chairman Welch welcomed Mr. Doug Matheson, Blowing Rock Town Councilman, who was in attendance.

CLOSED SESSION

At 6:01 P.M., Commissioner Wallin, seconded by Vice-Chairman Kennedy, moved to enter Closed Session to discuss Attorney/Client Matters, per G. S. 143-318.11(a)(3) and Land Acquisition, per G. S. 143-318.11(a)(5)(i).

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

Vice-Chairman Kennedy, seconded by Commissioner Yates, moved to resume the open meeting at 6:39 P.M.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

POSSIBLE ACTION AFTER CLOSED SESSION

Commissioner Yates, seconded by Commissioner Wallin, moved to adopt the November 6, 2019, closed session minutes as amended.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

ADJOURN

Commissioner Wallin, seconded by Vice-Chairman Kennedy, moved to adjourn the meeting at 6:41 P.M.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

John Welch, Chairman

ATTEST:

Anita J. Fogle, Clerk to the Board

Watauga County Board of Commissioners

MINUTES

WATAUGA COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS TUESDAY, DECEMBER 3, 2019

The Watauga County Board of Commissioners held a regular meeting, as scheduled, on Tuesday, December 3, 2019, at 8:30 A.M. in the Commissioners' Board Room of the Watauga County Administration Building, Boone, North Carolina.

PRESENT: John Welch, Chairman
Billy Kennedy, Vice-Chairman
Larry Turnbow, Commissioner
Charlie Wallin, Commissioner
Perry Yates, Commissioner
Anthony di Santi, County Attorney
Deron Geouque, County Manager
Anita J. Fogle, Clerk to the Board

County Manager Geouque called the meeting to order at 8:37 A.M.

BOARD ORGANIZATIONAL MATTERS

County Manager Geouque called for the election of the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Watauga County Board of Commissioners.

A. Election of Officers

County Manager Geouque called for nominations for Chairman of the Watauga County Board of Commissioners.

Vice-Chairman Kennedy, seconded by Commissioner Yates, moved to nominate Commissioner Welch for Chairman.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

Commissioner Turnbow, seconded by Commissioner Wallin, moved to nominate Commissioner Kennedy for Vice-Chairman.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

The meeting was then turned over to Chairman Welch.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Chairman Welch called for additions and/or corrections to the November 19, 2019, regular meeting and closed session minutes.

Vice-Chairman Kennedy, seconded by Commissioner Turnbow, moved to approve the November 19, 2019, regular meeting minutes as presented.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

Vice-Chairman Kennedy, seconded by Commissioner Turnbow, moved to approve the November 19, 2019, closed session minutes as presented.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

BOARD ORGANIZATIONAL MATTERS (CONTINUED)

B. Staff Appointments

Commissioner Turnbow, seconded by Vice-Chairman Kennedy, moved to reappoint Deron Geouque as the County Manager.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

Commissioner Turnbow, seconded by Vice-Chairman Kennedy, moved to reappoint Anita Fogle as Clerk to the Board.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

Commissioner Turnbow, seconded by Vice-Chairman Kennedy, moved to reappoint both Monica Harrison and Tammy Adams as Substitute Clerks to the Board.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

Commissioner Turnbow, seconded by Vice-Chairman Kennedy, moved to reappoint di Santi, Watson, Capua, Wilson, & Garrett as the Law Firm representing Watauga County as legal counsel including the Watauga County Department of Social Services and the Child Support Enforcement Offices with rates to remain as current and to authorize di Santi Watson, Capua, Wilson, & Garrett, Social Services Attorney, to hire outside council when they have a conflict.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

[Clerk's Note: The current rate for legal services by the County Attorney is \$125.00 per hour.]

C. Fidelity Bonds

The following individual fidelity bonds were presented for approval:

<u>Position</u>	<u>Bond Amount</u>	<u>Statutory Requirement</u>
Finance Director	\$50,000	No less than \$50,000, per NCGS 159-29
Deputy Finance Director (County Manager)	\$50,000	
Tax Collector	\$50,000	Amount considered reasonable by BCC, NCGS 105-349-c
Register of Deeds	\$50,000	At least \$10,000 but no more than \$50,000, NCGS 161-4
Sheriff	\$25,000	Amount considered reasonable by BCC, but no more than \$25,000 max, NCGS 162-8

Vice-Chairman Kennedy, seconded by Commissioner Turnbow, moved to approve the individual fidelity bonds as presented and to approve the Finance Director, County Manager, and Chairman of the Board of Commissioners as the authorized signers for disbursements on all County accounts and to approve additional signers and Deputy Finance Officers, on the Inmate Commissary account only, as Randy Greene, James Sharpe, Barry Trivette, and Michael Brown and to approved the official depositories of the County as First National Bank and BB&T.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

D. Commissioner Appointments to Boards & Commissions

Chairman Welch presented the attached list of current Commissioner Board appointments:

Board/Commission	Member
Appalachian District Health Department	Yates
Appalachian Theatre Board of Trustees Ex-Officio Member	Wallin or Welch
AppalCART Authority	Wallin
Blue Ridge Resource Conservation & Development Area	Turnbow
Caldwell Community College & Technical Institute - Watauga Advisory Board	Welch
Children's Council	Turnbow
Child Protection Team	Kennedy
Cooperative Extension Advisory Leadership Board	Yates
Economic Development Commission (EDC)	Turnbow
Educational Planning Committee (2 appointees)	Wallin & Welch

EMS Advisory Committee	Yates
High Country Council of Governments Executive Board Rural Transportation Advisory Committee	Turnbow
Juvenile Crime Prevention Council (JCPC)	Welch
Humane Society	Turnbow
Library Board	Kennedy
Motor Vehicle Valuation Review Committee	Welch
New River Service Authority Board	Wallin
Northwest Regional Housing Authority (five-year term expires Dec. 12, 2019)	Pat Vines
POA Advisory Committee (Home & Community Care Block Grant)	Yates
Sheriff's Office Liaison	Kennedy & Turnbow
Vaya County Commissioner Advisory Board	Wallin
Social Services Advisory Board	Wallin
Watauga County Fire Commission	Yates
Watauga County Personnel Advisory Committee	Welch
Watauga County Recreation Commission	Welch
Watauga Medical Center Board of Trustees	Kennedy
Watauga Opportunities, Inc.	Turnbow
Workforce Development Board (WDB)	Chairman

Vice-Chairman Kennedy, seconded by Commissioner Yates, moved to accept the appointments as currently seated including the reappointment of Pat Vines to a five-year term as the Northwest Regional Housing Authority representative.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

E. Regular Meeting Schedule

Chairman Welch stated that the Board of Commissioners' regular meetings were currently scheduled for the first Tuesday of each month at 8:30 A.M. and the third Tuesday of each month at 5:30 P.M.

Commissioner Yates, seconded by Commissioner Turnbow, moved to retain the regular meeting schedule for the Watauga County Board of Commissioners as follows: the first Tuesday of each month at 8:30 A.M. and the third Tuesday of each month at 5:30 P.M.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Chairman Welch called for additions and/or corrections to the December 3, 2019, agenda.

County Manager Geouque requested to add a proposed resolution establishing the Register of Deeds' salary.

Commissioner Wallin, seconded by Commissioner Turnbow, moved to approve the December 3, 2019, agenda as presented.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

PROPOSED RESOLUTION ESTABLISHING THE REGISTER OF DEEDS' SALARY

County Manager Geouque stated that, per Statute, for the filing period for 2020 elections, the Board must establish the salary for the Register of Deeds in order for filing fees to be determined. The entry level salary on the County's current pay plan is \$60,629 and is the amount listed in the proposed resolution.

Vice-Chairman Kennedy, seconded by Commissioner Yates, moved to adopt the resolution establishing the Register of Deeds Salary as presented.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

SANITATION MATTERS

A. Bid Award Request for Motor Grader

Mr. Rex Buck, Operations Services Director, presented a bid for one (1) new Leeboy Motor Grader in the amount of \$187,652 from Ascendum Machinery which includes an eight foot front blade. The motor grader will be utilized for maintenance of roads to county cell towers and ball field maintenance and repair. County Manager Geouque stated that adequate funds were available in the current Sanitation budget to cover the expense.

Commissioner Turnbow, seconded by Commissioner Wallin, moved to authorize the purchase of one (1) new Leeboy Motor Grader in the amount of \$187,652 from Ascendum Machinery.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

B. Bid Award Request for Tub Grinder

Mr. Rex Buck presented a bid for one (1) new DuraTech Model 2009 Tub Grinder in the amount of \$231,383.22 from Public Works Equipment, Inc. County Manager Geouque stated that adequate funds were available in the current Sanitation budget to cover the expense.

Vice-Chairman Kennedy, seconded by Commissioner Turnbow, moved to authorize the purchase of one (1) new DuraTech Model 2009 Tub Grinder in the amount of \$231,383.22 from Public Works Equipment, Inc.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

C. Bid Award Request for Container Delivery Truck

Mr. Rex Buck presented a bid for the purchase of one (1) new Container Delivery Truck in the amount of \$115,866.19 from CES, Inc. County Manager Geouque stated that adequate funds were available in the current Sanitation budget to cover the expense.

Commissioner Wallin, seconded by Commissioner Turnbow, moved to authorize the purchase of one (1) Container Delivery Truck in the amount of \$115,866.19 from CES, Inc.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

BUDGET AMENDMENTS

Ms. Misty Watson, Finance Director, reviewed the following budget amendments:

Account #	Description	Debit	Credit
103311-312013	TDA Donation – Rocky Knob Playground		\$40,079
104288-451000	Capital Outlay – Equipment	\$72,408	
103311-312014	Grant – Rocky Knob Playground		\$32,329

The amendment recognized acceptance of a donation from the Watauga County District U Tourism Development Authority and a grant from GameTime as part of the 2019 NCRPA Statewide Training and Funding Initiative and for replacement of the Rocky Knob Playground.

103300-349606	Soil and Water Grant		\$18,001
104960-449917	Soil and Water Grant – Resource Institute	\$18,001	

The amendment recognized the acceptance of the Division of Water Resources pass-through funds. No match is required.

103991-399100	Fund Balance Appropriated		\$375,000
104199-457008	Capital Outlay – Valle Landing Property	\$375,000	

The amendment recognized the purchase of the Valle Landing property from fund balance as approved by the Board at the June 4, 2019, Board Meeting.

103991-399100	Fund Balance Appropriated		\$367,129
104199-469150	Watauga County Humane Society Loan	\$367,129	

The amendment shows funds used to pay off the Watauga County Humane Society loan for refinancing through Watauga County as approved at the November 19, 2019, Board Meeting.

Commissioner Yates, seconded by Commissioner Turnbow, moved to approve the budget amendments as presented by Ms. Watson.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

PROPOSED PROCLAMATION IN SUPPORT OF NATIONAL RADON ACTION MONTH IN WATAUGA COUNTY

Chairman Welch presented a proposed proclamation in support of National Radon Action Month in Watauga County as requested by Mr. Phillip Ray Gibson, North Carolina Radon Program Coordinator with the Division of Health Service Regulation, Radiation Protection Section, of the North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services.

Commissioner Yates, seconded by Commissioner Wallin, moved to adopt the proclamation supporting National Radon Action Month in Watauga County.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

MISCELLANEOUS ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

A. Presentation of the North Carolina Recreation and Parks Association (NCRPA) Healthy Plan and Recreation Initiative Grant

County Manager Geouque stated that at the November 19, 2019, Board of Commissioners meeting, Ms. Michelle Wells, Executive Director of the NC Recreation and Parks Association (NCRPA), presented the County with the NCRPA Healthy Plan and Recreation Initiative Grant for new playground equipment. The \$70,000 grant required a fifty percent (50%) match that will be provided by the Watauga County Tourism Development Authority (TDA). Board approval was required to accept the grant from the North Carolina Recreation and Parks Association in the amount of \$70,000 and authorize staff to purchase the new equipment. However, during the presentation of the grant no formal authorization was given.

Vice-Chairman Kennedy, seconded by Commissioner Turnbow, moved to formally accept the NCRPA Healthy Plan and Recreation Initiative grant and to authorize staff to purchase the new playground equipment.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

B. Proposed Forest Service Lease

County Manager Geouque presented the proposed Forest Service lease with a three (3) year term from December 1, 2019, to November 30, 2022.

Property owned by the County may be leased or rented for such terms and upon such conditions as the Board may determine, for up to ten (10) years. Property may be rented or leased only pursuant to a resolution of the Board authorizing the execution of the lease or rental agreement adopted at a regular Board meeting upon 10 days' public notice. Notice shall be given by publication describing the property to be leased or rented, stating the annual rental or lease payments, and announcing the Board's intent to authorize the lease or rental at its next regular meeting.

County Manager Geouque stated that the notice requirement has been met. The County Manager stated that Board approval, contingent upon County Attorney review, is required to approve the lease and completion of PO-28 Lease proposal form. County Attorney di Santi stated that he had reviewed the lease which is worded the same as the current lease.

County Manager Geouque stated that in the near future the Forest Service would be requesting to rent office space from the Cooperative Extension Building. He stated that he had offered for the State to move a new office trailer onto the property currently being lease. The State, however, planned to continue to use that for connex boxes and vehicles.

Commissioner Turnbow, seconded by Commissioner Yates, moved to approve the lease as presented.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

C. January's Meeting Schedule

County Manager Geouque stated that the Board has traditionally cancelled one of the meetings in either December or January depending on how the holidays have fallen. Due to where Christmas and New Year's fall during the week, staff would recommend the Board cancel the first meeting in January as there would be insufficient time to prepare the Board packets for that meeting. Historically, December and the first weeks in January have few issues requiring Board action.

Vice-Chairman Kennedy, seconded by Commissioner Yates, moved to cancel the January 7, 2020, Board meeting.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

D. Boards and Commissions

County Manager Geouque presented the following for consideration:

Watauga County Planning Board

The four year At-large Planning Board term of Mr. Jamie Hodges will expire in December. Mr. Hodges does not wish to be reappointed. Volunteer Applications from Mr. David Hill, Mr. Chuck Phillips, and Ms. Kimmy Tiedemann are included for consideration as second readings.

Commissioner Turnbow, seconded by Vice-Chairman Kennedy, moved to appoint Ms. Kimmy Tiedemann to serve as an At-large Planning Board member for a four year term ending in December 2023.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

E. Announcements

County Manager Geouque announced the following:

- The Annual Employee Christmas Lunch will be held at Dan'l Boone Inn on Tuesday, December 10, 2019, from 11:30 A.M. to 2:00 P.M. The first lunch group will begin at 11:30 A.M. and the second lunch group will begin at 1:00 P.M.
- The Register of Deeds, Clerk of Court, and Tax Office invites you to join them for holiday breakfast on Friday, December 13, 2019, from 8:30 to 10:00 A.M. in the hallway between the Clerk of Court and Register of Deeds offices.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment.

CLOSED SESSION

At 9:00 A.M., Commissioner Wallin, seconded by Commissioner Turnbow, moved to enter Closed Session to discuss Attorney/Client Matters, per G. S. 143-318.11(a)(3) and Land Acquisition, per G. S. 143-318.11(a)(5)(i).

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

Commissioner Yates, seconded by Commissioner Turnbow, moved to resume the open meeting at 9:37 A.M.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

POSSIBLE ACTION AFTER CLOSED SESSION

There was no action after Closed Session.

ADJOURN

Commissioner Wallin, seconded by Commissioner Turnbow, moved to adjourn the meeting at 9:37 A.M.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

John Welch, Chairman

ATTEST:

Anita J. Fogle, Clerk to the Board

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Watauga County Board of Commissioners

MINUTES

WATAUGA COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS TUESDAY, DECEMBER 17, 2019

The Watauga County Board of Commissioners held a regular meeting, as scheduled, on Tuesday, December 17, 2019, at 5:30 P.M. in the Commissioners' Board Room of the Watauga County Administration Building, Boone, North Carolina.

PRESENT: Billy Kennedy, Vice-Chairman
Larry Turnbow, Commissioner
Charlie Wallin, Commissioner
Perry Yates, Commissioner
Andrea Capua, County Attorney
Deron Geouque, County Manager
Anita J. Fogle, Clerk to the Board

Vice-Chairman Kennedy called the meeting to order at 5:30 P.M. and announced that Chairman Welch would not be in attendance due to a prior commitment.

Commissioner Wallin opened with a prayer and Commissioner Yates led the Pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Vice-Chairman Kennedy called for additions and/or corrections to the December 3, 2019, regular meeting and closed session minutes.

Commissioner Turnbow, seconded by Commissioner Yates, moved to approve the December 3, 2019, regular meeting minutes as presented.

VOTE: Aye-4(Kennedy, Turnbow, Wallin, Yates)
Nay-0
Absent-1(Welch)

Commissioner Turnbow, seconded by Commissioner Yates, moved to approve the December 3, 2019, closed session minutes as presented.

VOTE: Aye-4-(Kennedy, Turnbow, Wallin, Yates)
Nay-0
Absent-1(Welch)

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Vice-Chairman Kennedy called for additions and/or corrections to the December 17, 2019, agenda.

Commissioner Yates, seconded by Commissioner Wallin, moved to approve the December 17, 2019, agenda as presented.

VOTE: Aye-4(Kennedy, Turnbow, Wallin, Yates)
Nay-0
Absent-1(Welch)

NORTH CAROLINA DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE OPIOID AWARENESS PRESENTATION

Ms. Holly Jones, North Carolina Department of Justice, presented a presentation on the opioid awareness campaign. Ms. Jones shared that overdose deaths have now eclipsed car accident deaths. Ms. Jones encouraged the strengthening of opioid prevention by reducing the over-prescribing of opioids while still working with those who truly need opioid medications to help with pain management. Ms. Jones shared the More Powerful North Carolina Campaign website (www.morepowerfulnc.org) (<http://www.morepowerfulnc.org/>) and encouraged the Board to consider adopting a resolution similar to the one on the website. Information about the Western Regional Summit in May 2020 can also be found on the website.

Vice-Chairman Kennedy thanked Ms. Jones and shared the steps that Watauga County currently takes to help with prevention of opioid issues including offering ways for citizens to turn in unused medication throughout the year. The presentation was given for information only and, therefore, no action was required.

PRESENTATION OF FY 2019 AUDIT

Mr. Travis Kever, who was the County's Audit Manager with Gould Killiam CPA Group, P.A. presented the Fiscal Year 2019 County Audit. Mr. Kever stated that the County received a clean opinion with no findings in internal control review. There were two findings in compliance, both with Social Services in Medicaid and Foster Care; however, a corrective action plan has been established. Mr. Kever reviewed the County revenues and expenses and stated that the County's Fund Balance is 40% of the budget. The County is only required to have 8% in the fund balance. Mr. Kever commended the County for setting aside funds for Other Post Employee Benefits (OPEB) and encouraged the County to be diligent with cybersecurity.

Below are highlights from the Audit as provided to the Board for review prior to the meeting:

- The total assets of the County exceeded its liabilities at the close of the fiscal year by \$155,261,296.
- The County's unassigned fund balance for the general fund was \$20,786,602 at the end of the year, representing 40.1% of total General Fund expenditures. This is an increase of \$649,173 in the unassigned fund balance from the previous year.
- The current year collection rate for property taxes was 99.01% which was an increase from last year's 98.83%. The County is still well above the statewide average of 98.24% for entities of similar populations in fiscal year 2017-18.
- **Outstanding debt principal increased by \$14,607,639.** Total outstanding debt principal at June 30,

2019 is \$49,604,027. Watauga County's legal debt limit is \$688,841,459 so the County continues to be well below the state limits.

- S&P updated their review of the County's financials and reaffirmed the County's stable outlook and credit rating at AA.

County Manager Geouque stated that no action was required for the Audit; however, staff had requested the \$400,000 of health insurance savings from fiscal year 2019 be assigned to future plans of becoming fully self-insured.

Commissioner Turnbow, seconded by Commissioner Yates, moved to assign the \$400,000 of health insurance savings from Fiscal Year 2019 to be assigned to future plans of becoming self-insured.

VOTE: Aye-4(Kennedy, Turnbow, Wallin, Yates)
Nay-0
Absent-1(Welch)

APPALACHIAN STATE REQUEST TO BUILD STRUCTURE ON LEASED LANDFILL PROPERTY

County Manager Geouque stated that in August, 2019, the Board approved a lease renewal with Appalachian State University for the greenhouse located at the Watauga County Landfill. The University is now requesting permission to create an outdoor classroom with the construction of a deck around the existing building. Per the lease, Board approval is required for the University to make alterations to the property.

Commissioner Turnbow, seconded by Commissioner Yates, moved to table consideration for the request to allow time for the County Attorney to verify that Appalachian State has proper insurance coverage for the students using the outdoor classroom.

VOTE: Aye-4(Kennedy, Turnbow, Wallin, Yates)
Nay-0
Absent-1(Welch)

BID AWARD FOR WIRELESS NETWORK SYSTEM AT THE NEW COMMUNITY RECREATION CENTER

Mr. Drew Eggers, Information Technologies Director, requested to award the wireless network bid for the new Community Recreation Center. The County received three (3) bids with SpartanTec being the lowest responsive bidder in the amount of \$44,492.29. Mr. Eggers stated that he has not worked with the company but does feel comfortable working with them.

Commissioner Yates, seconded by Commissioner Turnbow, moved to award the bid to SpartanTec in the amount \$44,492.29 for the wireless network at the new Community Recreation Center.

VOTE: Aye-4(Kennedy, Turnbow, Wallin, Yates)
Nay-0
Absent-1(Welch)

TAX MATTERS

A. Monthly Collections Report

Tax Administrator, Mr. Larry Warren, presented the Tax Collections Report for the month of November 2019. The report was presented for information only and, therefore, no action was required.

B. Refunds and Releases

Mr. Warren presented the Refunds and Releases Report for November 2019 for Board approval:

TO BE TYPED IN MINUTE BOOK

Commissioner Turnbow, seconded by Commissioner Wallin, moved to approve the Refunds and Releases Report for November 2019 as presented.

VOTE: Aye-4(Kennedy, Turnbow, Wallin, Yates)
Nay-0
Absent-1(Welch)

PROPOSED CONTRACT FOR DESIGN BUILD SERVICES FOR THE ADMINISTRATION AND COURTHOUSE ROOFS

Mr. Robert Marsh, Maintenance Director, stated that the Board approved to enter into a contract with Muter Construction Company for Design-Build services for the new roofs on the Administration and Courthouse facilities. The Design-Build method leaves the liability on one person and provides a better method for the County to potentially save funds. Mr. Marsh stated that this is the first time the County will use this method but feels that it is a better fit for the County than the formerly used Design-Bid-Build method. With the new method, the contractor hires the architect who prepares the working drawings, at a cost of eight percent (8%) of the budget and the County owns the drawings. In the event the project experienced problems, the County would own the drawings and could then use them to move forward with the project through a different route.

The County Attorney has reviewed the contract and forwarded changes to Muter for incorporation into the contract. Prior to the meeting, County Attorney Ham Wilson has verified that the changes requested have been made to the contract. Mr. Marsh presented the contract for design of the facilities in the amount of \$72,051. Upon completion of the design; Muter Construction will be required to build the roof replacements within the budgeted amount of \$907,737. If they are unable to bring the project within the budget the County will bid the project out with the plans created by Muter Construction. An amendment to the contract for the construction phase of the project will be forthcoming upon both parties agreeing to the preliminary design work and project budget.

After lengthy discussion including Commissioner Yates stating that he did not agree with the Design-Build process of sharing the budget upfront, Commissioner Turnbow, seconded by Commissioner Wallin, moved to approve the contract with Muter Construction Company in the amount of \$72,051 for design services.

VOTE: Aye-3(Kennedy, Turnbow, Wallin)
Nay-1(Yates)
Absent-1(Welch)

PROPOSED AMENDMENT TO AUDIT CONTRACT

Ms. Misty Watson, Finance Director, presented an amendment to the fiscal year 2019 Audit contract with Gould Killian CPA Group, PA. The amendment is due to Mr. Keever, Audit Manager, being out on paternity leave during the Audit process. The Local Government Commission (LGC) required there be a contract amendment if the Audit was not submitted to them by December 1. Ms. Watson stated that the Audit has since been submitted to the LGC; however, an official amendment to the contract was required.

Commissioner Yates, seconded by Commissioner Wallin, moved to approve the amendment to the Audit contract to officially extend the due date to January 15, 2020.

VOTE: Aye-4(Kennedy, Turnbow, Wallin, Yates)

Nay-0

Absent-1(Welch)

MISCELLANEOUS ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

A. Cove Creek Preservation and Development (CCP&D) Request to Remove Trees at Old Cove Creek School

County Manager Geouque stated that the Cove Creek Preservation and Development (CCP&D) Association has requested permission from the Board to remove trees at the Old Cove Creek School. Per the lease with the County, approval from the Board of Commissioners is required before any trees over the diameter of 6 inches can be removed. CCP&D contacted Mr. Sean McKee, an arborist, who examined the trees and recommended they be removed. Vice-Chairman Kennedy requested the County replace the trees with hardwood trees big enough to provide shade.

Commissioner Turnbow, seconded by Commissioner Yates, moved to:

- give permission to Cove Creek Preservation and Development to hire Mr. Sean McKee to remove the trees as recommended;
- direct the County Manager to have Mr. McKee provide recommendations of adequate hardwood trees that are approximately fifteen (15) to eighteen (18) feet tall; and
- direct the County Manager to allocate funds to pay Mr. McKee to plant the new trees as a replacement of the trees being removed.

VOTE: Aye-4(Kennedy, Turnbow, Wallin, Yates)

Nay-0

Absent-1(Welch)

B. Request to Surplus Turner Property House

County Manager Geouque stated that the County has advertised the sale of the Turner house and outbuilding located on County-owned property at 136 North Water Street, Boone, PIN #2900-79-8884-000 with bids being accepted until Tuesday, October 29, 2019. No bids were received for the house and outbuilding. Since that time, staff has obtained a demolition permit for the buildings from the Town of Boone. Demolition would occur after the Turner Law Office, who is currently leasing the property, vacates the premises in April. The building needs to be surplus for demolition or any future sale.

Commissioner Yates, seconded by Commissioner Turnbow, moved to surplus the buildings on the property located at 136 North Water Street, Boone, North Carolina.

VOTE: Aye-4(Kennedy, Turnbow, Wallin, Yates)
Nay-0
Absent-1(Welch)

C. Sheriff's Office Vehicle Purchase Request

County Manager Geouque stated that in August, 2019, the Board approved vehicle bids from Ross Automotive for five (5) new 2020 Dodge Durango AWD SUVs at a cost of \$28,859 per unit; two (2) 2020 Dodge Chargers AWD sedans at a cost of \$23,971 per unit; and one (1) 2020 Jeep Grand Cherokee AWD SUV at a cost of \$26,392 per unit. The Sheriff's Office recently received details that the two (2) 2020 Dodge Chargers AWD sedans were not available due to Ross Automotive's failure to place the order and the vehicles no longer being available due to a shortage of Dodge sedan production components. Due to their error, Ross Automotive has agreed to reduce the price, by \$542 each, for two (2) additional new 2020 Dodge Durango AWD SUVs in lieu of the sedans.

Commissioner Turnbow, seconded by Commissioner Yates, moved to approve the purchase of two (2) new 2020 Dodge Durango AWD SUVs in the amount of \$28,317 each in lieu of the sedans.

VOTE: Aye-4(Kennedy, Turnbow, Wallin, Yates)
Nay-0
Absent-1(Welch)

D. Boards and Commissions

Juvenile Crime Prevention Council (JCPC)

Mr. Adam Zebzda submitted a Volunteer Application requesting to serve on the JCPC. The JCPC recommends Mr. Zebzda be appointed to the Council. This is a first reading.

Commissioner Yates, seconded by Commissioner Wallin, moved to waive the second reading and appoint Mr. Adam Zebzda to serve as a Commissioner appointee on the Juvenile Crime Prevention Council.

VOTE: Aye-4(Kennedy, Turnbow, Wallin, Yates)
Nay-0
Absent-1(Welch)

Watauga Medical Center Board of Trustees

The Watauga Medical Center Board of Trustees has recommended Mr. Sam Adams, Mr. Jim Deal, and Mr. Kenneth Wilcox for reappointment as Board Trustees. Each of their terms would be effective January 1, 2020, through December 31, 2022. These are first readings.

Commissioner Yates, seconded by Commissioner Wallin, moved to waive the second reading and reappoint

Mr. Sam Adams, Mr. Jim Deal, and Mr. Kenneth Wilcox as Watauga County representatives on the Watauga Medical Center Board of Trustees with each of their terms to end on December 31, 2022.

VOTE: Aye-4(Kennedy, Turnbow, Wallin, Yates)
Nay-0
Absent-1(Welch)

Recreation Commission

Hardin Park School Principal, Philip Norman, has recommended Ms. Brittany Bolick be reappointed as Hardin Park's representative on the Recreation Commission. This is a first reading.

Commissioner Yates, seconded by Commissioner Wallin, moved to waive the second reading and reappoint Ms. Brittany Bolick to serve as the Hardin Park Elementary School representative on the Recreation Commission.

VOTE: Aye-4(Kennedy, Turnbow, Wallin, Yates)
Nay-0
Absent-1(Welch)

E. Announcements

County Manager Geouque announced that the January 7, 2020, regular meeting of the Board of Commissioners has been cancelled. The next regular meeting of the Board will be on Tuesday, January 21, 2020, at 5:30 P.M.

AMEND THE AGENDA

Commissioner Yates, seconded by Commissioner Turnbow, moved to amend the agenda and add a discussion with Mr. Eric Plaag.

VOTE: Aye-4(Kennedy, Turnbow, Wallin, Yates)
Nay-0
Absent-1(Welch)

MR. ERIC PLAAG DISCUSSION

Mr. Eric Plaag, who has served as an historical consultant for the Town of Boone, but stated that he was speaking for himself and not on behalf of any other organization, shared his concerns in regards to the County's plans to demolish the Tuner House on County-owned property.

Commissioner Turnbow stated that the County purchased the property with the intent to use it as a parking lot which would require the removal of the house. Mr. Turnbow stated that the County has tried to sell the house and has even offered to pay to have the house moved (since the cost is comparable to having it demolished) to Town of Boone property, if the Town paid one dollar (\$1) for the house.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment as Mr. Plaag was added to the agenda.

CLOSED SESSION

At 7:17 P.M., Commissioner Yates, seconded by Commissioner Wallin, moved to enter Closed Session to discuss Attorney/Client Matters, per G. S. 143-318.11(a)(3).

VOTE: Aye-4(Kennedy, Turnbow, Wallin, Yates)
Nay-0
Absent-1(Welch)

Commissioner Yates, seconded by Commissioner Turnbow, moved to resume the open meeting at 7:27 P.M.

VOTE: Aye-4(Kennedy, Turnbow, Wallin, Yates)
Nay-0
Absent-1(Welch)

ADJOURN

Commissioner Wallin, seconded by Commissioner Yates, moved to adjourn the meeting at 7:27 P.M.

VOTE: Aye-4(Kennedy, Turnbow, Wallin, Yates)
Nay-0
Absent-1(Welch)

Billy Kennedy, Vice-Chairman

ATTEST:

Anita J. Fogle, Clerk to the Board

Watauga County Board of Commissioners

MINUTES

WATAUGA COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS TUESDAY, JANUARY 21, 2020

The Watauga County Board of Commissioners held a regular meeting, as scheduled, on Tuesday, January 21, 2020, at 5:30 P.M. in the Commissioners' Board Room of the Watauga County Administration Building, Boone, North Carolina.

PRESENT: John Welch, Chairman
Billy Kennedy, Vice-Chairman
Larry Turnbow, Commissioner
Charlie Wallin, Commissioner
Perry Yates, Commissioner
Anthony di Santi, County Attorney
Deron Geouque, County Manager
Anita J. Fogle, Clerk to the Board

Chairman Welch called the meeting to order at 5:31 P.M.

Commissioner Wallin opened with a prayer and Commissioner Turnbow led the Pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Chairman Welch called for additions and/or corrections to the December 17, 2020, regular meeting and closed session minutes.

Vice-Chairman Kennedy, seconded by Commissioner Yates, moved to approve the December 17, 2020, regular meeting minutes as presented.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

Vice-Chairman Kennedy, seconded by Commissioner Yates, moved to approve the December 17, 2020, closed session minutes as presented.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Chairman Welch called for additions and/or corrections to the January 21, 2020, agenda.

County Manager Geouque requested to add Land Acquisition, per G. S. 143-318.11(a)(5)(i) to the scheduled

closed session.

Vice-Chairman Kennedy, seconded by Commissioner Turnbow, moved to approve the January 21, 2020, agenda as amended.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

REQUEST FOR APPROVAL OF LOTTERY APPLICATIONS

Ms. Ly Marze, Director of Finance for Watauga County Schools, presented a request for the release of funds from the State Education Lottery Fund. A total amount of \$300,000 is being requested to replace worn carpet (\$30,000), replace cafeteria equipment (\$55,000), resurface tennis courts (\$60,000), replace phone and bell systems (\$65,000), replace gym floor at Mabel and/or Blowing Rock School/s (\$75,000), and replace doors (\$15,000).

Commissioner Yates, seconded by Commissioner Wallin, moved to approve the release of \$300,000 in funds from the State Education Lottery Fund as requested by Ms. Marze.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

Mr. Ron Henries, School Board Chairman, thanked the Board for supporting the schools and gave an update on the school year and commended Dr. Elliott and Ms. Marze for their work while waiting on the State to adopt a budget for the current fiscal year. Mr. Henries stated that enrollment was stable and growing. Mr. Henries also thanked Mr. Will Holt, Watauga County Emergency Management Services Director, for his help with repeater placement and for working toward an Emergency fuel Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). Mr. Henries stated that positive progress was being made with the proposed property for the new Valle Crucis School as a septic permit was underway and due diligence was expected to be completed by March 2020.

PROPOSED APPALCART RURAL OPERATING ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (ROAP) GRANT APPLICATION

Mr. Craig Hughes, AppalCART Director, presented the proposed North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) Rural Operating Assistance Program (ROAP) grant application for fiscal year 2020. Watauga County was awarded \$184,459 which is down slightly from last year's funding. The grant does not require a County local match.

Mr. Hughes stated that the funds were proposed to be allocated as follows: \$71,416 for Elderly and Disabled, \$15,562 for Employment Transportation, and \$97,481 for Rural General Populations.

Commissioner Turnbow, seconded by Vice-Chairman Kennedy, moved to approve the North Carolina Department of Transportation Rural Operating Assistance Program (ROAP) grant application for FY 2020 as presented.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

COMMUNITY RECREATION MATTERS

A. Update and Change Order # 6

Mr. Chad Roberson, of Clark Nexsen, presented an update on the Community Recreation Center. The weather has impacted construction forty-one (41) days as of four hundred and sixty-nine (469) days into the project. Mr. Roberson stated that the current completion date is May 1, 2020. The key accomplishments thus far include exterior concrete work, interior painting at the gym and pool, drywall in the admin area and gym, installation of locker room tile, exterior stone work, the curtain wall, the selection of furniture and fixtures, and the signage is expected to be finalized at this meeting. Upcoming activities are as follows: pool deck concrete, radiant flooring, pool equipment installation, interior finishes, gym railings, gym flooring, pool finishes, ordering equipment and furniture. County Manager Geouque clarified that the facility would not be occupied on the date of completion as there would be employee training required prior to the facility being operational.

Mr. Roberson also presented Change Order #6 in the amount of \$127,252.30. The Change Order reconciles modifications required due to additional work scope. To date the budget summary indicates no increase in the total project cost. The owner contingency balance is \$297,165.51 and the contractor contingency is over \$600,000 and allowances of \$100,000. Mr. Roberson stated that the overall budget has not increased.

County Manager Geouque presented an additional work scope for testing and inspections with Wood Environmental & Infrastructure Solutions, Inc. in the amount of \$33,000. The original contract was for \$199,700 for testing and inspections. The additional \$33,000 is due to the extra testing and inspections required because of unsuitable soils and to allow the project to continue through the winter months.

Vice-Chairman Kennedy, seconded by Commissioner Turnbow, moved to approve Change Order #6 in the amount of \$127,252.30 and to approve the additional work scope testing and inspections with Wood Environmental & Infrastructure Solutions, Inc., in the amount of \$33,000 as presented.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

County Manager Geouque also informed the Board that funds had been reallocated from the Equipment line to the Information Technologies line as the IT equipment came in at a higher cost than expected for Wi-Fi and security.

B. Proposed Membership and Fee Schedule

Mr. Stephen Poulos, Parks and Recreation Director, presented a proposed membership and rental fee schedule for the new Community Recreation Center. Mr. Poulos thanked his staff for their work in preparing the schedules.

After discussion, the Board agreed, by consensus, to table consideration to allow for further discussion at the Annual Pre-Budget Retreat.

C. Approval of Fitness Equipment Purchase

Mr. Poulos presented two bids for award of fitness equipment for the new Community Recreation Center. The first bid is to Gym Source in the amount of \$101,144.56 for treadmills, bikes, and elliptical machines.

The second bid is to Wellness Solutions in the amount of \$192,306.41 for the remaining fitness equipment. Mr. Poulos stated that adequate funds were available in the Community Recreation Center project budget to cover this expense.

Commissioner Yates, seconded by Vice-Chairman Kennedy, moved to award the bid to Gym Source, in the amount of \$101,144.56, for treadmills, bikes, and elliptical machines, and to award the bid to Wellness Solutions, in the amount of \$192,306.41, for the remaining fitness equipment; for a total bid award in the amount of \$293,450.97.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

D. Approval of Signage

County Manager Geouque presented a bid for the contract of interior signs for the Community Recreation Center to APCO Carolinas in the amount of \$24,618.06. The County Manager stated that adequate funds are available in the Community Recreation Center project budget to cover this expense.

Commissioner Turnbow, seconded by Commissioner Wallin, moved to award the bid for the contract of interior signs for the Community Recreation Center to APCO Carolinas in the amount of \$24,618.06 as presented by the County Manager.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

TAX MATTERS

A. Monthly Collections Report

Tax Administrator, Mr. Larry Warren, presented the Tax Collections Report for the month of December 2019. The report was presented for information only and, therefore, no action was required.

B. Refunds and Releases

Mr. Warren presented the Refunds and Releases Report for December 2019 for Board approval:

TO BE TYPED IN MINUTE BOOK

Vice-Chairman Kennedy, seconded by Commissioner Yates, moved to approve the Refunds and Releases Report for December 2019 as presented.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

FINANCE MATTERS

A. Budget Amendments

Ms. Misty Watson, Finance Director, reviewed the following budget amendments:

Account #	Description	Debit	Credit
104199-470000	Payment to Refunded Escrow Agent	\$19,055,720	
104199-469199	Bond Issuance Costs	\$184,280	
103910-331000	Refunding Bonds Issued		\$19,240,000
309100-471002	Interest – High School		\$515,405
309100-472002	Principal – High School	\$465,000	
303980-398100	Transfer from General Fund	\$50,405	

The amendment recognized the refunding of the 2012 high school debt and the updated interest expense payments.

103300-345000	ROAP Grant		\$184,459
104500-469845	Elderly and Disabled	\$71,416	
104500-469844	Employment Transportation	\$15,562	
104500-469843	Rural General Populations	\$97,481	

The amendment recognized the acceptance of the acceptance of the North Carolina Department of Transportation Rural Operating Assistance Program (ROAP) funds. No County dollars were required as match.

103300-333000	JCPC Grant		\$17,500
105890-463151	Mountain Alliance – JCPC	\$3,500	
105890-463146	Blue Ridge Mediation – JCPC	\$12,000	
105890-463142	Project Challenge – JCPC	\$2,000	

The amendment recognized the acceptance of additional funds for the Juvenile Crime Prevention grant. No County dollars were required as a match.

Commissioner Yates, seconded by Commissioner Wallin, moved to approve the budget amendments as presented by Ms. Watson.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

B. Proposed Resolution Authorizing the Sale of Lot 2, Phase 1, Twin Rivers Development

Ms. Misty Watson, Finance Director, requested the Board surplus a 1.60 acre lot located in the Twin Rivers Development in Foscoe (Parcel ID 1889-70-2213-000 in the Watauga County tax maps) and adopt a proposed resolution authorizing the sale of the property to start the sale process through GovDeals. The minimum bid will be set at \$5,000 to cover taxes, attorney fees, and administrative fees.

Commissioner Turnbow, seconded by Commissioner Yates, moved to declare the 1.60 acre lot located in the Twin Rivers Development as surplus and adopt the resolution authorizing the sale of the property and to authorize staff to list the property for sale with GovDeals at a minimum bid of \$5,000.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

C. Proposed Reallocation of Rural Operating Assistance Program (ROAP) Funds

Ms. Misty Watson, Finance Director, stated that \$2,500 has been reallocated as recommended by the Rural Operating Assistance Program (ROAP) Committee. Funds were shifted from the Watauga County DSS Elderly and Disabled Transportation Assistance Program to AppalCART to cover the cost of in-town complimentary paratransit services.

Commissioner Wallin, seconded by Commissioner Turnbow, moved to approve the reallocation of Rural Operating Assistance Program (ROAP) funds as presented by Ms. Watson.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

MISCELLANEOUS ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

A. Proposed Resolution Supporting the More Powerful NC Campaign

County Manager Geouque presented, per commissioner direction and as recommended by Ms. Holly Jones with the NC Department of Justice who presented the Opioid presentation at the December 17 meeting, a proposed resolution supporting the More Powerful NC Campaign to combat the opioid epidemic.

Vice-Chairman Kennedy, seconded by Commissioner Turnbow, moved to adopt the resolution supporting the More Powerful NC Campaign as presented.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

B. Request for Additional School Resource Officer

County Manager Geouque stated that the Watauga County School system received an additional School Resource Officer (SRO) grant in the amount of \$33,000. The grant requires for each \$2 provided the County match with \$1. Five months of the SRO salary is \$24,711 with the State paying \$16,474 and the County \$8,237. The County would need to fund an additional \$44,434 in initial start-up costs for a vehicle and equipment. The subsequent budget year the SRO's salary would be \$59,308, which includes benefits, with the state paying \$33,000 and the County paying \$26,308. If the Board approved this request action would be required to accept the SRO grant through the school system in the amount of \$33,000 and direct staff to requisition \$52,671 to cover the five months of salary at \$8,237 and \$44,434 for a vehicle and equipment.

By consensus, the Board tabled this matter to allow for further discussion.

C. Proposed Dates for Annual Pre-Budget Retreat

County Manager Geouque announced that the proposed dates for the Annual Pre-Budget Retreat were Thursday, February 13, from 12 noon until approximately 7:00 P.M., and Friday, February 14, from 9:00 A.M. until approximately 1:00 P.M. The County Manager announced that two days were required for the Retreat and asked for direction in regards to the dates proposed.

By consensus, the Board agreed to hold the Annual Pre-Budget Retreat on Thursday, February 13, from 12 noon until approximately 7:00 P.M., and Friday, February 14, from 9:00 A.M. until approximately 1:00 P.M.

D. Upcoming Meeting Schedule

County Manager Geouque presented the below chart showing the dates of Board of Commissioners meetings and highlighting the meeting dates of which the Board of Elections requires the use of the Commissioners Board room:

January	7	Cancel Due to Holiday Schedules	July	7	
	21			21	
February	4		August	4	
	18	One-Stop Voting: Feb. 12-29		18	
March	3	Primary Election Day	September	1	
	17			15	
April	7	Possible Primary Runoff One-Stop (April 2-18)	October	6	
	21	Possible Primary Runoff Election Day		20	One-Stop Voting: October 14-31
May	5	Possible Primary Runoff One-Stop (April 23 – May 9) (Election - May 12)	November	3	Election Day
	19			17	
June	2		December	1	
	16			15	

Staff recommends either canceling or moving the location of the February 18 meeting to Courtroom # 1 and either canceling or rescheduling the March 3 meeting to Wednesday, March 4.

By consensus, the Board agreed to hold the February 18, 2020, Board of Commissioners meeting at 5:30 P.M. and to change the location of the meeting to Courtroom # 1 in the Watauga County Courthouse.

The Board also agreed, by consensus, to table consideration of canceling the March 3 meeting until closer to that date to see if the meeting will be needed.

E. Boards and Commissions

Economic Development Commission (EDC)

EDC member Ms. Savannah Garland has had to resign due to accepting a new job in Kingsport, Tennessee. Her three year term expires in June, 2022. The Commissioners could replace her now or wait until June, 2020, when four other terms expire. One of those members will not be eligible for reappointment per the EDC rules; the other three will be eligible for reappointment, provided they are interested in continuing to serve.

By consensus, the Board requested the County advertise for volunteers.

F. Announcements

County Manager Geouque announced the following:

- The Annual Pre-Budget Retreat will be held on Thursday, February 13, from 12 noon until approximately 7:00 P.M., and Friday, February 14, from 9:00 A.M. until approximately 1:00 P.M.
- The Boone Town Council has expressed interest in a joint open public meeting to discuss the future of the County-owned Turner House and parking issues.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment.

CLOSED SESSION

At 6:53 P.M., Commissioner Yates, seconded by Commissioner Wallin, moved to enter Closed Session to discuss Attorney/Client Matters, per G. S. 143-318.11(a)(3) and Land Acquisition, per G. S. 143-318.11(a)(5)(i).

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

Vice-Chairman Kennedy, seconded by Commissioner Yates, moved to resume the open meeting at 7:38 P.M.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

ADJOURN

Commissioner Wallin, seconded by Commissioner Turnbow, moved to adjourn the meeting at 7:38 P.M.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

John Welch, Chairman

ATTEST: Anita J. Fogle, Clerk to the Board

Watauga County Board of Commissioners

MINUTES

WATAUGA COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 4, 2020

The Watauga County Board of Commissioners held a regular meeting, as scheduled, on Tuesday, February 4, 2020, at 8:30 A.M. in the Commissioners' Board Room of the Watauga County Administration Building, Boone, North Carolina.

PRESENT: John Welch, Chairman
Billy Kennedy, Vice-Chairman
Larry Turnbow, Commissioner
Charlie Wallin, Commissioner
Perry Yates, Commissioner
Andrea Capua, County Attorney
Deron Geouque, County Manager
Anita J. Fogle, Clerk to the Board

Chairman Welch called the meeting to order at 8:33 A.M.

Commissioner Yates opened with a prayer and Vice-Chairman Kennedy led the Pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Chairman Welch called for additions and/or corrections to the January 21, 2020, regular meeting and closed session minutes.

Vice-Chairman Kennedy, seconded by Commissioner Turnbow, moved to approve the January 21, 2020, regular meeting minutes as presented.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

Vice-Chairman Kennedy, seconded by Commissioner Turnbow, moved to approve the January 21, 2020, closed session minutes as presented.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Chairman Welch called for additions and/or corrections to the February 4, 2020, agenda.

Commissioner Yates, seconded by Commissioner Wallin, moved to approve the February 4, 2020, agenda as presented.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

Chairman Welch announced that he had to leave the meeting at approximately 9:20 A.M. to attend another meeting and would return as soon as possible.

PROPOSED PROCLAMATION SUPPORTING THE WATAUGA HIGH SCHOOL PIONEER PLAYMAKERS REPRESENTING NORTH CAROLINA AT THE SOUTHEASTERN THEATRE CONFERENCE

Chairman Welch presented a proposed proclamation honoring the Watauga High School (WHS) Pioneer Playmakers who will be representing North Carolina at the Southeastern Theatre Conference in Louisville, Kentucky. The WHS Pioneer Playmakers will also be hosting a fundraiser as they present "Ernest and the Pale Moon" on Friday, February 21, 2020, at 7:30 P.M. and 9:30 P.M. at Appalachian Theatre. Funds raised will be used to cover the costs associated with the competition.

Commissioner Yates, seconded by Commissioner Wallin, moved to approve the February 4, 2020, agenda as presented.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

2018-2019 ANNUAL REPORT AND 2019 STATE OF THE COMMUNITY'S HEALTH

Ms. Jennifer Greene, Appalachian District Health Director, presented the 2019 State of the Community's Health report and the Health Department's Annual Report for Fiscal Year 2018-2019. The reports were given for information only and, therefore, no action was required.

WATAUGA FOOD COUNCIL REPORT

Ms. Brooke Kornegay, Watauga Food Council Coordinator, presented an update on the Council's activities. The Food Council supports the local Food Hub, Farmer's Markets, the Cooperative Extension, and the Visit NC Farms App. The Food Council also works with local businesses to bring good food to citizens. Ms. Kornegay stated that they are currently working on achievable balances and need to increase coordination effort.

Ms. Elena Dalton, with F.A.R.M. Café, updated the Board on the Food Council's coordination, increased efficiency, policies researched, and the increased demand at local food outlets.

The Food Council is currently planning to hire a Coordinator position that will work with producers and outlets. The Food Council requested funding in the amount of \$2,500 to \$5,000 to help fund the position. The Food Council is also requesting the Town of Boone help with the funding needed. With anticipated growth, the Food Council believes hiring the Coordinator position would be beneficial.

Vice-Chairman Kennedy stated that the Board would revisit the request during the budget planning process

and Chairman Welch advised Ms. Kornegay and Ms. Dalton to stay in touch with the County Manager.

WATAUGA COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY ANNUAL REPORT

Ms. Monica Caruso, County Librarian, presented the Watauga County Public Library Annual Report. Ms. Caruso reported on youth and adult services, activities at the Western Watauga Branch, volunteer activities and gave an overview of revenues and expenses, statistics, and grants received. The report was for information only and, therefore, no action was required.

At 9:16 A.M., Chairman Welch left the meeting to attend a meeting that was a prior commitment. Vice-Chairman Kennedy led the meeting while Mr. Welch was absent.

WATAUGA ARTS COUNCIL UPDATE AND REQUEST FOR LEASE RENEWAL

Ms. Cherry Johnson, Watauga County Arts Council, thanked the Board and County staff for the support shown over the years. Ms. Johnson stated that the facility they have leased from the County since 2013, located at 377 Shadowline Drive, is wonderful and needed. The lease automatically renews for ninety (90) day periods after April 15. Ms. Johnson requested the Board renew the lease, which is set to expire April 15, 2020, for an additional five years.

Ms. Ginger Bryant, President of the Watauga Arts Council Board of Directors, also thanked the Board for the building and support over the years. Ms. Bryant reviewed the history of the Arts Council which began as a grassroots program as well as the current programs offered. Ms. Bryant encouraged the Board to extend the lease for an additional five years.

The Arts Council pays one dollar (\$1) per year to lease the building. Any subleases must be approved by the Board of Commissioners. A proposed resolution was presented which would need to be approved and advertised for ten days prior to authorization for the execution of the lease with final adoption at the next regular Board meeting after the ten day public notice.

After lengthy discussion, Commissioner Turnbow moved to renew the lease for a three year period. Commissioner Turnbow's motion died for lack of a second.

Commissioner Yates, seconded by Commissioner Turnbow, moved to adopt the resolution stating the Board's intent to lease the property to the Arts Council for one dollar (\$1) per year for a term of four (4) years.

Commissioner Turnbow also encouraged Ms. Johnson and Ms. Bryant to start looking for permanent space to house the Arts Council. Commissioner Turnbow also suggested the Board of Commissioners appoint a liaison to the Arts Council Board as a non-voting member. Ms. Johnson welcomed the idea.

VOTE: Aye-4(Kennedy, Turnbow, Wallin, Yates)

Nay-0

Absent-1(Welch)

EMERGENCY SERVICES MATTERS

A. Proposed Emergency Fuel Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Watauga County Schools

Mr. Will Holt, Emergency Services Director, presented a proposed Emergency Fuel Memorandum of

Understanding (MOU) with the Watauga County School System. The purpose of the agreement is to secure fuel during state-of-emergency situations in the County.

Commissioner Yates, seconded by Commissioner Wallin, moved to approve the Memorandum of Understanding as presented by Mr. Holt.

VOTE: Aye-4(Kennedy, Turnbow, Wallin, Yates)
Nay-0
Absent-1(Welch)

B. 911 Phone Maintenance Contract

Mr. Holt requested approval to renew the contract with Mobile Communications America in the amount of \$60,746.28. The contract was for the County's 911 phone system maintenance. Mr. Holt stated that funds were provided from the 911 surcharge.

Commissioner Turnbow, seconded by Commissioner Yates, moved to renew the 911 phone system maintenance contract with Mobile Communications America in the amount of \$60,746.28 as presented by Mr. Holt.

VOTE: Aye-4(Kennedy, Turnbow, Wallin, Yates)
Nay-0
Absent-1(Welch)

BID AWARD REQUEST FOR AERIAL PLATFORM

Mr. Robert Marsh, Maintenance Director, stated that bids were received for an aerial lift to service the new Community Recreation Center and other County facilities, parking lots, and fields. Four (4) bids were received with Aerial Titans of Tucker, Georgia submitting the lowest responsive bid in the amount of \$39,610. Mr. Steven Moody, Maintenance Mechanic Crew Chief, was present and stated that Maintenance staff has rented and operated the exact brand of aerial lift.

County Manager Geouque clarified that funds for the equipment would be allocated from the Community Recreation Center budget as it would be used for that facility.

Commissioner Yates, seconded by Commissioner Turnbow, moved to award the bid to Aerial Titans in the amount of \$39,610 for an aerial lift as presented by Mr. Marsh.

VOTE: Aye-4(Kennedy, Turnbow, Wallin, Yates)
Nay-0
Absent-1(Welch)

PROJECT ON AGING MATTERS

A. Proposed Appointment of North Carolina Senior Tar Heel Legislature (STHL) Alternate Member

Ms. Angie Boitnotte, Project on Aging Director, presented recommendations for an appointment to the North Carolina Senior Tar Heel Legislature (STHL). Each County in the State has a delegate and an alternate. Ms.

Mary Moretz's name has been provided to serve as the alternate STHL member for Watauga County.

Commissioner Yates, seconded by Commissioner Turnbow, moved to waive a second reading and appoint Ms. Mary Moretz to serve as the Watauga County Alternate to the North Carolina Senior Tar Heel Legislature.

VOTE: Aye-4(Kennedy, Turnbow, Wallin, Yates)
Nay-0
Absent-1(Welch)

B. Proposed Appointment of Home and Community Care Block Grant (H&CCBG) Advisory Committee and Lead Agency

Ms. Angie Boitnotte stated that each year the Board is required to appoint a lead agency and advisory committee to make recommendations on how to best expend the County's allocation from the Home and Community Care Block Grant (H&CCBG) funds. H&CCBG funds were established by the Older American's Act and administered by the North Carolina Division of Aging.

The following were recommended for appointment to the committee: Commissioner Yates, Nicole Hiegl, Linda Bretz, Vanessa Brumfield, Jennifer Greene, Murray Hawkinson, Tom Hughes, Pat Coley, Kat Danner, Linda Marcoux, Mary Moretz, Bob Parker, Carolyn Owens, and Dr. Ed Rosenberg. Commissioner Yates was appointed to this Committee at the December 3, 2019, Board of Commissioners meeting.

Commissioner Turnbow, seconded by Commissioner Wallin, moved to waive the second reading and appoint Nicole Hiegl, Linda Bretz, Vanessa Brumfield, Jennifer Greene, Murray Hawkinson, Tom Hughes, Pat Coley, Kat Danner, Linda Marcoux, Mary Moretz, Bob Parker, Carolyn Owens, and Dr. Ed Rosenberg to the Home and Community Care Block Grant Advisory Committee.

VOTE: Aye-4(Kennedy, Turnbow, Wallin, Yates)
Nay-0
Absent-1(Welch)

Commissioner Turnbow, seconded by Commissioner Wallin, moved to appoint the Watauga County Project on Aging as the Lead Agency for Home and Community Care Block Grant funds.

VOTE: Aye-4(Kennedy, Turnbow, Wallin, Yates)
Nay-0
Absent-1(Welch)

FINANCE MATTERS

A. Proposed Updated Resolution Authorizing the Sale of Lot 2, Phase 1, Twin Rivers Development

Ms. Misty Watson, Finance Director, presented an updated resolution authorizing the sale of a 1.60 acre lot located in the Twin Rivers Development in Foscoe. The property was declared surplus at a previous meeting. The updated resolution would need to be adopted to start the sale process. The minimum bid will be set at \$5,000 to cover taxes, attorney fees, and administrative fees.

Commissioner Turnbow, seconded by Commissioner Yates, moved to adopt the revised resolution to authorize the listing, sale and advertisement of the property on GovDeals with a minimum bid of \$5,000 as

presented by Ms. Watson.

VOTE: Aye-4(Kennedy, Turnbow, Wallin, Yates)
Nay-0
Absent-1(Welch)

B. FY 2019 Carry Forward Purchase Order

Ms. Watson presented the following additional carry forward purchase order for Fiscal Year 2019.

Account	Description	Purpose	Amount	PO#
105911-470047	Carry forward	School Phase I Design	313,192.60	2019175
		TOTAL:	313,192.60	

Commissioner Yates, seconded by Commissioner Wallin, moved to approve the carry forward purchase order as presented by Ms. Watson.

VOTE: Aye-4(Kennedy, Turnbow, Wallin, Yates)
Nay-0
Absent-1(Welch)

C. Proposed Acceptance of Juvenile Crime Prevention Council (JCPC) Raise the Age Expansion Funds

Ms. Watson requested the acceptance of additional Raise the Age Expansion funding in the amount of \$17,500. No County match was required.

Commissioner Wallin, seconded by Commissioner Turnbow, moved to accept the additional Raise the Age Expansion funding in the amount of \$17,500 as presented by Ms. Watson.

VOTE: Aye-4(Kennedy, Turnbow, Wallin, Yates)
Nay-0
Absent-1(Welch)

MISCELLANEOUS ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

A. Bleachers and Gym Padding for New Community Recreation Center

County Manager Geouque requested approval for the purchase of bleachers and padding for the new Community Recreation Center. The lowest bid received was from Blankenship Associates, Inc., in the amount of \$34,062. The County Manager stated that adequate funds were allocated in the new Community Recreation Center Fixtures, Furniture, and Equipment budget to cover the expense.

Commissioner Turnbow, seconded by Commissioner Yates, moved to award the bid for bleachers and padding for the new Community Recreation Center to Blankenship Associates in the amount of \$34,062.

VOTE: Aye-4(Kennedy, Turnbow, Wallin, Yates)
Nay-0

Absent-1(Welch)

B. Furniture for the New Community Recreation Center

County Manager Geouque requested authorization to purchase new furniture from Young Office Supplies in the amount of \$161,991.04. Young Office Supplies has worked with the architect to design and coordinate the furniture for the new Community Recreation Center. Adequate funds have been allocated in the new Community Recreation Center project budget to cover the expense.

Commissioner Yates, seconded by Commissioner Wallin, moved to authorize the purchase of furniture from Young Office Supplies in the amount of \$161,991.04 for the new Community Recreation Center as presented by the County Manager.

VOTE: Aye-4(Kennedy, Turnbow, Wallin, Yates)
Nay-0
Absent-1(Welch)

C. Outdoor and Indoor Signage for the New Community Recreation Center

County Manager Geouque requested approval for the purchase of three (3) exterior seals and lettering along with one (1) interior sign from AOA Signs in the amount of \$14,840.41. Adequate funds have been allocated in the new Community Recreation Center project budget under Furniture, Fixtures, and Equipment (FF&E) to cover the expense.

Commissioner Turnbow, seconded by Commissioner Yates, moved to authorize the purchase of three (3) exterior seals and lettering along with one (1) interior sign from AOA signs in the amount of \$14,840.41 for the new Community Recreation Center as presented by the County Manager.

VOTE: Aye-4(Kennedy, Turnbow, Wallin, Yates)
Nay-0
Absent-1(Welch)

D. Request for Additional School Resource Officer (SRO)

County Manager Geouque stated that the Watauga County School system received an additional SRO grant in the amount of \$33,000. The grant requires for each two dollars provided, the County will match with one dollar. Five months of the SRO salary is \$24,711 with the State paying \$16,474 and the County \$8,237. The County would need to fund an additional \$44,434 in initial start-up costs for a vehicle and equipment. In the subsequent budget year the SRO's salary would be \$59,308 with the state paying \$33,000 and the County \$26,308.

The County Manager stated that the Board had tabled the decision regarding this matter at a previous meeting until further information could be gathered from the School System. The County Manager contacted Dr. Elliott to discuss the school system covering the personnel costs for the initial period as the County would be covering the \$44,434 in equipment costs. School Superintendent, Dr. Scott Elliott, agreed to cover the salary cost for the initial period.

County Manager Geouque stated that the additional position would allow more flexibility for the elementary

schools as the new SRO would be stationed at Hardin Park Elementary but would also serve as a backup at the other schools, including Watauga High School, when other SROs were out for training or on leave. The new SRO would also perform DARE services.

Commissioner Turnbow, seconded by Commissioner Wallin, moved to accept the School Resource Officer (SRO) grant through the school system in the amount of \$33,000 and direct staff to requisition \$44,434, from the contingency fund, for a vehicle and equipment with the understanding that the school system would cover the County's five month portion of salary in the amount of \$8,237.

VOTE: Aye-4(Kennedy, Turnbow, Wallin, Yates)
Nay-0
Absent-1(Welch)

E. Proposed Renewal of Red Cross Lease

County Manager Geouque stated that the American Red Cross has requested a renewal of their lease for County-owned office space which is set to expire March 31, 2020. The proposed renewal is for an eight (8) year term with the rent remaining at one dollar (\$1) per year. A proposed resolution was presented which would need to be approved and advertised for ten days prior to authorization for the execution of the lease with final adoption at the next regular Board meeting after the ten day public notice. County Attorney Capua stated that the lease addressed space concerns and included a thirty-day termination clause.

Commissioner Yates, seconded by Commissioner Wallin, moved to adopt the resolution stating the Board's intent to lease the property to the American Red Cross for one dollar (\$1) per year for a term of eight (8) years.

VOTE: Aye-4(Kennedy, Turnbow, Wallin, Yates)
Nay-0
Absent-1(Welch)

F. Proposed Dates for Joint Meeting with the Town of Boone to Discuss the Turner House

County Manager Geouque stated that the Town of Boone had confirmed that February 24, 2020, at 6:30 PM was a good time to hold a joint meeting to discuss the Turner building currently owned by the County. The County would host the meeting at the Agricultural Conference Center. Vice-Chairman Kennedy stated that he would not be able to attend that meeting due to a previous commitment at that time.

Commissioner Turnbow, seconded by Commissioner Yates, moved to schedule a special joint meeting with the Boone Town Council on Monday, February 24, 2020, at 6:30 P.M. to discuss the Turner building.

VOTE: Aye-4(Kennedy, Turnbow, Wallin, Yates)
Nay-0
Absent-1(Welch)

G. Appalachian State Request to Build Structure on Leased Landfill Property

County Manager Geouque stated that in August 2019, the Board approved a lease renewal with Appalachian

State University for their greenhouse located at the Watauga County Landfill. At the December 17, 2019, Board meeting, the County Manager presented a request from the University for permission to create an outdoor classroom with the construction of a deck around the existing building. Per the lease, Board approval is required for the University to make alterations to the property.

In December, the Board tabled consideration to allow time for the County Attorney to verify that Appalachian State has proper insurance coverage for the students using the outdoor classroom. Mr. Geouque stated that the County Attorney has reported back that the University's position is that they are not willing (or able) to make any changes to the clause regarding insurance and the County will have to rely on its own sovereign immunity and insurance policies in case the County were ever sued. Appalachian State's response included . . . "The request to build does not change the county attorney's response as county's sovereign immunity cannot be waived under any circumstances. The county's self-insurance (NC Tort Claims Act and Defense of State Employees) would still apply to any non-employee hurt on the site due to a negligent act by a university employee and our employees are covered by workers compensation as required by NC law."

County Attorney Capua agreed that Appalachian State University was strapped by North Carolina law and the County would be protected by liability insurance and County immunity. Ms. Capua stated that the County would have to consider the risk assessment and what it is comfortable with. County Manager Geouque stated that Government immunity was being chipped away at; however, the County does have insurance. Ms. Capua stated that she did not believe it was an Appalachian State University policy but a statewide university policy.

After discussion, there was no action taken due to the lack of a motion.

Vice-Chairman Kennedy stated that the request could be revisited in the future and Commissioner Turnbow stated that he understood that it was a statewide policy, not Appalachian State University that would leave the County liable.

H. Boards and Commissions

County Manager Geouque shared the following proposed Boards and Commissions appointments for consideration:

Economic Development Commission (EDC)

EDC member Savannah Garland had to resign due to accepting a new job in Kingsport, Tennessee. Her three year term expires in June, 2022. The un-expired term could be filled now and would expire in June at which time the member could be appointed to serve their first full term. Another option would be to wait and replace the position at the beginning of the full term which would be in June. Four other terms also expire in June. One of those four members will not be eligible for reappointment per the EDC rules; the other three will be eligible for reappointment, provided they are interested in continuing to serve. A request for volunteers has been advertised. Vice-Chairman Kennedy tabled consideration to allow for the submission of applications.

Voluntary Farmland Preservation Program Advisory Board

The Voluntary Farmland Preservation Program Advisory Board recommended the appointment of Ms. Kristy Hackler to fill the vacancy of Mr. Johnny Moretz who recently resigned due to health reasons.

Vice-Chairman Kennedy tabled consideration to allow for a second reading.

At 10:31 A.M., Chairman Welch returned to and rejoined the meeting.

AppalCART Board

The AppalCART Board recommended the appointment of Mr. David Jackson as an At-Large representative to fill the vacancy of Ms. Kedith England who resigned in September 2019. Mr. Jackson is the CEO of the Boone Area Chamber of Commerce. He is the current Chair of the High Country RPO Rural Transportation Coordinating Committee, a member of the Children's Council Board, Boone Area Sports Commission, and Watauga Opportunities Board. Mr. Jackson uses AppalCART as a form of transportation to attend meetings around town.

Commissioner Turnbow, seconded by Commissioner Yates, moved to waive the second reading and appoint Mr. David Jackson as an At-Large representative on the AppalCART Board as presented.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

Recreation Commission

Valle Crucis School Principal, Bonnie Smith, has recommended Mr. Sam Painter be reappointed as Valle Crucis' representative on the Recreation Commission.

Commissioner Turnbow, seconded by Vice-Chairman Kennedy, moved to waive the second reading and reappoint Mr. Sam Painter as the Valle Crucis School representative on the Recreation Commission as presented.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

I. Announcements

County Manager Geouque announced the following:

- The Annual Pre-Budget Retreat is scheduled for Thursday, February 13, beginning at 12:00 P.M. and Friday, February 14, 2020, at 9:00 A.M.
- The High Country Council of Governments invites you to their Legislative Luncheon on February 27, 2020, from 10:00 A.M. until 12:00 P.M. at Blue Ridge Energy's Community Room. Please let Anita know if you plan to attend and she will be glad to RSVP on your behalf.
- Due to one-stop voting, the location of the February 18, 2020, regular meeting of the Board of Commissioners will be moved to Courtroom # 1 on the third floor of the Watauga County Courthouse, located at 842 West King Street. The meeting will begin at the regular time of 5:30 P.M.
- The Senior Center will host an advocacy event from 10:00 – 11:00 A.M. on Monday, February 24, 2020, at the Lois E. Harrell Senior Center to allow seniors the opportunity to meet their elected officials and allow conversations to be held about issues that are concerning to seniors.

The County Manager stated that, in the future, he could ask Ms. Angie Boitnotte, Project on Aging Director, to direct staff to present a couple of dates for the Board to choose from before setting the date for this event.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Mr. Patrick Richardson thanked the Board for being fiscally responsible and for supporting the Arts Council. He also shared his support of the Council and how the arts positively affected his life.

CLOSED SESSION

At 10:38 A.M., Commissioner Wallin, seconded by Vice-Chairman Kenney, moved to enter Closed Session to discuss Attorney/Client Matters, per G. S. 143-318.11(a)(3).

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

Commissioner Wallin, seconded by Vice-Chairman Kennedy, moved to resume the open meeting at 11:45 A.M.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

ADJOURN

Commissioner Turnbow, seconded by Vice-Chairman Kennedy, moved to adjourn the meeting at 11:46 A.M.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

John Welch, Chairman

ATTEST:

Anita J. Fogle, Clerk to the Board

Watauga County Board of Commissioners

MINUTES

WATAUGA COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

SPECIAL MEETING

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 13, 2020, & FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 14, 2020

The Watauga County Board of Commissioners held a special meeting on Thursday, February 13, 2020, and Friday, February 14, 2020, in order to conduct a budget retreat to review goals and objectives for the County. The meetings were held in the Commissioners' Board Room located in the Watauga County Administration Building, Boone, North Carolina.

PRESENT: John Welch, Chairman
Billy Kennedy, Vice-Chairman
Larry Turnbow, Commissioner
Charlie Wallin, Commissioner
Perry Yates, Commissioner
Deron Geouque, County Manager
Misty Watson, Finance Director

Lunch was provided at 12:00 P.M. Chairman Welch called the meeting to order on Thursday, February 13, 2020, at 12:30 P.M. welcoming those in attendance.

The following topics were discussed:

Opening Remarks

Mr. Deron Geouque

FY 2020 Review and Discussion of 2021 Budget

Ms. Misty Watson

1. Revenues
2. Expenditures
3. Debt Service Report
4. Budget Calendar
5. Future Appropriations

Review of Current Capital Improvement Plan (CIP)

Mr. Deron Geouque & Mr. Robert Marsh

1. Current CIP Status Report
2. Courtroom # 2 Renovations
3. East Annex Building Program
4. Courthouse and Administration Roof Replacements
5. County Facilities Assessment Update
6. Turner Building
7. Recreation Fields
 - a. Tennis Courts
 - b. Basketball Courts

- c. Pickleball Courts
- d. Anne-Marie Paving

- 8. Library
- 9. School Facilities

Break from 2:45 P.M. to 3:00 P.M.

Sanitation Matters

Mr. Rex Buck

- 1. Organics Recycling Market Study
- 2. Facility Upgrades

Appalachian District Health

Ms. Jennifer Greene

Tourism Development Authority (TDA)

Mr. Matt Vincent and Mr. Wright Tilley

Caldwell Community College & Technical Institute

Dr. Mark Poarch

Break from 4:45 P.M. to 5:00 P.M.

School Board Funding Issues

Superintendent Dr. Scott Elliott, School Board Members Mr. Ron Henries, Ms. Brenda Reese, Dr. Jay Fenwick, and Staff members Ms. Ly Marze, Mr. Danny Clark

- 1. FY 2021 Funding Needs
- 2. Schools' Capital Improvement Plan

Public Safety and Emergency Communications Systems Study Update

Mr. Will Holt

County Manager's Summary

Mr. Deron Geouque

A recess was declared at 7:00 P.M. The meeting reconvened on Friday, February 14, 2020, at 9:00 A.M.

Pritzker Children's Initiative (PCI) Presentation

Ms. Crystal Kelly

Update on Recreational Projects

Mr. Joe Furman & Ms. Wendy Patoprsty

- 1. Guy Ford Paddle Access
- 2. Middle Fork Greenway

Census

Mr. Joe Furman

Broadband Update

Mr. Joe Furman

Watauga Medics

Mr. Craig Sullivan

- 1. Annual Report
- 2. Future Needs

Miscellaneous & Commissioner Matters

Mr. Deron Geouque

Budget work sessions were set for May 14, 2020, from 12:00 to 8:00 P.M. and May 15, 2020, from 9:00 A.M.-4:00 P.M.

Board Discussion and Directives

The County Manager concluded the retreat by reviewing the issues discussed and seeking direction from the

Board for Fiscal Year 2020-2021.

The meeting adjourned at 11:25 P.M.

John Welch
Chairman, Watauga County Board of Commissioners

ATTEST:
Deron Geouque
County Manager

Watauga County Board of Commissioners

MINUTES

WATAUGA COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 18, 2020

The Watauga County Board of Commissioners held a regular meeting, as scheduled, on Tuesday, February 18, 2020, at 5:30 P.M. in Courtroom # 1 at the Watauga County Courthouse in Boone, North Carolina.

PRESENT: John Welch, Chairman
Billy Kennedy, Vice-Chairman
Larry Turnbow, Commissioner
Charlie Wallin, Commissioner
Perry Yates, Commissioner
Anthony di Santi, County Attorney
Deron Geouque, County Manager
Anita J. Fogle, Clerk to the Board

Chairman Welch called the meeting to order at 5:38 P.M.

Commissioner Wallin opened with a prayer and Commissioner Turnbow led the Pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Chairman Welch called for additions and/or corrections to the February 4, 2020, regular meeting and closed session minutes.

Vice-Chairman Kennedy, seconded by Commissioner Wallin, moved to approve the February 4, 2020, regular meeting minutes as presented.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

Vice-Chairman Kennedy, seconded by Commissioner Wallin, moved to approve the February 4, 2020, closed session minutes as presented.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Chairman Welch called for additions and/or corrections to the February 18, 2020, agenda.

Chairman Welch stated that there has been a request to add an appointment to the Watauga Council under Boards and Commissions.

Vice-Chairman Kennedy, seconded by Commissioner Turnbow, moved to approve the February 18, 2020, agenda as amended.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

TAX MATTERS

A. Monthly Collections Report

Tax Administrator, Mr. Larry Warren, presented the Tax Collections Report for the month of January 2020. The report was presented for information only and, therefore, no action was required.

B. Refunds and Releases

Mr. Warren presented the Refunds and Releases Report for January 2020 for Board approval:

TO BE TYPED IN MINUTE BOOK

Commissioner Yates, seconded by Vice-Chairman Kennedy, moved to approve the Refunds and Releases Report for January 2020 as presented.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

MISCELLANEOUS ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

A. Upcoming Meeting Schedule

County Manager Geouque stated that the Board of Elections required the use of the Commissioners' Board Room through March 4 due to the room being a one-stop voting place and an official Polling site for the Primary which is on March 3, 2020. At the January 21 Board meeting, the Board moved the February 18 meeting location to Courtroom # 1 in the Courthouse and discussed cancelling the March 3 meeting. Mr. Geouque stated that the Board of Elections also had other County facilities reserved on March 3 due to the elections which limited the availability of a meeting space to hold a meeting.

Commissioner Yates, seconded by Vice-Chairman Kennedy, moved to cancel the March 3, 2020, Board of Commissioners meeting due to the Board of Elections use of County facilities.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

B. Boards and Commissions

County Manager Geouque presented the following:

Economic Development Commission (EDC)

EDC member Savannah Garland has had to resign due to accepting a new job in Kingsport, Tennessee. Ms. Garland's three-year term expires in June, 2022. The un-expired term could be filled now and would expire in June, 2022 at which time the member could be appointed to serve their first full term. Another option would be to wait and replace the position at the beginning of the full term which would be in June. Four other terms also expire in June. One of those four members will not be eligible for reappointment per the EDC rules; the other three will be eligible for reappointment, provided they are interested in continuing to serve. A request for volunteers has been advertised.

By consensus, further discussion was tabled until the receipt of volunteer applications.

Voluntary Farmland Preservation Program Advisory Board

The Voluntary Farmland Preservation Program Advisory Board recommends the appointment of Ms. Kristy Hackler to fill the vacancy of Mr. Johnny Moretz who recently resigned due to health issues. This is a second reading.

Commissioner Wallin, seconded by Commissioner Turnbow, moved to appoint Ms. Kristy Hackler to the Voluntary Farmland Preservation Program Advisory Board as requested.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

Watauga County Arts Council

At the February 4, 2020, the Board discussed appointing a Commissioner as a liaison to the Watauga County Arts Council Board.

By consensus, the Board agreed to appoint Commissioner Wallin to the Watauga County Arts Council and to include the appointment in the future under the Chairman's appointments during the organization portion of the first regular meeting in December of each year.

C. Announcements

County Manager Geouque announced the following:

- The High Country Council of Governments invites you to their Legislative Luncheon on February 27, 2020, from 10:00 A.M. until 12:00 P.M. at Blue Ridge Energy's Community Room. Please let Anita know if you plan to attend and she will be glad to RSVP on your behalf.
- The Senior Center will host an advocacy event from 10:00 – 11:00 A.M. on Monday, February 24, 2020, at the Lois E. Harrell Senior Center to allow seniors the opportunity to meet their elected officials and allow conversations to be held about issues that are concerning to seniors.
- The Board of Commissioners will hold a joint meeting with the Boone Town Council to discuss the County-owned Turner building located on Water Street. The meeting will be held on Monday, February 24, 2020, at 6:30 P.M. in the Agriculture Conference Center located on Poplar Grove Road.

- Budget Work Sessions are scheduled on May 14 and 15, 2020.
- Watauga County Cooperative Extension invites you to the Annual "Report to the People" on Monday, March 9, 2020, from 11:45 A.M. to 1:00 P.M. at the Agricultural Conference Center. Lunch will be provided and staff will report on Extension results from 2019 and issues that are being worked on in 2020. The Watauga County Master Gardeners and High Country Grown will also highlight their ongoing work in the county. If you wish to attend, please let Anita know and she will be glad to RSVP on your behalf.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment.

CLOSED SESSION

At 5:50 P.M., Commissioner Turnbow, seconded by Vice-Chairman Kennedy, moved to enter Closed Session to discuss Attorney/Client Matters, per G. S. 143-318.11(a)(3) and Personnel Matters, per G. S. 143-318.11(a)(6).

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

Commissioner Yates, seconded by Commissioner Turnbow, moved to resume the open meeting at 6:35 P.M.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

ADJOURN

Commissioner Wallin, seconded by Vice-Chairman Kennedy, moved to adjourn the meeting at 6:35 P.M.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

John Welch, Chairman

ATTEST:

Anita J. Fogle, Clerk to the Board

Watauga County Board of Commissioners

MINUTES

WATAUGA COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS JOINT MEETING WITH THE BOONE TOWN COUNCIL TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 24, 2020

The Watauga County Board of Commissioners held a joint meeting with the Boone Town Council at 6:30 P.M. on Monday, February 24, 2020, at the Agricultural Conference Center, Boone, North Carolina.

Those present were:

Watauga County: Chairman John Welch, Commissioners: Larry Turnbow, Charlie Wallin, and Perry Yates, as well as County Attorney, Anthony di Santi, County Manager Deron Geouque, and Clerk to the Board, Anita Fogle.

[Clerk's Note: Watauga County Vice-Chairman Billy Kennedy was absent due to a prior commitment.]

Town of Boone: Mayor, Rennie Brantz; Mayor Pro-Tem, Loretta Clawson; Council Members: Sam Furgiuele, Dustin Hicks, Nancy LaPlaca, and Connie Ulmer; Town Attorney, Allison Meade; Town Manager, John Ward; Town Clerk, Nicole Harmon; and Planning and Inspections Director, Jane Shook.

Mayor Brantz, followed by Chairman Welch, called the joint meeting to order at 6:30 P.M.

Commissioner Yates, seconded by Commissioner Turnbow, moved to add a closed session at the end of the Watauga County Commissioners' agenda for Attorney/Client Matters, per G. S. 143-318.11(a)(6) to discuss the Town of Boone vs. Watauga County lawsuit.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

Mayor Brantz asked County Manager Geouque to begin discussions. County Manager Geouque shared that the County bought the Turner House property for the purpose of creating parking spaces. The County had once owned the Turner House property (which was originally part of the Ginn property). After turning the upper portion of the Ginn lot into parking the County sold the lower portion, including the house, to Mr. Turner who used the house for his law offices. When the property became available, the County purchased it (now referred to as the Turner property) for parking which would include the demolition of the house to accommodate for the maximum number of parking spaces.

Mayor Brantz asked if Mr. Eric Plaag, who has served as a historical consultant for the Town of Boone, could share a presentation in regards to the history of the house on the Turner property.

County Manager Geouque stated that the Board of Commissioners had previously been briefed by Mr. Plaag;

however, Council Member LaPlaca stated that she would like to hear the presentation.

Mr. Plaag shared the following: The Turner House has historical significance. It is not currently on the historic register; however, Mr. Plaag stated that his professional opinion was that the Turner House is historically significant with minor changes. It was built in 1926 by Oscar and Sue Hardin who lived in the house until their untimely death. The Brown's, Author and Clara, then lived in the home from 1952-1990. In 1997 the State decide not to add the home to the historical register due, in part, to the vinyl/aluminum siding, enclosure of porches, and other upkeep issues. Mr. Plaag stated that the home would have architectural and historical significance when restored.

When asked if it was important for the house to stay at the current location, Mr. Plaag replied that houses that had been moved were not usually accepted in the historical registry. Mr. Plaag stated that there have been exceptions, such as a Frank Lloyd Wright home that had been moved but was still listed. Mr. Plaag stated that, if the Turner House were moved, it would probably never be listed with the registry.

Lengthy discussion was held in regards to the house on the Turner property and its possible historical significance to the Town of Boone.

County Manager Geouque stated that the Turner property was purchased with the intent to gain forty to fifty parking spaces and then subsequently gain fifty-plus additional parking spaces by extending the Ginn parking lot over the Turner property parking lot.

Town Manager Ward presented the possibility of the Town of Boone and County working together to construct a parking deck at the Town's Queen Street parking lot which could possibly benefit both Courthouse and Library patrons. A parking deck on that lot could potentially double its size from one hundred to two hundred spaces.

Chairman Welch stated that the Turner property was purchased to use as parking not to restore the house. Discussion was held regarding the timeline of the Town creating a Historic District and the purchase of the house.

After discussion, Town Attorney Meade suggested the County sell the Turner House property and discuss parking options with the Town of Boone.

Town Manager Ward stated that the Queen Street lot could double in size. The Town of Boone could provide the property and a business model could be used where a third party would rent spaces in the deck with a certain number of spaces per jurisdiction.

Commissioner Wallin was concerned for elderly citizens who may need access to County buildings. Town Manager Ward suggested flipping current parking lots for public parking areas and have staff parking in the Queen Street lot.

Discussion turned to the County's intent to demolish the Turner House. The County has a Town of Boone issued demolition permit for the property which County Manager Geouque stated that the County had to show activity by the date of June 3, 2020, or the permit expires. County Manager Geouque stated that the County solicited for someone to purchase the house and move it to another location. No offers were made. In the meantime, the County still needs additional parking.

County Manager Geouque stated that the County's primary parking needs were between 8:00 A.M. and 5:00

P.M. Monday through Friday with no demand on Saturdays. Town Manager Ward stated that the Town's highest use of parking was on the weekends with the trends in downtown businesses changing toward higher end restaurants and the different types of shops opening as well as people staying to attend the newly renovated Appalachian Theatre which results in more demand for evening parking.

Commissioner Yates stated that it will take time to explore alternate parking options and the County's demolition permit would potentially expire prior to finding a solution.

Town Attorney Meade suggested the County either reapply for a demolition permit prior to the Town putting new regulations into place or the Town agreeing to make sure the County would be issued the permit when needed. Attorney Meade didn't want the County to demo the property, prior to the permit expiring, if something could be worked out for parking. Town Manager Ward stated that he didn't want a delay. Chairman Welch stated that there were trust issues between the County and Town and suggested having the two attorneys looking into the possibilities and make sure there was an iron clad agreement that would be beneficial for all.

County Manager Geouque suggested having the County and Town Attorneys work toward extending the demolition permit while he and Town Manager Ward worked on determining the possibilities of the Queen Street lot.

Commissioner Turnbow stated that a timeline was needed and that costs analysis was important. Also, if the Historical Society were to restore the house, it would be better for it not to sit empty.

County Manager Geouque suggested the County could potentially donate the Turner House property to the Town of Boone with the County's purchase price value of \$755,000 being put toward the construction of the parking deck. The County Manager stated that the County was not interested in being in real estate and trying to sell the property. The County Attorney also stated that an engineer would be needed for the Queen Street lot and that would not be a quick process; however, he and Town Manager Ward could work on that.

Town Manager Ward stated that the Town had worked with the University of North Carolina - School of Government (UNC-SOG) on Howard Street parking and was told the space was too small for a parking deck. Approximately one hundred spaces would be needed per level.

County Manager Geouque stated that the County has long-range plans to build a facility between the Human Services Building and the Health Department and move all County operations to that area which would leave only Courthouse functions at the current County building locations.

County Manager Geouque stated that the County had \$100,000 budgeted for the demolition and surface lot at the Turner property which would be Phase One. Phase Two would consist of the construction of the extension of the Ginn lot extending out over the Turner property surface lot. There was no estimate for Phase Two at this time.

Discussion was held regarding the County's immediate need for fifty parking spaces. Town Manager Ward stated that any additional reserved spaces from current Town of Boone lots would take away from customer parking for downtown which would hurt the revenue (sales tax) and would impact downtown businesses. Town Attorney Meade suggested the County would have immediate spaces once the Turner house was vacated. County Manager Geouque stated that would be around ten to twelve spaces as Town of Boone regulations would prohibit more spaces by eliminating the landscaping. Council Member Hicks stated that there are parking areas that are underutilized. County Manager Geouque stated that both the County-owned

property near the new AppalCART facility and the Brookshire Park parking lot (during the winter months) have been unofficial park-and-ride sites.

After further discussion, and the agreement that both the County and Town need additional parking, County Manager Geouque stated that the Board of Commissioners would need to file for an extension of the demolition permit which, if granted, would give time to receive reports in regards to potential parking solutions.

By consensus, the Board of Commissioners, along with the Boone Town Council, agreed to have the County and Town Managers work with the County and Town Attorneys to develop possible solutions.

County Manager Geouque stated he and Town Manager Ward could have a preliminary plan within two months.

The Boone Town Council adjourned their meeting at 7:59 P.M.

Commissioner Wallin, seconded by Commissioner Turnbow, moved to enter closed session for Attorney/Client Matters, per G. S. 143-318.11(a)(6) including discussion on the Town of Boone vs. Watauga County lawsuit in regards to sales tax distribution.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

Commissioner Yates, seconded by Commissioner Turnbow, moved to resume the open meeting at 8:40 P.M.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

Commissioner Wallin, seconded by Commissioner Turnbow, moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:40 P.M.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

John Welch, Chairman

ATTEST: Anita J. Fogle, Clerk to the Board

Watauga County Board of Commissioners

MINUTES

WATAUGA COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS TUESDAY, MARCH 17, 2020

The Watauga County Board of Commissioners held a regular meeting, as scheduled, on Tuesday, March 17, 2020, at 5:30 P.M. in the Commissioners' Board Room located in the Watauga County Administration Building in Boone, North Carolina.

PRESENT: John Welch, Chairman
Billy Kennedy, Vice-Chairman
Larry Turnbow, Commissioner
Charlie Wallin, Commissioner
Perry Yates, Commissioner
Andrea Capua, County Attorney
Deron Geouque, County Manager
Anita J. Fogle, Clerk to the Board

Chairman Welch called the meeting to order at 5:32 P.M.

Commissioner Wallin opened with a prayer and Commissioner Turnbow led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Chairman Welch congratulated Ms. Kayla Lasure upon recently winning awards for her work as a reporter with the Watauga Democrat.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Chairman Welch called for additions and/or corrections to the following minutes:

- February 13 & 14, 2020, Special Meeting (Annual Pre-Budget Retreat)
- February 18, 2020, Regular Meeting
- February 18, 2020, Closed Session
- February 24, 2020, Special Meeting (Joint Meeting with Town of Boone)
- February 24, 2020, Special Meeting Closed Session (End of Joint Meeting with Town of Boone)

Vice-Chairman Kennedy, seconded by Commissioner Yates, moved to approve the February 13 & 14, 2020, special meeting minutes as presented.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

Vice-Chairman Kennedy, seconded by Commissioner Yates, moved to approve the February 18, 2020, regular

meeting minutes as presented.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

Vice-Chairman Kennedy, seconded by Commissioner Yates, moved to approve the February 18, 2020, closed session minutes as presented.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

Vice-Chairman Kennedy, seconded by Commissioner Yates, moved to approve the February 24, 2020, special meeting minutes as presented.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

Vice-Chairman Kennedy, seconded by Commissioner Yates, moved to approve the February 24, 2020, special meeting closed session minutes as presented.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Chairman Welch called for additions and/or corrections to the March 17, 2020, agenda.

Commissioner Turnbow, seconded by Commissioner Wallin, moved to approve the March 17, 2020, agenda as presented.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19) COMMUNITY UPDATE

Ms. Jennifer Greene, AppHealthCare Director, provided an update on the Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. The report was for information only and, therefore, no action was required.

HIGH COUNTRY RESTORATION COALITION REQUESTS

Ms. Debbie Shetterly, High Country Restoration Coalition, was not able to attend the meeting. On her behalf, County Manager Geouque presented a proposed resolution committing the County to using and promoting native plants on County-owned property.

Commissioner Turnbow, seconded by Commissioner Wallin, moved to adopt the resolution in support of the use of native plants as presented.

VOTE: Aye-5

SHERIFF'S OFFICE VEHICLE PURCHASE

County Manager Geouque presented a bid for a 2020 Toyota Tacoma 4WD pickup from Modern Toyota, the North Carolina Sheriff's Association vendor. The cost for the vehicle, including tax and tag, was \$26,933.29. County Manager Geouque stated that the current cost exceeds the budgeted amount and therefore a budget amendment would be forthcoming recognizing additional narcotics funds.

Commissioner Turnbow, seconded by Vice-Chairman Kennedy, moved to award the bid for a 2020 Toyota Tacoma 4WD pickup in the amount of \$26,933.29 to Modern Toyota, the North Carolina Sheriff's Association vendor.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

SANITATION MATTERS

A. Engineering and Design Services for Landfill Improvements

Mr. Rex Buck, Operations Service Director, presented a proposal by McGill Associates for services pertaining to trailer storage area improvements, Innovation Drive improvements, and sediment basin improvements. These improvements were identified for commencement during the Annual Pre-Budget Retreat.

Mr. Buck recommended the acceptance of McGill Associates' proposal in the amounts listed for the following services:

1. Trailer Storage Area Improvement - \$25,800
2. Innovation Drive Improvements - \$74,700
3. Sediment Basin Improvements - \$61,160

Adequate funds were budgeted to cover the services for these improvements with future requests for construction approval to be forthcoming.

Vice-Chairman Kennedy, seconded by Commissioner Yates, moved to approve McGill Associates' proposal for trailer storage area improvements, in the amount of \$25,800; Innovation Drive improvements, in the amount of \$74,700; and Sediment Basin improvements, in the amount of \$61,160.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

B. Feasibility Study Regarding Organic Materials Management

Mr. Buck presented a proposal from Baker Advisors to conduct a feasibility study to determine the best management policy regarding organic materials. This issue was discussed at the Annual Pre-Budget Retreat and Board direction was for staff to engage Baker Advisors to conduct the study.

Baker Advisors proposal, in the amount of \$17,300, would examine the following options: 1) County Operated Local Retail Market; 2) County Operated Wholesale Market; and 3) Third-party Operation. Mr. Buck stated that adequate funds have been budgeted to cover the expense.

Commissioner Yates, seconded by Commissioner Wallin, moved to direct staff to engage Baker Advisors, in the amount of \$17,300, to conduct the study as presented.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

C. Sanitation Capital Expenditure Requests

Mr. Buck requested to purchase up to \$45,433 in solid waste containers from Baker Waste Equipment, Inc. on an as needed basis. The containers were needed to allow for the County to provide additional commercial solid waste services. Currently, the program is being tested in the 28607 zip code area with the desire to expand Countywide. The need for additional containers is due to the success thus far of the service. The lowest price for the containers has been received from Baker Waste Equipment.

Commissioner Yates, seconded by Commissioner Turnbow, moved to authorize the expenditure of funds for solid waste containers, not to exceed \$45,433, to ensure continued expansion of services.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

PROPOSED PROJECT ON AGING HOME CARE POLICY REVISIONS

Ms. Angie Boitnotte, Project on Aging Director, presented proposed amendments to the agency's operations and policies including requirements of the NC Division of Health Service Regulation.

Vice-Chairman Kennedy, seconded by Commissioner Yates, moved to approve the amendments to the Project on Aging Home Care Policy as presented by Ms. Boitnotte.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

TAX MATTERS

A. Monthly Collections Report

Tax Administrator, Mr. Larry Warren, presented the Tax Collections Report for the month of February 2020. The report was presented for information only and, therefore, no action was required.

B. Refunds and Releases

Mr. Warren presented the Refunds and Releases Report for February 2020 for Board approval:

TO BE TYPED IN MINUTE BOOK

Commissioner Yates, seconded by Vice-Chairman Kennedy, moved to approve the Refunds and Releases Report for February 2020 as presented.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

C. Board of Equalization and Review Schedule

Mr. Larry Warren, Tax Administrator, discussed the scheduling of the FY 2020 Board of Equalization and Review (E&R). Mr. Warren stated that the Board may create a special Board of Equalization and Review or, as in previous years, the Board of Commissioners may serve as the Board of Equalization and Review and include the County Manager to serve as an alternate member. The County Manager would only serve if a quorum could not be met otherwise.

Mr. Warren stated that there had only been fifteen appeals received as of this date with only five wanting to appear before the Board of E&R.

County Manager Geouque stated that the County would look for State Guidance if the Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic interrupted the schedule.

County Attorney Capua stated that the County Attorneys needed to work on a policy for questions about meetings during the pandemic as it would be helpful to have everything coordinated Countywide rather than department by department.

County Manager Geouque stated that the County would air on the side of safety but would work with the County Attorney to continue to conduct meetings electronically; possibly including the Board of E&R meetings.

Vice-Chairman Kennedy, seconded by Commissioner Turnbow, resolved to establish the Board of Equalization and Review as follows:

MEMBERSHIP:

- Shall consist of the 5 member County Commissioners, each having one vote.
- Three members shall constitute a quorum.
- One alternate shall be appointed consisting of the County Manager.
- The alternate shall only serve to meet a quorum of the Board for a scheduled Board of Equalization and Review meeting.

POWERS AND DUTIES:

The powers and duties of this Board shall be as specified in NCGS 105-328 and Article 21 of the Machinery Act.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

Mr. Warren recommended the convening date for the Board of Equalization and Review be scheduled for

Thursday April 16, 2020, at 4:00 P.M. and the adjournment be scheduled for Thursday April 23, 2020, at 5:00 P.M.

Vice-Chairman Kennedy, seconded by Commissioner Turnbow, moved to set the following dates for the Board of Equalization and Review:

- Convene on Thursday, April 16, 2020, at 4:00 P.M.
- Adjourn on Thursday, April 23, 2020, at 5:00 P.M.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

The Board of Equalization and Review has been compensated \$75 per meeting in the past.

Vice-Chairman Kennedy, seconded by Commissioner Turnbow, moved to establish the compensation rate for the Board of Equalization and Review at \$75.00 per meeting.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

D. Tax Lien Report

Mr. Warren presented the Tax Lien Report which lists delinquent tax bills that were liens on real property and requested authorization to advertise such liens between March 1 and June 30, 2020.

Commissioner Turnbow, seconded by Vice-Chairman Kennedy, moved to order the Tax Administrator to advertise the liens as requested.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

REQUEST TO SURPLUS PROPERTY – 2011 AUTOCAR FRONT LOADER TRASH TRUCK

Ms. Misty Watson, Finance Director, stated that the County Manager had previously been granted authority by the Board to sell surplus property under the \$30,000 threshold. Ms. Watson requested to surplus a 2011 Autocar Front Loader Trash Truck which could exceed the \$30,000 threshold.

Commissioner Yates, seconded by Commissioner Wallin, moved to surplus the 2011 Autocar Front Loader Trash Truck and approve disposal via electronic sale on GovDeals.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

BID AWARD REQUEST FOR AUDIO AND VIDEO SYSTEM FOR COMMUNITY RECREATION CENTER MULTIPURPOSE ROOM

Mr. Drew Eggers, IT Director, presented a proposal from Freedom ElecTech, in the amount of \$21,500, for an audio/video system in the multipurpose room at the new Community Recreation Center (CRC). Freedom ElecTech were to also install the access control and security camera systems at the CRC; therefore, in an effort to provide continuity, staff recommended Freedom ElecTech to provide the audio and video system in the multipurpose room. Funds have been allocated in the current CRC budget to cover the expense.

Vice-Chairman Kennedy, seconded by Commissioner Turnbow, moved to accept Freedom ElecTech's proposal in the amount of \$21,500 for the audio and video system in the multipurpose room in the new Community Recreation Center.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

BID AWARD REQUEST FOR COURTROOM # 2 RENOVATIONS

Mr. Robert Marsh, Maintenance Director, presented a bid for millwork for Courtroom #2 renovations. Multiple contractors were solicited but only the following two bids were received:

Bidder	Millwork Cost	Furniture Refinishing	Replace Juror's Chairs
Goodman Millwork, Inc.	\$124,817.79	Not Included	Not Included
NC Correction Enterprise	\$39,160.00	Included	Included

The lack of contractors has delayed the project for several months. Based on the bids submitted and previous experience with North Carolina Correction Enterprise, staff recommended accepting the bid in the amount of \$39,160.

County Attorney Capua expressed concern, on behalf of the Bar Association, with the design and visibility of the witness as the attorneys will need eye contact with the witness. County Manager Geouque stated that the witness box was not elevated due to ADA (American's with Disabilities Act) requirements. Mr. Geouque also stated that the design had been in review for three years to date and was limited due to the size and shape of the space available.

After discussion, Commissioner Turnbow, seconded by Vice-Chairman Kennedy, moved to award the bid to North Carolina Correction Enterprise, in the amount of \$39,160, for millwork in the renovation of Courtroom # 2.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

PROPOSED FEE SCHEDULE FOR COMMUNITY RECREATION CENTER

Mr. Stephen Poulos, Parks and Recreation Director, presented the proposed Membership and Fee Schedule for the new Community Recreation Center for formal approval. Draft proposals were reviewed by the Board at the January 21, 2020, Board meeting and again at the Annual Pre-Budget Retreat. Mr. Poulos stated that a daily Dry Ticket Fee, in the amount of \$4, was added for those wishing to watch their children but not participate themselves.

Commissioner Yates, seconded by Commissioner Turnbow, moved to formally adopt the Community

Recreation Center Membership and Fee Schedule as presented with the addition of the Dry Ticket Fee.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

MISCELLANEOUS ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

A. Proposed Renewal of Red Cross Lease

County Manager Geouque stated that the American Red Cross had requested renewal of their lease for office space which was set to expire March 31, 2020. The renewal was for an eight (8) year term with one dollar (\$1) rent per year. The required ten day notice was given and the lease was ready for approval, if so desired.

Commissioner Yates, seconded by Commissioner Wallin, moved to approve the lease with the American Red Cross as presented by the County Manager.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

B. Watauga Arts Council Update and Request for Lease Renewal

County Manager Geouque stated that the Watauga County Arts Council had requested renewal of their lease of County-owned property which was set to expire March 31, 2020. The new request was for a four (4) year term with automatic ninety (90) day renewals and rent in the amount of one dollar (\$1) per year. The required ten day notice was given and the lease was ready for approval, if so desired.

County Attorney Capua stated that she would prepare the renewal document with the term for four years and remove the clause for the music and craft school as that no longer exists.

Vice-Chairman Kennedy, seconded by Commissioner Turnbow, moved to approve the lease with Watauga County Arts Council and directed the County Attorney to prepare the appropriate documents.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

C. Proposed Lease with NC Forest Service for Office Space at the Cooperative Extension Building

County Manager Geouque stated that the North Carolina Forest Service had requested to lease one of the vacant offices in the Cooperative Extension building. Mr. Jim Hamilton, Director of Cooperative Extensions, had volunteered the space. The office space was needed due to the poor conditions of the Forest Service's modular unit located on the leased space at the County's old landfill. The office space lease would be temporary until the Forest Service could find a new location. The County Manager has offered their current site allowing them to remove and replace the modular unit which would be the most cost effective option. However, the State had given the Forest Service direction to pursue the acquisition of land and the construction of a new facility. This option will not likely happen due to local land prices and the limited budget set forth for the project.

By consensus, the Board gave direction for the County Manager to propose a one-year lease to the NC Forest

Service for office space in the Cooperative Extension building.

D. Boards and Commissions

County Manager Geouque presented the following for consideration:

Economic Development Commission (EDC)

EDC member Ms. Savannah Garland had to resign due to accepting an out-of-town. A Volunteer Application was received from Mr. Kelly Coffey for consideration to fill her unexpired term. This is a first reading.

Commissioner Turnbow, seconded by Commissioner Yates, moved to waive the second reading and appoint Mr. Kelly Coffey to the Economic Development Commission to fill the unexpired term of Ms. Savannah Garland.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

Tourism Development Authority (TDA)

The following Watauga County TDA Board member's terms expired at the end of February:

- Tina Houston of Reid's Café & Catering and The Beacon Event facility
- Matt Vincent of VPC Builders (Current TDA Board Chair)
- Lisa Cooper of Mast General Store.

All three are willing and eligible to be re-appointed to 3-year terms and the TDA Board supports the re-nomination of each of them.

Commissioner Yates, seconded by Commissioner Wallin, moved to waive the second reading and appoint Ms. Tina Houston, Mr. Matt Vincent, and Ms. Lisa Cooper to the Tourism Development Authority for three-year terms.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

Appointment of TDA Chair

The TDA Board Chair is appointed by the Board of Commissioner. Mr. Matt Vincent is eligible to continue in that role or you may appoint a new chair. A list of all TDA Board Members was provided for consideration.

Vice-Chairman Kennedy, seconded by Commissioner Turnbow, moved to appoint Mr. Matt Vincent as the Chair for the Tourism Development Authority.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

E. Announcements

County Manager Geouque announced the following:

- Caldwell Community College and Technical Institute invites you to attend the Building Dedication and Open House on Tuesday, April 7, 2020, at 5:30 P.M.
- The CCC&TI Board also invites you to join them for a combined Board meeting with the Board of Education at 4:00 P.M. prior to the building dedication/open house. This meeting is typically in May; however, it is being combined with the open house this year.
- The Watauga Compassionate Community Initiative 2020 Conference will be held on Saturday, May 16, 2020, from 8:00 A.M. to 3:15 P.M. at Watauga High School. The Opening Keynote Speaker will be Brandon Wrencher and the Keynote Speaker will be Allison Sampson-Jackson. Please let Anita know if you wish to attend and she will be glad to RSVP on your behalf.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment.

CLOSED SESSION

At 6:56 P.M., Commissioner Wallin, seconded by Commissioner Yates, moved to enter Closed Session to discuss Attorney/Client Matters, per G. S. 143-318.11(a)(3).

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

Vice-Chairman Kennedy, seconded by Commissioner Turnbow, moved to resume the open meeting at 7:30 P.M.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

ADJOURN

Vice-Chairman Kennedy, seconded by Commissioner Wallin, moved to adjourn the meeting at 7:30 P.M.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

John Welch, Chairman

ATTEST:

Anita J. Fogle, Clerk to the Board

Watauga County Board of Commissioners

MINUTES

WATAUGA COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS TUESDAY, APRIL 7, 2020

The Watauga County Board of Commissioners held a regular meeting, as scheduled, on Tuesday, April 7, 2020, at 8:30 A.M. remotely with the meeting originating in the Manager's Conference Room located in the Watauga County Administration Building, Boone, North Carolina.

PRESENT VIA ELECTRONIC MEANS:

John Welch, Chairman
Billy Kennedy, Vice-Chairman
Larry Turnbow, Commissioner
Charlie Wallin, Commissioner
Perry Yates, Commissioner
Andrea Capua, County Attorney
Deron Geouque, County Manager
Anita J. Fogle, Clerk to the Board

Chairman Welch called the remote electronic meeting to order at 8:34 A.M. by calling roll and having each Commissioner respond. Chairman Welch also stated that the meeting was being recorded and the audio would be posted on the County's website.

Commissioner Wallin opened with a prayer and Commissioner Turnbow led the Pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Chairman Welch called for additions and/or corrections to the March 17, 2020, regular meeting and closed session minutes.

Vice-Chairman Kennedy, seconded by Commissioner Yates, moved to approve the March 17, 2020, regular meeting minutes as presented.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

Vice-Chairman Kennedy, seconded by Commissioner Yates, moved to approve the March 17, 2020, closed session minutes as presented.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Chairman Welch called for additions and/or corrections to the April 7, 2020, agenda.

Commissioner Wallin, seconded by Commissioner Turnbow, moved to approve the April 7, 2020, agenda as presented.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

WATAUGA COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS ELECTRONIC MEETING POLICY

County Manager Geouque presented a proposed Electronic Meeting Policy to be used to navigate the meeting process during times when the County was under a State of Emergency Order such as the current COVID-19 health crisis. County Attorney Capua stated that she had looked closely at all directives; the proposed policy was consistent with similar policies; and, therefore, was comfortable to defend it, if necessary.

Commissioner Yates, seconded by Commissioner Turnbow, moved to adopt the Electronic Meeting Policy as presented by the County Manager.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19) COMMUNITY UPDATE

Ms. Jennifer Greene, AppHealthCare Director, provided an update on the Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. The report was for information only and, therefore, no action was required.

REQUEST FOR CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROJECT (CIP) FUNDS

Ms. Ly Marze, Watauga County School Finance Director, gave a brief update on behalf of School Superintendent, Dr. Scott Elliott, who was in another meeting. Ms. Marze thanked the Board for continued support and funding. Ms. Marze stated that Watauga County Schools were able to transition to remote learning easier than some counties due to the support of the County which has allowed for student laptops and other needs. The School System continues to teach and feed children through the Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic with fifty thousand (50,000) meals over the past three weeks including the use of vehicles and buses to deliver to doorsteps. Ms. Marze stated that the School System hadn't stopped moving forward and was still doing great things that couldn't be done without the County's support.

Ms. Marze then requested the release of \$529,290 from Capital Improvement Plan funds reserved for the School System to fund the following projects:

Pavement Repair/Resurface	160,000
Roof Maintenance	45,000
Security Cameras	100,000
HVAC / Sewer Pump Replacements	10,000
Repeater System	19,000
Fuel Island	30,000

Classroom Presentation Technology	80,000
Facilities - Furniture/Equipment	55,290
Facilities - Central Office Renovation	<u>30,000</u>
TOTAL:	\$529,290

Ms. Marze also requested the release of \$42,222 from Long Term Capital funds for the carryover of the pavement repair project funded in Fiscal Year 2019.

Discussion was held as to whether the items listed were categorized in the proper funding lines. County Manager Geouque stated that further in depth discussions could be held during the planned upcoming budget work session with the School Board in May. Mr. Geouque stated that the School System received Current Capital Funds (for normal yearly operations) from the County as well as two forms of Long Term Capital Funds; one for immediate capital improvement projects and the other for new school construction. Mr. Geouque clarified that the request was not for funds designated for new school construction. Dr. Elliott was able to join the remote meeting briefly. He shared his appreciation for the flexibility in how the funds have been used and stated that this request was a function of their budget process. Dr. Elliott reiterated that the funds requested were not coming from the new school construction budget line. Mr. Geouque stated that the school also had access to NC Lottery funds but those funds had to be spent in a very specific nature.

Dr. Elliot also thanked the Board for continued support which allowed the school system to move to remote learning in a one week time period.

Commissioner Turnbow, seconded by Vice-Chairman Kennedy, moved to release the \$571,512 from the School's Capital Improvement Plan balances.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

REQUEST FOR FUNDS TO UPGRADE AND PROFESSIONALIZE THE DOC WATSON MUSEUM AT THE HISTORIC COVE CREEK SCHOOL

For his presentation, Mr. David Tyner read from the following statement:

"I am here to address a previous request CCP&D made for a matching grant. Ms. Karen James, who is working with the Cove Creek Preservation & Development (CCP&D), requested at a previous County Commission on Sept. 18, 2018 that she planned to apply for a grant through the Blue Ridge National Heritage Area. If awarded, the funds would be used to hire a Museum Consultant to review the available space and develop a master plan to ensure the feasibility of enhancing the Doc Watson Museum in the Historic Cove Creek School. The Blue Ridge Grant required partner funds 50% of the grant award amount. Ms. James requested Watauga County partner by committing to provide \$15,000. After reviewing the minute archives of that meeting a discussion was held regarding this being an appropriate request for the TDA.

Later in April of 2019 CCP&D was awarded the grant for \$10,000 from Blue Ridge National Heritage Area. The expenses eligible for reimbursement included services of a museum consultant, project coordination, and other project expenses approved by the Blue Ridge staff. Ms. James began working with Nancy Watson daughter of Doc Watson in the spring of 2019

for advice on the museum. Nancy being the heir and legal owner of Doc Watson name and all things related to the museum had to be approved by her.

In June of 2019 the museum upgrade project ran into problems beyond our control. First Ms. James resigned from the project due to family illness. I attempted to pick up where she left off working with Nancy Watson. Then Nancy became very ill as she already suffers with ongoing health problems. Without her being able to give advice and blessings on our moving forward we had no choice but wait on her health to improve which in the last couple of months her health has improved. She has been able to give us limited assistance with the Watson family history and memorabilia for the museum.

We were very fortunate that Jeff Futch, Regional Supervisor, of the Western Office of the North Carolina Department of Natural and Cultural Resources came to us to help. In January he visited our museum and in February he brought employees from two other museums to consult us and give us professional advice on how we need to proceed with the museum upgrades and improvements. Jesse Bricker, exhibit designer and coordinator of Mountain Gateway Museum and Heritage Center gave us valuable advice and designs how to precede that pleased Nancy's request to make the museum improvements that Doc and Merle Watson would be proud of. Jesse has a Master's degree in Public History. Mountain Gateway Museum in Old Fort NC is a regional branch of the NC Museum of History, part of the Division of the state History Museums in the Office of Archives and History in the NC Dept. of Natural and Cultural Resources. Their mission is to preserve and interpret the culture, traditions, and history of Carolina's mountains and foothills. Their exhibit outreach for the 39 counties of Western NC is to provide support in Museum quality exhibit planning, consultation, design, and fabrication assistance. This service was provided as a service by the NC Dept. of Natural and Cultural Resources. Also present that day to give us more valuable advice was Zach Dressel, Curatorial Assistant at the Blowing Rock Museum. Zack has a Master's Degree in Museum Studies.

With one problem solved, we still faced one more obstacle. Our Blue Ridge grant has an end date of April 2020. The original grant gave us one year to complete our upgrades. With only two months left before our grant expired I wrote letter to Rob Bell, Senior Director of Programs for Blue Ridge National Heritage Area requesting a grant change and extension to complete the museum upgrades. I had to submit revised Grant Budget Forms, line item budget time lines and people and organizations who would be involved with the project, as well as estimates on work to be done. A lot of work involved in a short time to hopefully save our grant.

I received the good news from Rob on March 16th that the BRNHA board approved the extension request and change of scope. It is conditional upon two things. First is confirmation of matching funds from the TDA and/or another source. The second is the blessing of the State Historic Preservation Office since the building is listed on the National Register. Rob helped us out by already submitting our project to the State Historic Preservation Office system. The CCP&D request today is that the County Commission approve the matching funds of \$10,000 with the Blue Ridge National Heritage Area for the Doc and Merle Watson Folk Art Museum upgrades and improvements. Our goal today and for over a year was to have these upgrades and improvements completed by the 20th anniversary of the Doc and Rosa Lee Music Fest in Sugar Grove on July 18th.

With the ongoing covid-19 pandemic in our country it appears we may have to postpone our music event until next year, but we will continue to make the museum upgrades/improvements to hopefully be completed by the end of July. Regardless of this request outcome and when it is safe to visit, we would like to invite our county commissioners and TDA board members to view the museum as soon as the upgrades and improvements are completed before we open to the public. These upgrades are going to be a surprise with the amount of Doc Watson memorabilia that will be on display that has never been displayed before.

Thank you once more for your consideration of this second request for the matching funds.”

Commissioner Yates, seconded by Commissioner Turnbow, moved to authorize the \$10,000 match for the Blue Ridge National Heritage Area grant as requested with funding to come from the County if not available from the Tourism Development Authority.

County Manager Geouque stated that, due to the potential financial impact of the COVID-19 health emergency, staff recommended approving the request only if the Tourism Development Authority (TDA) was to provide the match.

After discussion, the following vote was taken on Commissioner Yates’ motion:

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

REQUEST FOR NC COOPERATIVE EXTENSION TO PARTNER WITH APPALACHIAN STATE UNIVERSITY ON GRANT PROJECT FOR VETERAN FARMERS

Mr. Jim Hamilton, Cooperative Extension Director, presented a proposal for Watauga County Cooperative Extension and Watauga County to support Appalachian State University’s proposal to the U.S. Department of Agriculture (National Institute of Food and Agriculture) entitled “Going Whole Hog: Sustainable Livestock and Agroforestry Training for Military Veterans.”

The Watauga County Extension, through Watauga County, would enter into a subcontract for the performance period of September 15, 2020, to September 14, 2023. Mr. Eddy Labus, Livestock Extension Agent who is also a veteran, would serve as the main contact for the proposal. The work performed for the project would be to create learning modules for veterans entering into agriculture; primarily pig production. The estimated cost was not to exceed \$25,000. Grant monies would be reimbursed to Watauga County to cover Mr. Labus’ portion of salary and benefits over the three years for his efforts on the project. The proposal was submitted to the USDA in March and confirmation of award would come in a few months.

Commissioner Turnbow, seconded by Commissioner Yates, moved to commit \$25,000 for the proposed subcontract as presented by Mr. Hamilton.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION (EDC) ALLOCATION

RECOMMENDATION TO HIGH COUNTRY FOOD HUB

Mr. Joe Furman, Economic Development Director, stated that the Economic Development Commission (EDC) approved a request from Blue Ridge Women In Agriculture (BRWIA) for help in funding the purchase of a cooler. The cost of the cooler was \$18,000. The Food Hub planned to reallocate \$8,158.45 from their "Serving Target Customers" line to cover a portion of the cost. The EDC approved to allocate the remaining amount of \$9,841.55 for the walk-in cooler and shelving units. The EDC requested approval of an allocation of \$9,841.55 from the Economic Development Capital Reserve Account.

Commissioner Yates, seconded by Commissioner Wallin, moved to approve the allocation of \$9,841.55 from the Economic Development Capital Reserve Account to the High Country Food Hub for the purchase of a cooler.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

BID AWARD REQUEST FOR THE COMPLETION OF THE GUY FORD ROAD PADDLE ACCESS

Mr. Joe Furman, Planning and Inspections Director, recently received the following bids for completion of the Guy Ford Road paddle access:

Bidder's Name	Lump Sum Bid	Additional Item #1	Additional Item #2
	Items 1-15	Remove and replace unsuitable material Bid Cost per CY	BX-11Geogrid (Installed) Bid Cost per SY
VPC	\$200,268.59	\$23.79	\$3.97
Moretz Paving	\$158,733.94	\$35.00	\$3.00
Tri County Paving	\$117,697.48	\$75.00	\$8.00
PADCO Excavating	\$140,856.96	\$35.00	\$3.50

The low bid, from Tri-County Paving, Inc., out of West Jefferson, was \$117,697.48. Current funding available from Tourism Development Authority (TDA) was \$110,000. Mr. Furman presented two options which would allow for the project to move forward: 1) work with the low bidder to reduce the bid to the current funds available or, 2) request additional funds from the TDA. Mr. Furman stated that the handrails for the top of the retaining wall specified in the bid from Tri County Paving were very expensive and he felt that a different railing could be used to get the costs below the amount available from the TDA.

Commissioner Yates moved to award the contract to Tri-County Paving, in the amount of \$117,697.48, contingent upon the amount being reduced to the current funds available from the Tourism Development Authority (TDA). Commissioner Turnbow seconded the motion with the caveat that, in the event costs could not be reduced to under the TDA's \$110,000; Mr. Furman was to let the County Manager know.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

MISCELLANEOUS ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

A. Watauga County Humane Society Request to Apply for Small Business Loan Under the Recently Enacted CARE Act

County Manager Geouque stated that the Watauga Humane Society had requested permission, as required by the terms of their loan document with the County, to apply for a Small Business Administration (SBA) Loan under the recently enacted CARE Act.

Per the provisions of the Act, specifically the Paycheck Protection Program, it was the Humane Society's understanding that 501(c)3 organizations were eligible to apply for a loan equal to 2½ times their monthly payroll. The proceeds from the loans would be forgiven if used to pay employees' salaries, the organizations' utility costs, and interest on indebtedness over a period of the next eight weeks. It was the Humane Society's intent to use the loan proceeds for these purposes and the estimated amount was projected to be around \$50,000.

The County Manager stated that the loan application was due on Friday, April 3, 2020, and, therefore, authorization was given by staff to submit the application with the understanding that should the Commissioners not support the request it would be withdrawn from consideration.

Commissioner Turnbow, seconded by Vice-Chairman Kennedy, moved to authorize the Humane Society to proceed with the Small Business Administration (SBA) Loan Application under the CARE Act as requested.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

B. Vehicle Purchase

County Manager Geouque stated that Sheriff Hagaman's vehicle was totaled in February 2020. The insurance paid \$12,947 for the total loss of the vehicle. The Sheriff's office requested to utilize the insurance payment along with excess funds in the vehicle capital outlay budget line to purchase one (1) new 2020 Dodge Durango SUV from Ilderton Dodge in the amount of \$30,109.81, including tax and tag.

Vice-Chairman Kennedy, seconded by Commissioner Turnbow, moved to approve the purchase of one (1) new 2020 Dodge Durango SUV from Ilderton Dodge for \$30,109.81, including tax and tag.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

C. Announcements

County Manager Geouque announced the following:

- The Caldwell Community College and Technical Institute Building Dedication and Open House scheduled for Tuesday, April 7, 2020, at 5:30 P.M. has been cancelled.
- The Watauga Compassionate Community Initiative 2020 Conference was scheduled to be held on

Saturday, May 16, 2020, from 8:00 A.M. to 3:15 P.M. at Watauga High School. The County Manager anticipated that the event dates may change due to the coronavirus pandemic and would keep the Board informed of any such changes.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment.

CLOSED SESSION

At 10:11 A.M., Commissioner Turnbow, seconded by Commissioner Wallin, moved to enter Closed Session to discuss Attorney/Client Matters, per G. S. 143-318.11(a)(3).

The following lawsuits were included in discussion during closed session:

Town of Boone Lawsuit Regarding Sales Tax Distribution
Robert H. Johnson, Plaintiff, vs. Keri L. Triplett and Beth Berry, Defendants

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

Commissioner Turnbow, seconded by Commissioner Yates, moved to resume the open meeting at 11:26 A.M.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

ADJOURN

Chairman Welch adjourned the meeting at 11:26 A.M.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

John Welch, Chairman

ATTEST:

Anita J. Fogle, Clerk to the Board

Watauga County Board of Commissioners

MINUTES

WATAUGA COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS TUESDAY, APRIL 21, 2020

The Watauga County Board of Commissioners held a regular meeting, as scheduled, on Tuesday, April 21, 2020, at 5:30 P.M. remotely with the meeting originating in the Manager's Conference Room located in the Watauga County Administration Building, Boone, North Carolina.

PRESENT VIA ELECTRONIC MEANS:

John Welch, Chairman
Billy Kennedy, Vice-Chairman
Larry Turnbow, Commissioner
Charlie Wallin, Commissioner
Perry Yates, Commissioner
Andrea Capua, County Attorney
Anthony di Santi, County Attorney
Deron Geouque, County Manager
Anita J. Fogle, Clerk to the Board

Chairman Welch called the remote meeting to order at 5:33 P.M.

Commissioner Yates opened with a prayer and Vice-Chairman Kennedy led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Chairman Welch asked Clerk to the Board Fogle to call roll with those listed above responding as present.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Chairman Welch called for additions and/or corrections to the April 7, 2020, regular meeting and closed session minutes.

Vice-Chairman Kennedy, seconded by Commissioner Turnbow, moved to approve the April 7, 2020, regular meeting minutes as presented.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

Vice-Chairman Kennedy, seconded by Commissioner Yates, moved to approve the April 7, 2020, closed session minutes as presented.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Chairman Welch called for additions and/or corrections to the April 21, 2020, agenda.

Vice-Chairman Kennedy, seconded by Commissioner Yates, moved to approve the April 21, 2020, agenda as presented.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19) COMMUNITY UPDATE

Ms. Jennifer Greene, AppHealthCare Director, provided an update on the Coronavirus (COVID-19). The report was for information only and, therefore, no action was required.

ACCEPTANCE OF DONATION TO SHERIFF'S OFFICE AND PURCHASE OF EQUIPMENT

Captain Justin Wood stated that the Sheriff's Office had recently received a one-time donation for the purchase of equipment to assist local law enforcement in their efforts. The donation is in the amount of \$23,424.58 and would be used to purchase donor approved equipment.

Commissioner Turnbow, seconded by Vice-Chairman Kennedy, moved to accept the \$23,424.58 donation to be used to purchase equipment.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION'S REQUEST TO ESTABLISH A LOCAL EMERGENCY LOAN PROGRAM FOR SMALL BUSINESSES

Mr. Joe Furman, Planning and Inspections/Economic Development Director, stated that the Economic Development Commission (EDC) proposed to designate \$100,000 from the Economic Development Reserve Account, which currently has a balance of \$221,505, for a local emergency loan program for small businesses. This is possible through General Statute 158-7.1.

The goal was to raise \$400,000 by acquiring additional funds from Blue Ridge Energy, Skyline/Skybest, and others. Mr. Furman stated that Mr. David Jackson, Director of Boone Area Chamber of Commerce, was helping to get others involved. Because public funds were involved, the program could not include grants or low interest loans. The benefit to the borrower would be that the transactions could be made quickly. All funds would funnel through Mountain Biz Works, who would make the loans and administer the repayments. The hope was for all of the money to ultimately be returned to the County.

The proposed name of the program was "Reenergize Watauga Fund" and it would be promoted as a recovery loan to help small businesses reopen when the time comes. It could also be used by some to fill the void until Federal funding comes through. It would have to be first come-first served.

Mr. Furman stated that a public hearing was required pursuant to NC G. S. 158-7.1 and requested, with time of the essence, it be scheduled for the Tuesday, May 5, 2020, Board meeting at 8:30 A.M. Mr. Furman stated

that the actual program documents, including a contract with Mountain Biz Works, would be available for the May 5 meeting.

Vice-Chairman Kennedy, seconded by Commissioner Wallin, moved to establish the “Reenergize Watauga Fund” in principal and authorize \$100,000 from the Economic Development Capital Reserve Fund with the program documents to be considered after the public hearing was held.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

REQUEST FOR APPROVAL OF CIVIL PENALTY

Mr. Joe Furman stated that Waterfront Group/Deep Creek Holdings was recently granted preliminary plat approval of a 99 lot development on Shawnee Road known as Monteagle. A recent site visit by Mr. Chris Grubb, who was responsible for enforcement of the Erosion Control Ordinance, revealed that grading had occurred, and had obviously begun days before. His site visit was prompted by the observation of a Building Inspector that grading was occurring. The developer was aware that an erosion control plan had not been approved because it had been submitted, reviewed, and denied with a request for revisions and additional information.

Mr. Furman stated that the County Erosion Control Ordinance included a provision, in Section 23(a), to assess a \$5,000 per day penalty for violations, up to \$25,000. Mr. Furman stated that, since the Stop Work Order and Notice of Violation were issued and, it wasn’t definitively known how many days the work had been going on, he requested the Board assess a penalty of \$5000.00 (one day).

Commissioner Turnbow, seconded by Vice-Chairman Kennedy, moved to assess Waterfront Group/Deep Creek Holdings with a \$5,000 (one day) penalty for violation of the County’s Erosion Control Ordinance at the 99 lot development on Shawnee Road known as Monteagle.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT REQUEST TO PURCHASE RADIOS AND ACCESSORIES

Mr. Will Holt, Emergency Services Director, requested approval for the purchase of five (5) portable radios and accessories in the amount of \$44,558.50. The radios were to provide back-up capability for the 911 Center. Adequate funds were budgeted in the current 2020 Fiscal Year.

Commissioner Turnbow, seconded by Commissioner Yates, moved to approve the purchase of the five (5) portable radios and accessories, in the amount of \$44,558.50, as requested by Mr. Holt.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

TAX MATTERS

A. Monthly Collections Report

Tax Administrator, Mr. Larry Warren, presented the Tax Collections Report for the month of March 2020. The report was presented for information only and, therefore, no action was required.

B. Refunds and Releases

Mr. Warren presented the Refunds and Releases Report for March 2020 for Board approval:

TO BE TYPED IN MINUTE BOOK

Commissioner Yates, seconded by Commissioner Turnbow, moved to approve the Refunds and Releases Report for March 2020 as presented.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

ANNE-MARIE PARK PAVING BID AWARD REQUEST

Mr. Robert Marsh, Maintenance Director, stated that the following bids were received for the paving of the Anne-Marie Park parking lot:

Bidder	Location	Bid Amount
Moretz Paving	Zionville, NC	\$127,344.50
Boone Paving	Boone, NC	\$162,500.00
Tri-County Paving	West Jefferson, NC	\$139,800.75
Shatley	West Jefferson, NC	\$138,559.00

Moretz Paving provided the lowest responsive bid in the amount of \$127,344.50. This lot was part of the overall plan to provide parking for the new Community Recreation Center (CRC), baseball and soccer fields, and Greenway usage. Per the long term lease with the Town of Boone, Town Council approval was required to pave the lots. The County Manager was on the Town Council's agenda to seek approval.

Commissioner Turnbow, seconded by Commissioner Yates, moved to accept the bid from Moretz Paving in the amount of \$127,344.50 to pave the Anne-Marie parking lot and to direct the County Manager to seek Town of Boone approval for the paving of the parking lot.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

MISCELLANEOUS ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

A. Acceptance of Recreation Trails Grant for Rocky Knob Park

County Manager Geouque stated that at the June 16, 2019, Board of Commissioners meeting, approval was given to Mr. Kristian Jackson, Rocky Knob Trail Boss, to submit an application to the North Carolina Recreational Trails Program Grant. At that time, the Tourism Development Authority (TDA) agreed to provide the required 25% match, if the grant was awarded, of the \$100,000 requested. Mr. Jackson recently

received notification that the grant was awarded.

Commissioner Turnbow, seconded by Vice-Chairman Kennedy, moved to accept the \$100,000 grant from the North Carolina Recreational Trails Program Grant and to accept the matching funds to be provided by the County Tourism Development Authority (TDA).

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

B. Boards and Commissions

County Manager Geouque stated that Mr. Keith Deveraux, Director of High Country Workforce Development, had recommended, on behalf of the High Country Workforce Development Board, for Mr. Hayden Gibson to be reappointed to the High Country Workforce Development Board for a term beginning July 1, 2020, and ending June 30, 2022.

Commissioner Turnbow, seconded by Vice-Chairman Kennedy, moved to waive the second reading and reappoint Mr. Hayden Gibson to the High County Workforce Development Board for a term beginning July 1, 2020 and ending June 30, 2022.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

C. Announcements

County Manager Geouque announced the following:

- Budget Work Sessions are scheduled for May 14 from 12:00 P.M. to 8:00 P.M. and May 15 from 9:00 A.M. to 1:00 P.M. At this time, these meetings will be Zoom conference calls and follow the Electronic Meeting Policy adopted by the Board.
- The Watauga Compassionate Community Initiative 2020 Conference will be held on Saturday, May 16, 2020, from 8:00 A.M. to 3:15 P.M. at Watauga High School. The Opening Keynote Speaker will be Brandon Wrencher and the Keynote Speaker will be Allison Sampson-Jackson.

Commissioner Wallin stated that the Watauga Compassionate Community Initiative 2020 Conference has been cancelled.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment.

CLOSED SESSION

At 6:19 P.M., Commissioner Wallin, seconded by Commissioner Yates, moved to enter Closed Session to discuss Attorney/Client Matters, per G. S. 143-318.11(a)(3).

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

Vice-Chairman Kennedy, seconded by Commissioner Yates, moved to resume the open meeting at 7:36 P.M.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

ADJOURN

Commissioner Turnbow, seconded by Vice-Chairman Kennedy, moved to adjourn the meeting at 7:37 P.M.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

John Welch, Chairman

ATTEST:

Anita J. Fogle, Clerk to the Board

Watauga County Board of Commissioners

MINUTES

WATAUGA COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS TUESDAY, MAY 5, 2020

The Watauga County Board of Commissioners held a regular meeting, as scheduled, on Tuesday, May 5, 2020, at 8:30 A.M. remotely with the meeting originating in the Manager's Conference Room located in the Watauga County Administration Building, Boone, North Carolina.

Chairman Welch called the remote electronic meeting to order at 8:30 A.M. by calling roll with each Commissioner answering as present. The following were present:

PRESENT VIA ELECTRONIC MEANS:

John Welch, Chairman
Billy Kennedy, Vice-Chairman
Larry Turnbow, Commissioner
Charlie Wallin, Commissioner
Perry Yates, Commissioner
Anthony di Santi, County Attorney
Andrea Capua, County Attorney
Deron Geouque, County Manager
Anita J. Fogle, Clerk to the Board

Commissioner Wallin opened with a prayer and Commissioner Turnbow led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Approval of Minutes

Chairman Welch called for additions and/or corrections to the April 21, 2020, regular meeting and closed session minutes.

Vice-Chairman Kennedy, seconded by Commissioner Turnbow, moved to approve the April 21, 2020, regular meeting minutes as presented.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

Vice-Chairman Kennedy, seconded by Commissioner Turnbow, moved to approve the April 21, 2020, closed session minutes as presented.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

Approval of Agenda

Chairman Welch called for additions and/or corrections to the May 5, 2020, agenda.

Commissioner Yates, seconded by Commissioner Wallin, moved to approve the May 5, 2020, agenda as presented.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

Public Hearing to Allow Citizen Comment on A Proposed Appropriation for Economic Development Purposes Pursuant to NC G. S. 158-7.1

Chairman Welch stated that a public hearing was scheduled to seek public comment regarding a proposed Economic Development appropriation of \$100,000 to provide partial funding for an emergency small business loan program.

At the last meeting, Mr. Joe Furman, Planning and Inspections/Economic Development Director, requested the Board authorize the local emergency loan program for small businesses as recently approved by the Economic Development Commission (EDC). The EDC proposed to designate \$100,000 from the Economic Development Reserve Account (\$221,505) for the program.

The goal was to raise \$400,000 by acquiring additional funds from Blue Ridge Energy, Skyline/Skybest and others. Because public funds are involved, the program cannot include grants or low interest loans. The benefit to the borrower would be that the transactions could be made quickly. All funds would funnel through Mountain Biz Works, who would make the loans and administer the repayments. The hope was for all of the money to be returned to the County.

The proposal was to name the program Reenergize Watauga Fund and to promote it as a recovery loan to help small businesses reopen when the time comes. It could also be used by some to fill the void until federal funding comes through. It would have to be first come-first served. The loans would range from \$2,500 to \$10,000.

Mr. Furman presented a proposed agreement with Mountain Biz Works for the program. County Attorney Capua stated that she had reviewed and approved the agreement.

Commissioner Turnbow, seconded by Commissioner Yates, moved to call the public hearing to order at 8:41 A.M.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

As there was no one signed up to speak, Commissioner Yates, seconded by Commissioner Turnbow, moved to close the public hearing at 8:41 A.M.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

Commissioner Turnbow, seconded by Vice-Chairman Kennedy, moved to establish the Reenergize Watauga

Fund and authorize to allocate \$100,000 from the Economic Development Capital Reserve Fund to the Reenergize Watauga Fund.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

Coronavirus (COVID-19) Community Update

Ms. Jennifer Greene, AppHealthCare Director, provided an update on the Coronavirus (COVID-19). The report was for information only and, therefore, no action was required.

Staying Ahead of the Curve in Watauga County - A Phased-In Plan for Relaxing Restrictions and Protecting Public Health

County Manager Geouque stated that staff had prepared a plan to allow for the lifting of County restrictions consistent with the Governor's 3 Phase Plan. The Board had three (3) options for consideration.

Option 1 would not lift any County restrictions until Phase II of the Governor's Plan. Two (2) weeks after the implementation of the Governor's Phase II, and key metrics continuing to be met, the County would: 1) partially lift the local restriction on short-term rentals to the following: a reduction in occupancy for lodging facilities having more than a six (6) person occupancy shall be limited to fifty percent (50%) of occupancy capacity or fifty percent (50%) of available rental units whichever was less; and 2) lift the County's 14 day self-quarantine. Upon implementation of the Governor's Phase III, and key metrics continuing to be met, the County would lift the remaining County short term-rental restriction for lodging facilities having more than a six (6) person occupancy capacity from fifty percent (50%) to 100% occupancy.

Option 2 was to lift all County restrictions with the implementation of the Governor's Phase I.

Option 3 was to lift all County restrictions with the implementation of the Governor's Phase II.

If chosen, the implementation of Option 2 or 3 would coincide with any delay in Phase I of the Governor's plan should that be necessary.

County Manager Geouque stated that since the options were developed, additional recommendations to consider for Option 1 were as follows: 1) when short-term rental restrictions were partially lifted to 50% occupancy there would be an exception for immediate family members who live in the same household and 2) campgrounds would be aligned with local campgrounds under Park Service guidance.

After lengthy discussion, Vice-Chairman Kennedy, seconded by Commissioner Turnbow, moved to adopt Option 1 as the Staying Ahead of the Curve Plan in Watauga County with the two amendments as described by County Manager Geouque: 1) when short-term rental restrictions were partially lifted to 50% occupancy there would be an exception for immediate family members who live in the same household and 2) the opening of campgrounds would be aligned with local campgrounds under Park Service guidance.

VOTE: Aye-5

FY 2021 AppalCART Contracts

Mr. Craig Hughes, AppalCART Director, presented proposed contracts for transportation services for the Project on Aging and Social Services Departments for FY 2021. There were four contracts. The proposed rate for the Project on Aging, Department of Social Services, and other County functions was \$2.28 per direct mile. The contract for Project on Aging (POA) Meal delivery was at the proposed rate of \$1.45 per direct mile.

County Attorney Capua advised to remove the following wording: *“In the event of noncompliance with any provision of the Agreement”* from under the last Section (entitled “Termination of Agreement”) of each of the four contracts.

Vice-Chairman Kennedy, seconded by Commissioner Turnbow, moved to approve the four AppalCART contracts including County Attorney Capua’s suggested amendment.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

Request for Acceptance of the FY 2020 SHIIP/MIPPA Grant/Contract

Ms. Angie Boitnotte, Project on Aging Director, presented the Medicare Improvements for Patients and Providers Act (MIPPA) grant from the Seniors' Health Insurance Information Program (SHIIP) for the current Fiscal Year. The grant was in the amount of \$1,849 with no local match required.

Commissioner Yates, seconded by Commissioner Turnbow, moved to accept the MIPPA grant in the amount of \$1,849 to expand low income subsidy outreach and to upgrade technology used for SHIIP counseling and activities.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

Proposed Contract for Consultant/Commercial Appraisal Services for the 2022 Revaluation Project

Mr. Larry Warren, Tax Administrator, presented a proposed contract for consultant/commercial appraisal services for the upcoming 2022 Revaluation Project. Mr. Warren contacted four firms with two (2) firms responding and interviewed both. Mr. Warren recommended Vincent Valuations in the amount of \$178,000 for commercial properties and \$900.00 per day for the defense of values at the Board of Equalization and Review, and the North Carolina Property Tax. Mr. Warren stated that he received a quote for \$162,080 for appraising exempt properties as well.

Commissioner Turnbow, seconded by Commissioner Wallin, moved to accept Vincent Valuations proposal in the amount of \$178,000 for commercial properties; \$900 per day for the defense of values at the Board of Equalization and Review and the North Carolina Property Tax; and approve staff to handle the evaluation of non-exempt properties.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

Budget Amendments

Ms. Misty Watson, Finance Director, reviewed the following budget amendments:

Account #	Description	Debit	Credit
103980-398121	Transfer from Capital Projects Funds		\$60,000
104261-458000	Capital Outlay – Building	\$60,000	
213991-399101	Fund Balance Appropriation		\$60,000
219800-498010	Transfer to General Fund	\$60,000	

The amendment allocated funds from CIP set aside funds for the completion of the Courtroom #2 renovations including the millwork approved per Board action on March 17, 2020.

105911-471000	NC Lottery Funds		\$297,900
105911-470051	Watauga High School – Resurface Tennis Courts	\$60,000	
105911-470052	Green Valley School – VOIP System Upgrade	\$65,000	
105911-470053	K-8 Schools – Replace Doors	\$12,900	
105911-470005	K-8 Schools – Replace Kitchen Coolers and Equip.	\$55,000	
105911-470001	K-8 Schools – Replace Carpet and Tile Flooring	\$30,000	
105911-470056	Blowing Rock & Mabel – Replace Gym Floor	\$75,000	

The amendment allocated funds for NC Lottery projects as requested by the Watauga County Schools and approved by NC DPI per Board action on January 21, 2020.

105911-470041	Pavement Repairs	\$202,222	
105911-470058	Roof Maintenance	\$45,000	
105911-470059	Security Cameras	\$100,000	
105911-470060	HVAC and Sewer Pump Replacements	\$10,000	
105911-470061	Repeater System	\$19,000	
105911-470062	Fuel Island	\$30,000	
105911-470063	Classroom Presentation Technology	\$80,000	
105911-470064	Facilities – Furniture and Equipment	\$55,290	
105911-470065	Facilities – Central Office Renovation	\$30,000	
213991-399101	Fund Balance Appropriation		\$571,512
219800-498010	Transfer to General Fund	\$571,512	
103980-398121	Transfer from Capital Projects Fund		\$571,512

The amendment allocated funds from CIP set aside funds for project as requested by the Watauga County School System per Board action on April 7, 2020.

104920-463000	Annual Appropriation		\$33,463
109800-498021	Transfer to Capital Projects Fund	\$33,463	
213980-398100	Transfer from General Fund		\$33,463

213991-399101	Appropriated Fund Balance	\$33,463
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The amendment returned unused CIP funds from High Country Local First for projects that are no longer viable.

224310-454000	Capital Outlay – Vehicles	\$26,934	
223991-399101	Appropriated Fund Balance		\$26,934

The amendment recognized the purchase of a narcotics vehicle per Board action on March 17, 2020.

104274-435101	Maintenance and Repairs – Grounds		\$123,817
109800-498021	Transfer to Capital Projects Fund	\$123,817	
213980-398100	Transfer from General Fund		\$123,817
213991-399101	Appropriated Fund Balance	\$123,817	

The amendment returned unused CIP funds from the West Annex Culvert project to CIP.

103980-398121	Transfer from Capital Projects Fund		\$9,842
104920-463000	General Appropriation	\$9,842	
213991-399101	Fund Balance Appropriation		\$9,842
219800-498010	Transfer to General Fund	\$9,842	

The amendment allocated funds from CIP set aside funds for projects as requested by the Economic Development Commission to be utilized by the Blue Ridge Women in Agriculture for a walk-in refrigerator per Board action on April 7, 2020.

103839-343100	Donations		\$23,500
104310-451000	Capital Outlay – Equipment	\$23,500	

The amendment recognized the purchase of law enforcement equipment which was funded through a private donation.

104262-435100	Maintenance and Repairs – Grounds		\$200,000
109800-498021	Transfer to Capital Projects Fund	\$200,000	
213980-398100	Transfer from General Fund		\$200,000
213991-399101	Appropriated Fund Balance	\$200,000	

The amendment returns unused CIP funds from the East Annex Juvenile Court renovations to CIP.

103839-384000	Donations		\$154,752
104288-457001	Capital Outlay – Land Improvements	\$154,752	

The amendment recognized the Rocky Knob 2020 Trails Renovation Project between North Carolina Department of Natural and Cultural Resources and Boone Area Cyclists.

103300-349615	Soil and Water – NC Division of Water Resources – Ward’s Mill Dam	\$200,000
104960-449917	DWR Grant	\$200,000

The amendment recognized the agreement between Blue Ridge RC&D and Watauga County Soil and Water Conservation District for the removal of Ward’s Mill Dam.

Commissioner Turnbow, seconded by Commissioner Yates, moved to approve the budget amendments as presented by Ms. Watson.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

Miscellaneous Administrative Matters

A. Presentation of the FY 2021 Capital Improvement Plan (CIP)

County Manager Geouque presented the FY 2020-2021 Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) for review prior to discussion during the upcoming budget work sessions.

B. Presentation of the Manager’s FY 2021 Recommended Budget

County Manager Geouque presented his Recommended FY 2021 Budget and reviewed highlights. Mr. Geouque announced upcoming budget work sessions on Thursday, May 14, 2020, beginning at 12:00 P.M. and Friday, May 15, 2020 at 9:00 A.M. A public hearing will be held on May 19, 2020, at 5:30 P.M. to allow citizen comment on the proposed budget.

Several Commissioners shared concerns over trying to conduct the Budget Work Sessions through remote meetings. Discussion was held in regards to the best way to conduct the Budget Work Sessions. Chairman Welch stated that he would brainstorm with the County Manager and County Attorney to determine the best way to accommodate those who wished to be present and through electronic means.

C. Proposed Property & Liability Insurance and Workers Compensation Renewals Request

County Manager Geouque presented proposed renewal rates for property and liability insurance and workers compensation. The rate for property and liability was \$195,521 which was a \$9,386 increase and the rate for workers compensation remains the same at \$237,279. Based on prior years’ claims experience staff recommended continuing the property deductible at \$5,000. The Manager’s recommended budget included adequate funds to cover the insurance premiums.

Commissioner Yates, seconded by Commissioner Wallin, moved to accept the renewals for property and liability insurance and workers compensation from the North Carolina Association of County Commissioners (NCACC), in the amounts of \$195,521 and \$237,279 respectively.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

D. Proposed Nurses Week Proclamation

County Manager Geouque presented a proposed proclamation declaring May 6 through May 12, 2020, as Nurse Appreciation Week. The County would like to thank all nurses in the County for their dedication and devotion to those individuals falling ill and in need of medical assistance. The County has never needed nurses' services more than during the global pandemic. On behalf of Watauga County and its citizens, we would like to express our sincerest appreciation and gratitude for their services.

Commissioner Turnbow, seconded by Commissioner Yates, moved to adopt the Nurse Appreciation Week Proclamation as presented.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

E. Announcements

County Manager Geouque announced the following:

- Budget work sessions are scheduled for May 14, 2020, from 12:00 P.M. to 8:00 P.M. and May 15, 2020, from 9:00 A.M. to 1:00 P.M. At this time, these meetings will be Zoom conference calls and follow the Electronic Meeting Policy adopted by the Board.
- A public hearing will be held on Tuesday, May 19, 2019, at 5:30 P.M. to allow citizen comment on the FY 2021 Proposed Budget.

Public Comment

Written comments were received by the following and were made available through the County Manager's Office and on the County's website: Tim Gupton, Russ Curtis, Ann Lovern, Debbie Miller, Richard Miller, Kimberly Mikesell, Kari McMichael, and David Harwood.

CLOSED SESSION

At 10:36 A.M., Commissioner Wallin, seconded by Commissioner Turnbow, moved to enter Closed Session to discuss Attorney/Client Matters, per G. S. 143-318.11(a)(3).

The following lawsuits were included in discussion during closed session:

Appalachian Materials, LLC, Petitioner, vs. Watauga County, Respondent, and Terry Covell, Sharon Covell and Blue Ridge Environmental Defense League, Inc. d/b/a High Country Watch.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

Vice-Chairman Kennedy, seconded by Commissioner Turnbow, moved to resume the open meeting at

11:23 A.M.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

ADJOURN

Commissioner Turnbow, seconded by Commissioner Yates, moved to adjourn the meeting at 11:24 A.M.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

John Welch, Chairman

ATTEST:

Anita J. Fogle, Clerk to the Board

Watauga County Board of Commissioners

MINUTES

WATAUGA COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS TUESDAY, JUNE 16, 2020

The Watauga County Board of Commissioners held a regular meeting, as scheduled, on Tuesday, June 16, 2020, at 5:30 P.M. remotely with the meeting originating in the Manager's Conference Room located in the Watauga County Administration Building, Boone, North Carolina.

Chairman Welch called the remote electronic meeting to order at 5:31 P.M. by calling roll with each Commissioner answering as present. The following were present:

PRESENT VIA ELECTRONIC MEANS:

John Welch, Chairman
Billy Kennedy, Vice-Chairman
Larry Turnbow, Commissioner
Charlie Wallin, Commissioner
Perry Yates, Commissioner
Anthony di Santi, County Attorney
Deron Geouque, County Manager
Anita J. Fogle, Clerk to the Board

Commissioner Yates opened with a prayer and Vice-Chairman Kennedy led the Pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Chairman Welch called for additions and/or corrections to the June 2, 2020, regular meeting and closed session minutes.

Vice-Chairman Kennedy, seconded by Commissioner Yates, moved to approve the June 2, 2020, regular meeting minutes as presented.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

Vice-Chairman Kennedy, seconded by Commissioner Yates, moved to approve the June 2, 2020, closed session minutes as presented.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Chairman Welch called for additions and/or corrections to the June 16, 2020, agenda.

Commissioner Wallin, seconded by Commissioner Turnbow, moved to approve the June 16, 2020, agenda as presented.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19) COMMUNITY UPDATE

Ms. Jennifer Greene, AppHealthCare Director, provided an update on the Coronavirus (COVID-19). The report was for information only and, therefore, no action was required.

TAX MATTERS

A. Monthly Collections Report

Tax Administrator, Mr. Larry Warren, presented the Tax Collections Report for the month of May 2020. The report was presented for information only and, therefore, no action was required.

B. Refunds and Releases

Mr. Warren presented the Refunds and Releases Report for May 2020 for Board approval:

TO BE TYPED IN MINUTE BOOK

Vice-Chairman Kennedy, seconded by Commissioner Turnbow, moved to approve the Refunds and Releases Report for May 2020 as presented.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

SUBDIVISION PERFORMANCE GUARANTEE

Mr. Joe Furman presented a subdivision performance guarantee for Waterfront Group/Deep Creek Holdings, for completion of the roads in Phase I, Monteagle, which was approved by the Planning Board at their June 15, 2020, meeting. Mr. Furman stated that Section 92 of the *Ordinance To Govern Subdivisions and Multi Unit Structures* provided for performance guarantees in lieu of completion of improvements prior to final plat recordation, and required Board of Commissioners approval of the guarantee. The estimate for completion of the roads was in the amount of \$161,310. Section 92 required the guarantee to be 120% of the estimate which was \$193,572. The developer has proposed to provide a check in that amount. Mr. Furman stated that ninety percent of the paving was completed as of Monday, June 15, and if the remainder of the work had been completed the guarantee would be unnecessary.

Vice-Chairman Kennedy, seconded by Commissioner Wallin, moved to accept a check, if needed, in an amount up to \$193,572, from Waterfront Group/Deep Creek Holdings to guarantee paving of Phase I of Monteagle.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

PROJECT ON AGING MATTERS

A. Proposed Reallocation of FY 2020 Home & Community Care Block Grant (H&CCBG) Funds

Ms. Angie Boitnotte stated that, due to COVID-19 related issues, the Project on Aging (POA) needed to reallocate FY 2020 Home and Community Care Block Grant (H&CCBG) funds. The H&CCBG allocation for FY 2020 was \$300,702, which required a local match of \$33,412. Ms. Boitnotte stated that the match was present in the POA FY 2020 County budget.

H&CCBG Service	Original Allocation	Revised Allocation	Local Match
In-Home Aide Level I	\$102,213	\$94,046	\$10,450
In-Home Aide Level II	\$40,316	\$64,483	\$7,165
Congregate Meals	\$53,194	\$53,992	\$5,999
Home Delivered Meals	\$89,181	\$76,181	\$8,465
Transportation	\$15,798	\$12,000	\$1,333
Totals	\$300,702	\$300,702	\$33,412

Vice-Chairman Kennedy, seconded by Commissioner Yates, moved to accept the Fiscal Year 2020 Home & Community Care Block Grant (H&CCBG) fund budget reallocations as presented by Ms. Boitnotte.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

B. Proposed Allocation of FY 2021 Home & Community Care Block Grant (H&CCBG) Funds

Ms. Angie Boitnotte, Project on Aging Director, requested acceptance of the projected allocation of \$293,576 in Home and Community Care Block Grant (H&CCBG) funds for FY 2021. Ms. Boitnotte stated that the required local match is \$32,620 and is present in the Project on Aging's FY 2021 budget.

H&CCBG Service	H&CCBG Allocation	Local Match
In-Home Aide Level I	\$102,213	\$11,357
In-Home Aide Level II	\$40,316	\$4,480
Congregate Meals	\$49,631	\$5,515
Home Delivered Meals	\$89,181	\$9,909
Transportation	\$12,235	\$1,359
Totals	\$293,576	\$32,620

Commissioner Turnbow, seconded by Commissioner Wallin, moved to accept the recommended allocations for Fiscal Year 2021 for the Home & Community Care Block Grant (H&CCBG) Funds.

VOTE: Aye-5

Nay-0

C. Proposed Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA) and Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act Agreement

Ms. Angie Boitnotte, Project on Aging Director, requested the acceptance of \$38,127 in Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA) funding and \$94,068 in Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act funding from the NC Division of Aging and Adult Services. The FFCRA and CARES Act funding must be used to respond to the coronavirus emergency by providing Older Americans Act activities related to the response. No match was required and the funding must be expended by September 30, 2021.

FFCRA Service	Allocation
Congregate Meals	\$12,709
Home Delivered Meals	\$25,418
Totals	\$38,127

Vice-Chairman Kennedy, seconded by Commissioner Turnbow, moved to accept the \$38,127 in Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA) funding and \$94,068 in Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act funding from the North Carolina Division of Aging and Adult Services and approve the disbursement of those funds as presented by Ms. Boitnotte.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

JUVENILE CRIME PREVENTION COUNCIL (JCPC) FY 2021 CERTIFICATION, MEMBERSHIP, AND COUNTY PLAN

Mr. Stephen Poulos, JCPC Chairman, presented the Juvenile Crime Prevention Council (JCPC) Certification and County Plan as well as the proposed membership roster for FY 2021, which included a potential new member, Mr. Matthew Bonestell, who requested appointment.

Commissioner Turnbow, seconded by Commissioner Yates, moved to accept the Certification and County Plan as presented by Mr. Poulos.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

Commissioner Turnbow, seconded by Vice-Chairman Kennedy, moved to waive the second reading and approve the membership list including Mr. Matthew Bonestell as a new member.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

BUDGET AMENDMENTS

Ms. Misty Watson, Finance Director, reviewed the following budget amendments:

Account #	Description	Debit	Credit
103300-33000	JCPC Grant		\$9,963
105890-463151	Mountain Alliance – JCPC	\$4,936	
105890-463146	Blue Ridge Mediation – JCPC	\$1,565	
105890-463144	Western Youth Network – JCPC	\$3,462	

The amendment recognized the acceptance of additional funds for the Juvenile Crime Prevention grant as approved per Board action on May 19, 2020. No County funds were required as a match.

103300-332006	Senior Health Info Grant		\$1,849
105550-449901	Senior Health Information Program	\$1,849	

The amendment recognized the acceptance of the Senior Health Insurance Information Program (SHIIP) Medicare Improvements for Patients and Providers Act (MIPPA) grant funds per Board action on May 5, 2020. No County funds were required as match.

103300-346001	COVID-19 FEMA Reimbursement		\$100,000
103300-346000	Coronavirus Relief Fund		\$1,164,018
104330-449001	CRF – Watauga County	\$100,000	
104330-449009	CRF – Town of Blowing Rock	\$21,153	
104330-449003	CRF – Town of Boone	\$38,382	
104330-449004	CRF – Town of Seven Devils	\$20,175	
104330-449005	CRF – Town of Beech Mountain	\$20,290	
104330-449006	CRF – Appalachian Regional Healthcare	\$200,000	
104330-449007	CRF – Watauga County Schools	\$125,000	
104330-449008	CRF – App Health Care	\$639,018	
104330-449000	Coronavirus Expenses	\$100,000	

The amendment recognized the acceptance of funds received under Session Law 2020-4 for money reserved for local governments under the Coronavirus Relief Fund and FEMA reimbursement for COVID-19 related expenses.

103980-398121	Transfer from Capital Projects Fund		\$100,000
104920-463000	General Appropriation	\$100,000	
213991-399101	Fund Balance Appropriation		\$100,000
219800-498010	Transfer to General Fund	\$100,000	

The amendment allocated funds from CIP set aside funds for projects as requested by the Economic Development Commission to be utilized for small business loans as a part of the Reenergize Watauga Fund per Board action of May 19, 2020.

104283-457003	Guy Ford Road Grant	\$100,000	
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103300-343319	TDA Guy Ford Grant		\$100,000
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The amendment recognized the acceptance of a grant from the Watauga County District U TDA for Guy Ford Road river access.

293270-312009	Occupancy Tax Revenues		\$481,000
294140-469900	Watauga County District U TDA	\$475,000	
294140-449900	Administrative Collection Fee	\$6,000	

The amendment recognized additional projected occupancy tax revenues above original budget.

103200-326600	ABC Bottle Tax		\$2,000
105890-469848	Mediation and Restorative Justice	\$2,000	

The amendment recognized additional projected ABC Bottle tax revenues above original budget.

104330-469901	Foscoe Fire District Sales Tax Distribution	\$24,000	
104330-469903	Fall Creek Fire District Sales Tax Distribution	\$500	
104330-469904	Beaver Dam Fire District Sales Tax Distribution	\$3,500	
104330-469905	Boone Fire District Sales Tax Distribution	\$32,000	
104330-469906	Zionville Fire District Sales Tax Distribution	\$5,000	
104330-469907	Cove Creek Fire District Sales Tax Distribution	\$6,000	
104330-469908	Stewart Simmons Fire District Sales Tax Distribution	\$11,000	
104330-469910	Meat Camp Fire District Sales Tax Distribution	\$10,000	
104330-469911	Todd Fire District Sales Tax Distribution	\$3,000	
104330-469912	Blowing Rock Fire District Sales Tax Distribution	\$16,000	
104330-469913	Shawneehaw Fire District Sales Tax Distribution	\$6,000	
104330-469919	Creston Fire District Sales Tax Distribution	\$1,000	
104330-469924	Deep Gap Fire District Sales Tax Distribution	\$10,000	
104330-469998	Beech Mountain Fire District Sales Tax Distribution	\$2,000	
103200-323300	Sales Tax Revenue		\$130,000

The amendment recognized additional projected sales tax distribution above original budget.

243102-312008	Shawneehaw Current Year Tax Revenue		\$300
243102-312101	Foscoe Current Year Tax Revenue		\$1,000
283102-312119	Creston Current Year Tax Revenue		\$500
244340-469908	Shawneehaw	\$300	
244340-469901	Foscoe	\$1,000	
284340-469919	Creston	\$500	

The amendment recognized additional projected property tax revenue above original budget.

103300-343321	EMPG-S Grant	\$12,695
104330-449011	EMPG-S Grant	\$12,695

The amendment recognized additional funds received from the NC Department of Public Safety for Emergency Management Performance Grant Program Supplemental (EMPG-S) to cover COVID-19 related expenses.

103839-332007	Blue Cross Blue Shield of NC Grant	\$4,950
105550-422000	Food and Provisions	\$4,950

The amendment recognized acceptance of a Blue Cross Blue Shield of NC grant to support meal delivery to the seniors per Board action on June 2, 2020.

Vice-Chairman Kennedy, seconded by Commissioner Wallin, moved to approve the budget amendments as presented by Ms. Watson.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

CHANGE ORDER REQUEST FOR COURTHOUSE EXTERIOR WATERPROOFING PROJECT

Mr. Robert Marsh, Maintenance Director, presented change order # 1 for the exterior waterproofing project on the County Courthouse building. Strickland Waterproofing's bid was \$40,000. After the pre-construction meeting, Strickland Waterproofing recommended adding an additional bead of caulking to all of the precast joints for an additional cost in the amount of \$15,000. The purpose of the additional caulking would be to extend the life of the repair. Funds would come from the administrative contingency fund.

Vice-Chairman Kennedy, seconded by Commissioner Turnbow, moved to accept the change order from Strickland Waterproofing in the amount of \$15,000.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

MISCELLANEOUS ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

A. Purchase of Property for Emergency Communications Tower

County Manager Geouque presented a proposed agreement to purchase a 1.047 acre tract of land located at 1463 Sampson Road in Watauga County, North Carolina. The purchase would be to use the property for the location and construction of an emergency communications tower along with the potential to enhance internet services in that area. The cost for the property was \$100,000. The purchase would be a significant benefit to the County allowing for the ownership of the property and eliminating annual lease payments. In addition, the State would partner with the County to build a Viper tower and would allow a third party internet provider use of the tower. The partnership called for the State to build and maintain the tower which would allow the County to utilize funds, originally designated for this project, for the purchase or lease of future tower sites.

The acquisition of the property was in line with the County's Emergency Communication Upgrade Plan. Two additional sites would also need to be acquired to improve overall emergency communications coverage as well as the potential to improve internet services to underserved areas of the County. The County Attorney had reviewed and approved the agreement as presented.

Vice-Chairman Kennedy, seconded by Commissioner Wallin, moved to approve the purchase of the 1.047 acre tract of land in the amount of \$100,000. The funds to purchase would come from the Emergency Communication CIP fund.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

B. Boards and Commissions

County Manager Geouque shared the following for consideration:

Social Services Advisory Board

The Social Services Advisory Board recommended the reappointment of Ms. Mary Smalling, who was willing to continue to serve if so appointed, to a four year term. This was a first reading.

Vice-Chairman Kennedy, seconded by Commissioner Wallin, moved to waive the second reading and reappoint Ms. Mary Smalling to a four-year term on the Social Services Advisory Board.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

Voluntary Farmland Preservation Advisory Board

The Voluntary Farmland Preservation Advisory Board recommended the reappointment of Mr. Andrew Ellis and Ms. Jennifer Miller. These were first readings.

Commissioner Turnbow, seconded by Vice-Chairman Kennedy, moved to waive the second reading and reappoint Mr. Andrew Ellis and Ms. Jennifer Miller to the Voluntary Farmland Preservation Advisory Board.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

Economic Development Commission

Mr. Walter Kaudelka's term on the Economic Development Commission (EDC) was set to expire in June. There was a limit of two (2) consecutive terms. Mr. Kaudelka has served two full terms and, therefore, was ineligible for reappointment. Mr. Charlie Bateman submitted a volunteer application for consideration to serve on this Board. This was a first reading and, therefore, no action was taken.

C. Announcements

County Manager Geouque announced that the first regular meeting in July had been cancelled; therefore, the next Board of Commissioners Meeting would be held on Tuesday, July 21, 2020, at 5:30 P.M.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Vice-Chairman Kennedy requested a recently received email from the North Carolina Association of County Commissioners (NCACC) be included as a part of the public record. Chairman Welch read the comment submitted by Its Sapph. The written comment and the NCACC email were made available through the County Manager's Office and on the County's website.

CLOSED SESSION

At 6:31 P.M., Commissioner Turnbow, seconded by Commissioner Wallin, moved to enter Closed Session to discuss Attorney/Client Matters, per G. S. 143-318.11(a)(3).

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

Vice-Chairman Kennedy, seconded by Commissioner Turnbow, moved to resume the open meeting at 7:17 P.M.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

ADJOURN

Chairman Welch adjourned the meeting at 7:17 P.M.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

John Welch, Chairman

ATTEST:

Anita J. Fogle, Clerk to the Board

Watauga County Board of Commissioners

MINUTES

WATAUGA COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS TUESDAY, JULY 21, 2020

The Watauga County Board of Commissioners held a regular meeting, as scheduled, on Tuesday, July 21, 2020, at 5:30 P.M. remotely with the meeting originating in the Commissioners' Conference Room located in the Watauga County Administration Building, Boone, North Carolina.

Vice-Chairman Kennedy called the remote electronic meeting to order at 5:34 P.M. by calling roll with each Commissioner answering as present. The following were present:

PRESENT VIA ELECTRONIC MEANS:

Billy Kennedy, Vice-Chairman
Larry Turnbow, Commissioner
Charlie Wallin, Commissioner
Perry Yates, Commissioner
Anthony di Santi, County Attorney
Deron Geouque, County Manager
Anita J. Fogle, Clerk to the Board

Vice-Chairman Kennedy announced that Chairman Welch was not able to attend the meeting.

Commissioner Yates opened with a prayer and Commissioner Turnbow led the Pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Vice-Chairman Kennedy called for additions and/or corrections to the June 16, 2020, regular meeting and closed session minutes.

Commissioner Yates, seconded by Commissioner Turnbow, moved to approve the June 16, 2020, regular meeting minutes as presented.

VOTE: Aye-4(Kennedy, Turnbow, Wallin, Yates)
Nay-0
Absent-1(Welch)

Commissioner Yates, seconded by Commissioner Turnbow, moved to approve the June 16, 2020, closed session minutes as presented.

VOTE: Aye-4(Kennedy, Turnbow, Wallin, Yates)
Nay-0
Absent-1(Welch)

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Vice-Chairman Kennedy called for additions and/or corrections to the July 21, 2020, agenda.

Commissioner Turnbow, seconded by Commissioner Wallin, moved to approve the July 21, 2020, agenda as presented.

VOTE: Aye-4(Kennedy, Turnbow, Wallin, Yates)
Nay-0
Absent-1(Welch)

CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19) COMMUNITY UPDATE

Ms. Jennifer Greene, AppHealthCare Director, provided an update on the Coronavirus (COVID-19). The report was for information only and, therefore, no action was required.

SCHOOL BOARD REQUEST TO AMEND THE VALLE CRUCIS HISTORIC DISTRICT ORDINANCE

Dr. Scott Elliott, Watauga County School Superintendent, shared appreciation for AppHealthCare as well as the County Manager and Emergency Management Office for the help given while working on a return to school plan amid the COVID-19 pandemic.

Dr. Elliott shared a resolution recently adopted by the Watauga County Board of Education authorizing the acquisition of property located in the Valle Crucis area for a new elementary school. The property was approximately 14.4 acres at a cost of \$1,105,000. On behalf of the Watauga County Board of Education, Dr. Elliott requested the Board of Commissioners proceed with the following text amendment to the Valle Crucis Historic District Ordinance.

- 2.3 Exemption of Bona Fide Farms and Public Schools. This ordinance shall not be applicable to bona fide farm, but any use of farm property for non-farm purposes is subject to the regulations. Bone Fide Farm purposes include production of crops, fruits, vegetables, ornamental and flowering plants, dairy, poultry and all other forms of agricultural products having a domestic or foreign market.

Sections 2.4, 2.5 shall not be applicable to public schools.

County Manager Geouque stated that public comments, regarding the property purchase, were received after the deadline for the July 21 meeting and would be included with the August 4, 2020, Board meeting. Comments to be included in the August 4, 2020, Board meeting were due by 5:00 P.M. on Monday, August 3, 2020, and could be submitted through email to: public.comments@watgov.org (mailto:public.comments@watgov.org) or delivered to the County Manager's Office.

Vice-Chairman Kennedy tabled action to allow for the receipt of additional public comments.

PROPOSED PARKING STRUCTURES

Mr. Matthew Oetting, Project Manager with McGill Associates, stated that he had been working with the Town of Boone, who was in a partnership with the County, on a proposed parking deck to be located at the Town-owned Queen Street parking lot. Mr. Oetting presented two options which he had previously presented at the Town's meeting on July 16, 2020.

Option 1 would be a three level deck, 160,000 square feet, and would house 450 parking spaces in the structure and 33 spaces in the exterior lot. The estimated project cost for Option 1 was \$15,500,000. Option 2 would be a three level deck, 103,000 square feet, and house 270 spaces in the structure and 51 spaces in two exterior lots. The estimated project costs for Option 2 was \$10,000,000. The cost for both options excluded mechanical ventilation, temporary soil retainage, and land/easement acquisition. Mr. Oetting stated that he used the Appalachian State University Stadium Precinct Parking Deck for cost source data.

County Manager Geouque presented a rough draft of a potential parking deck at the County-owned Turner and Ginn lots. This would be a County project, separate from the joint Town/County contract for parking deck services. A two level parking deck on the Ginn lot would cost roughly \$3,500,000 per level and house 250 parking spaces. A parking lot with a deck that extended from the Ginn lot over the Turner lot would cost roughly \$2,500,000 and house 80 – 100 spaces.

Discussion was held during which Commissioner Turnbow stated that it was imperative for a Commissioner, the County and Town Managers, and a Town of Boone Council Member meet to discuss how much each entity would pay.

The presentation was for information only; therefore, no action was required.

TAX MATTERS

A. Monthly Collections Report

Tax Administrator, Mr. Larry Warren, presented the Tax Collections Report for the month of June 2020. The report was presented for information only and, therefore, no action was required.

B. Refunds and Releases

Mr. Warren presented the Refunds and Releases Report for June 2020 for Board approval:

TO BE TYPED IN MINUTE BOOK

Commissioner Yates, seconded by Commissioner Turnbow, moved to approve the Refunds and Releases Report for June 2020 as presented.

VOTE: Aye-4(Kennedy, Turnbow, Wallin, Yates)
Nay-0
Absent-1(Welch)

C. Annual Settlement of Tax Collector

Tax Administrator Warren presented the following Annual Settlement Statements for Fiscal Year 2020 for Board approval:

TO BE TYPED IN MINUTE BOOK

Commissioner Turnbow, seconded by Commissioner Yates, moved to approve the Annual Settlement Statements

for Fiscal Year 2020.

VOTE: Aye-4(Kennedy, Turnbow, Wallin, Yates)
Nay-0
Absent-1(Welch)

D. Oath to Collect Taxes

Mr. Warren presented a proposed order granting authorization to collect taxes for Fiscal Year 2020. Once approved, a sworn oath would be administered to Tax Administrator Warren.

Commissioner Wallin, seconded by Commissioner Yates, moved to grant authorization for Tax Administrator Warren to collect taxes for Fiscal Year 2021.

VOTE: Aye-4(Kennedy, Turnbow, Wallin, Yates)
Nay-0
Absent-1(Welch)

E. Motor Vehicle Value Appeal

Mr. Larry Warren stated that Ms. Nancy Eastman had contacted the tax office to appeal the value of her 2015 Subaru Outback. Her tax bill was based on a value of \$11,000. The condition and mileage of her car was considered and adjusted to the value of \$9,460, which reduced her tax liability, by \$1.79. Mr. Warren advised her that he was not willing to adjust the vehicle further and, therefore, she appealed to the County Commissioners for consideration.

Since Ms. Eastman continued to appeal the value as adjusted by Mr. Warren, her appeal would be heard by the Motor Vehicle Valuation Review Committee (MVVRC). Since the last appeal reviewed by the committee was approximately 20 years ago, Mr. Warren requested the Board appoint the Board of Commissioners as the Motor Vehicle Valuation Review Committee to hear the appeal.

Commissioner Turnbow, seconded by Commissioner Wallin, moved to appoint the Board of Commissioners to serve as the Motor Vehicle Valuation Review Committee.

VOTE: Aye-4(Kennedy, Turnbow, Wallin, Yates)
Nay-0
Absent-1(Welch)

Since Ms. Eastman was present remotely with Mr. Warren the Board considered her appeal at this time. Ms. Eastman stated that she had gone to several local dealerships and asked them to value her car. Ms. Eastman stated that she believed the value should be \$8,365.

Mr. Warren stated that she presented the Kelley Blue Book print outs from the dealerships with each one reflecting "Trade In Value" and not Fair Market Value or Retail Value. NC Statute, 105-330.2 states, "...value is determined using the most currently available January 1 retail value of the vehicle." Mr. Warren stated that the value provided through the North Carolina Department of Motor Vehicles was \$9,460. That amount would depreciate by ten percent each year. This would cause the tax amount owed to be forty-four cents more than the value Ms. Eastman had requested.

MVVRC Member Turnbow, seconded by MVVRC Yates, moved to set the value of Ms. Eastman's 2015 Subaru

Outback at the North Carolina Division of Motor Vehicles amount of \$9,460.

VOTE: Aye-4(Kennedy, Turnbow, Wallin, Yates)
Nay-0
Absent-1(Welch)

MAINTENANCE MATTERS

A. Bid Award Request for Health Department Chiller Repair

Mr. Robert Marsh, Maintenance Director, presented the following bids for a compressor for the chiller unit at the Health Department building:

BIDDER	NEW COMPRESSOR	REBUILT COMPRESSOR
HVAC, Inc.	\$17,854.00 (Includes refrigerant, 1-year warranty)	Refused to bid a rebuilt compressor but instead submitted proposal for complete chiller replacement (\$89,934.00)
Daikin	\$27,243.00 (Includes refrigerant)	\$21,320.00 (Includes refrigerant)
Hoffman	\$27,290.75 (Includes 5-year warranty; refrigerant not included)	\$16,586.42 (Includes refrigerant, 1-year warranty)

Mr. Marsh recommended the rebuilt compressor from Hoffman Mechanical Solutions in the amount of \$16,586.42. Hoffman Mechanical Solutions was the lowest responsive bidder for a rebuilt compressor. Mr. Marsh stated that the entire chiller unit was scheduled for replacement in Fiscal Year 2025 due to age and the phasing out of the R22 refrigerant units currently used. Adequate funds have been budgeted to cover the expense of the replacement which is expected to last until the entire unit is replaced. Discussion was held as to whether it would be best to go ahead and replace the entire system at this time.

After discussion, Vice-Chairman Kennedy tabled consideration to allow staff time to obtain quotes for replacing the entire system.

B. Proposed Courthouse and Administration Building Roofing Project Design Build Amendment

Mr. Robert Marsh stated that Watauga County entered into a Design-Build agreement with Muter Construction on December 16, 2019, for the construction and design of a metal truss, standing seam metal roof for the Courthouse and a standing seam metal reroof for the Administration Building. Muter Construction has completed the construction drawings and cost analysis phase of the project.

The amendment to the design build contract was submitted on July 14, 2020, in the amount of \$835,686. The anticipated substantial completion date was to be 180 days from acceptance of this agreement. Adequate funds have been budgeted to cover this expense which was in line with the initial projected cost.

Commissioner Turnbow, seconded by Commissioner Yates, moved to approve the amendment for \$835,686 with

Muter Construction for the construction and design of a metal truss, standing seam metal roof for the Courthouse, and a standing seam metal reroof for the Administration Building.

VOTE: Aye-4(Kennedy, Turnbow, Wallin, Yates)
Nay-0
Absent-1(Welch)

PROPOSED VENDING CONTRACT FOR COUNTY FACILITIES

On behalf of Mr. Stephen Poulos, Parks and Recreation Director; County Manager Geouque presented bid proposals from Triangle Vending Water and Coffee Service, High Country Vending, Pepsi Bottling Ventures and Coca-Cola Bottling Co. for vending services in County facilities. Triangle Vending Water and Coffee Service, based out of Jefferson, NC, was recommended to provide services for all Watauga County facilities, including the Community Recreation Center (CRC). References from Watauga Medical Center, Avery Mitchell Correction Facility, and Manheim Auto Auction in Statesville, NC, provided outstanding references for their services. The County Manager stated that upon choosing a vendor, a contract will be prepared.

Commissioner Turnbow, seconded by Commissioner Wallin, moved to award the bid for vending services to Triangle Vending Water and Coffee Service contingent upon the County Attorney either reviewing or preparing a contract for execution.

VOTE: Aye-4(Kennedy, Turnbow, Wallin, Yates)
Nay-0
Absent-1(Welch)

BUDGET AMENDMENTS

Ms. Misty Watson, Finance Director, reviewed the following budget amendments:

Account #	Description	Debit	Credit
103300-343306	CWMTF Grant		\$365,000
103839-384000	Donations – Brookshire Wetlands and Stream		\$115,000
104287-457001	Restoration	\$480,000	

The amendment recognized the completion of the Clean Water Management Trust Fund (CWMTF) Grant for wetlands construction on Brookshire Road as approved per Board action on June 19, 2018.

143300-343300	Adoption Promotion Funds		\$4,642
145410-440006	Adoption Proclamation	\$4,642	

The amendment recognized funds received from NC DHHS for the enhancement of programs to encourage and support adoption.

Commissioner Wallin, seconded by Commissioner Yates, moved to approve the budget amendments as presented by Ms. Watson.

VOTE: Aye-4(Kennedy, Turnbow, Wallin, Yates)
Nay-0
Absent-1(Welch)

MISCELLANEOUS ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

A. CARES Act Relief Funds Plan

County Manager Geouque stated that the North Carolina General Assembly authorized coronavirus relief funds in Session Law 2020-4. The legislation allocated \$150 million in funding to the 97 counties that did not receive direct federal funding from the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act. In addition, it holds in reserve \$150 million subject to action by the federal government.

Watauga County received \$1,164,018 in relief funds in the first round. Staff developed a plan for the expenditure of the relief funds. The funds were recommended and approved to be distributed as follows:

- 1) Essential Local Government Response
 - a. Watauga County - \$100,000
 - b. Town of Beech Mountain – \$20,290
 - c. Town of Blowing Rock - \$21,153
 - d. Town of Boone - \$38,382
 - e. Town of Seven Devils - \$20,175
- 2) Healthcare Services - Appalachian Regional Healthcare System - \$200,000
- 3) Educational Support Services – Watauga County School System - \$125,000
- 4) Public Health Services – AppHealthCare - \$639,018

The North Carolina General Assembly authorized round two of the Coronavirus Relief Funds (CRF) under Session Law 2020-4. Watauga County received an additional \$1,090,280 in round two giving a total between round one and round two of \$2,254,298. Of this total, \$563,575 was required to be allocated amongst the four municipalities in the County. The County could choose the allocation method in sharing CRF funds with the municipalities. The County allocated in round one \$100,000 to the Towns of Blowing Rock, Beech Mountain, Seven Devils, and Boone thus leaving an additional \$463,575 to be allocated.

The County Manager stated that staff recommended allocating the additional funds with a 20% base of the \$463,575 to each Town and the remaining balance to be allocated based on a per capita method as follows:

- | | |
|---------------------------|-----------|
| 1) Town of Beech Mountain | \$94,058 |
| 2) Town of Blowing Rock | \$98,061 |
| 3) Town of Boone | \$177,928 |
| 4) Town of Seven Devils | \$93,528 |
| 5) Watauga County | \$626,705 |

The County Manager stated that each Town would be required to submit their plan to the County by August 25, 2020, in order to meet the September 1, 2020, North Carolina Pro deadline. The County would amend the existing plan that the Board adopted previously to reflect the additional \$626,705.

Commissioner Turnbow, seconded by Commissioner Wallin, moved to adopt and submit the plan as presented to the North Carolina Office of State Budget and Management.

VOTE: Aye-4(Kennedy, Turnbow, Wallin, Yates)
Nay-0
Absent-1(Welch)

B. Appointment of the North Carolina Association of County Commissioners' (NCACC) Annual Conference Voting Delegate

County Manager Geouque stated that the North Carolina Association of County Commissioners' (NCACC) Annual Business Session would be held virtually on Thursday, August 6, 2020, at 11:00 A.M. The session would focus on elections for NCACC leadership positions. Each county in attendance was required to select a voting member for representation. Submission of the voting delegate was due Monday, August 3, 2020. More information on the Conference was available at: <https://www.ncacc.org/809/2020-Annual-Conference> (<https://www.ncacc.org/809/2020-Annual-Conference>).

Commissioner Yates, seconded by Commissioner Turnbow, moved to appoint Commissioner Wallin as the Watauga County Voting Delegate for the Business Session of the North Carolina Association of County Commissioners Annual Conference.

VOTE: Aye-4(Kennedy, Turnbow, Wallin, Yates)
Nay-0
Absent-1(Welch)

C. Proposed Amendments to the County's Electronic Meeting Policy

County Manager Geouque presented the following proposed amendments to the County's current Electronic Meeting Policy with the additions in red print and the deletions in strikethrough:

5. **Public Comment:** Citizens wishing to provide public comments during electronic meetings may send comments to public.comments@watgov.org (mailto:public.comments@watgov.org). Comments received by 5:00 PM the day prior to the official meeting date will be ~~read by the Chairman and~~ made a part of the official record. Board members and/or Commissioners will be given an opportunity to respond to comments submitted. Comments received after the 5:00 PM deadline will be ~~read at the next regularly scheduled meeting and~~ made a part of the official record ~~with the same opportunity to comment.~~ *of the next regularly scheduled Board meeting.*

The County Manager stated that public comments were included on the County's website for each electronic meeting and, therefore, the reading of the comments was an unnecessary duplication. The public would be better served by viewing the comments online versus trying to locate and listen to the Chairman read the public comments in the recording of the meeting. The County Manager stated that the change would eliminate duplication, better provide access to the public, and provide for a more efficient meeting. The County Manager suggested reading comments submitted for the meeting in progress with the new policy to be in effect for the August 4, 2020, and future electronic meetings.

Commissioner Turnbow, seconded by Commissioner Yates, moved to adopt the Electronic Meeting Policy as amended and to be effective beginning with the August 4, 2020, regular meeting.

VOTE: Aye-4(Kennedy, Turnbow, Wallin, Yates)
Nay-0
Absent-1(Welch)

D. Boards and Commissions

County Manager Geouque shared the following for consideration:

Economic Development Commission

Mr. Walter Kaudelka's term on the Economic Development Commission (EDC) expired in June. There was a limit of two (2) consecutive terms of which Mr. Kaudelka served; therefore, he was ineligible for reappointment. Mr. Charlie Bateman submitted a volunteer application for consideration to serve on this Board. This was a second reading.

Commissioner Turnbow, seconded by Commissioner Wallin, moved to appoint Mr. Charlie Bateman to the Economic Development Commission.

VOTE: Aye-4(Kennedy, Turnbow, Wallin, Yates)
Nay-0
Absent-1(Welch)

Nursing Home Community Advisory Committee

Ms. Stevie John, Regional Ombudsman with High Country Council of Governments, requested that Mr. Tim Racz be removed from the Nursing Home Community Advisory Committee. Recommendations for a replacement have not been received.

Commissioner Yates, seconded by Commissioner Wallin, moved to remove Mr. Tim Racz from the Nursing Home Community Advisory Committee.

VOTE: Aye-4(Kennedy, Turnbow, Wallin, Yates)
Nay-0
Absent-1(Welch)

E. Announcements

County Manager Geouque announced the following:

- The 113th North Carolina Association of County Commissioners (NCACC) Annual Conference would be held virtually with registration including all virtual sessions on August 5, 6, 14, and 15. Details for the conference were located at: <https://www.ncacc.org/809/2020-Annual-Conference> (<https://www.ncacc.org/809/2020-Annual-Conference>) and registration information was at: <https://ncaccevents.org/events/ac2020/> (<https://ncaccevents.org/events/ac2020/>). There was no cost for the virtual conference for County Officials and Staff.
- Commissioner Wallin encouraged citizens to participate in a broadband survey which would help to determine areas within the County in need of internet service.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Vice-Chairman Kennedy read written comments as submitted by: Mr. Tim Gupton, Mr. Deron Geouque, and Mr. Bill Pressly.

Written comments were also made available through the County Manager's Office and on the County's website.

CLOSED SESSION

At 8:01 P.M., Commissioner Yates, seconded by Commissioner Wallin, moved to enter Closed Session to discuss Attorney/Client Matters, per G. S. 143-318.11(a)(3). The following lawsuits were included in discussion during closed session: The Town of Boone lawsuit regarding sales tax distribution and the lawsuit against the Town of Boone regarding the water allocation.

VOTE: Aye-4(Kennedy, Turnbow, Wallin, Yates)
Nay-0
Absent-1(Welch)

Commissioner Turnbow, seconded by Commissioner Wallin, moved to resume the open meeting at 8:57 P.M.

VOTE: Aye-4(Kennedy, Turnbow, Wallin, Yates)
Nay-0
Absent-1(Welch)

ADJOURN

Commissioner Wallin, seconded by Vice-Chairman Kennedy, moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:57 P.M.

VOTE: Aye-4(Kennedy, Turnbow, Wallin, Yates)
Nay-0
Absent-1(Welch)

Billy Kennedy, Vice-Chairman

ATTEST:

Anita J. Fogle, Clerk to the Board

Watauga County Board of Commissioners

MINUTES

WATAUGA COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS TUESDAY, AUGUST 4, 2020

The Watauga County Board of Commissioners held a regular meeting, as scheduled, on Tuesday, August 4, 2020, at 8:30 A.M. remotely with the meeting originating in the Commissioners' Conference Room located in the Watauga County Administration Building, Boone, North Carolina.

Chairman Welch called the remote electronic meeting to order at 8:37 A.M. All votes were taken by roll call. The following were present:

PRESENT VIA ELECTRONIC MEANS:

John Welch, Chairman
Billy Kennedy, Vice-Chairman
Larry Turnbow, Commissioner
Charlie Wallin, Commissioner
Perry Yates, Commissioner
Anthony di Santi, County Attorney
Deron Geouque, County Manager
Anita J. Fogle, Clerk to the Board

Commissioner Wallin opened with a prayer and Commissioner Turnbow led the Pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Chairman Welch called for additions and/or corrections to the July 21, 2020, regular meeting and closed session minutes.

Vice-Chairman Kennedy, seconded by Commissioner Yates, moved to approve the July 21, 2020, regular meeting minutes as presented.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

Vice-Chairman Kennedy, seconded by Commissioner Yates, moved to approve the July 21, 2020, closed session minutes as presented.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Chairman Welch called for additions and/or corrections to the August 4, 2020, agenda.

Commissioner Turnbow, seconded by Commissioner Wallin, moved to approve the August 4, 2020, agenda as presented.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19) COMMUNITY UPDATE

Ms. Jennifer Greene, AppHealthCare Director, provided an update on the Coronavirus (COVID-19). The report was for information only and, therefore, no action was required.

SCHOOL BOARD REQUEST TO AMEND THE VALLE CRUCIS HISTORIC DISTRICT ORDINANCE

County Manager Geouque stated that at the July 21, 2020, meeting, Dr. Scott Elliott, Watauga County School Superintendent, presented a resolution by the Watauga County Board of Education authorizing the acquisition of property located in the Valle Crucis area for a new elementary school. The parcel number of the property was 1980-26-1517 and is approximately 14.4 acres at a cost of \$1,105,000. At that time, Dr. Elliott, on behalf of the Watauga County Board of Education, requested the Board of Commissioners adopt the Valle Crucis Historic District Ordinance with the following text amendments as follows:

- 2.3 Exemption of Bona Fide Farms and Public Schools. This ordinance shall not be applicable to bona fide farms, but any use of farm property for non-farm purposes is subject to the regulations. Bona Fide Farm purposes include production of crops, fruits, vegetables, ornamental and flowering plants, dairy, poultry and all other forms of agricultural products having a domestic or foreign market.
- Sections 2.4, 2.5 shall not be applicable to public schools.

After discussion, Chairman Welch stated that the Board could choose to adopt the Statement of Plan Consistency and text amendment as presented or with modifications; table action to another meeting; or deny the proposed amendments.

County Manager Geouque clarified that the Board had tabled action at their last meeting to allow opportunity for those who wished to submit public comment.

Vice-Chairman Kennedy, seconded by Commissioner Turnbow, moved to adopt the Board of Commissioners Statement of Plan of Consistency marked with “Approval of the Request” checked.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

Commissioner Turnbow, Seconded by Vice-Chairman Kennedy, moved to adopt the amended Valle Crucis Historic District Ordinance as presented.

VOTE: Aye-5

EMERGENCY SERVICES MATTERS

A. Proposed Renewal of Priority Dispatch License

County Manager Geouque stated that Mr. Will Holt, Emergency Services Director, was on the eastern end of the State helping with Hurricane Isaias relief. Therefore, Mr. Geouque presented a request for the renewal of the Priority Dispatch software license for \$16,800. The software was used for processing of Fire, EMS and Law Enforcement calls with a nationally recognized list of questions that allow for standardization and prioritization of emergency calls. The cost of the software would be 100% funded by 911 surcharge funds.

Vice-Chairman Kennedy, seconded by Commissioner Turnbow, moved to approve the contract with Priority Dispatch software license in the amount of \$16,800.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

B. Proposed Replacement of Radio Cache

County Manager Geouque requested to replace five (5) portable radios in the Emergency Services radio cache in the amount of \$28,000. The radio cache was used in multi-agency operations where all agencies may not have 800MHz capable radios from both in-County and out-of-County agencies. Adequate funds were included in the current fiscal year budget to cover the expense.

Commissioner Turnbow, seconded by Commissioner Wallin, moved to award Motorola Solutions the contract for five (5) portable radios in the amount of \$28,000.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

MISCELLANEOUS ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

A. Proposed Forest Service Lease Agreement for Space in the East Annex

County Manager Geouque stated that the Forest Service had requested to use office space in the Cooperative Extension Building (East Annex). The Forest Service currently has a lease with the County for property on Landfill Road which houses a trailer for office space. The trailer has experienced mold issues requiring the need to relocate. The Forest Service has requested to lease the available office in the Cooperative Extension Building for a two (2) year term beginning October 1, 2020, and ending September 30, 2022.

County Manager Geouque stated that property owned by the County may be leased or rented for such terms and upon such conditions as the Board may determine, for up to ten (10) years. Property may be rented or leased only pursuant to a resolution of the Board authorizing the execution of the lease or rental agreement adopted at a regular Board meeting upon 10 days' public notice. Notice shall be given by publication describing the property to be leased or rented, stating the annual rental or lease payments, and announcing the Board's intent to authorize the lease or rental at its next regular meeting.

Vice-Chairman Kennedy, seconded by Commissioner Wallin, moved to adopt the resolution authorizing the

County Manager to advertise the Board's intent to move forward with the lease and to approve the State of North Carolina PO-28 lease proposal form.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

B. Boards and Commissions

County Manager Geouque presented the following for consideration:

Watauga County Public Library Advisory Board

Ms. Monica Caruso, Watauga County Librarian, requested Ms. Carol Deal be appointed to fill the unexpired term of Ms. Mary Reichel and Mr. John Abbott be appointed to begin a new term replacing Mr. Terry Hamilton who served for two terms. These were first readings.

Vice-Chairman Kennedy, seconded by Commissioner Yates, moved to waive the second reading and appoint Ms. Carol Deal to fill the unexpired term of Ms. Mary Reichel and appoint Mr. John Abbott to begin a new term on the Watauga County Public Library Advisory Board.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

C. Announcements

County Manager Geouque announced that the 113th North Carolina Association of County Commissioners (NCACC) Annual Conference would be held virtually with registration including all virtual sessions on August 5, 6, 14, and 15. Details for the conference were located at: <https://www.ncacc.org/809/2020-Annual-Conference> (<https://www.ncacc.org/809/2020-Annual-Conference>) and registration information was at: <https://ncaccevents.org/events/ac2020/> (<https://ncaccevents.org/events/ac2020/>). There was no cost for the virtual conference for County Officials and Staff.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Chairman Welch stated that written comments were made available to view on the County's website and at the County Manager's Office.

[Clerk's Note: Written comments were received by the 5:00 P.M. deadline on August 3, 2020, from the following: JD Dooley, Lyle Schoenfeldt, Susan Musilli, Audra Thompson, Bill Pressly, Lee Hyde, Stacie Saunders, Mitch and Kelli Mayhew, Sibyl Pressly, Sally Pressly, and Tuesdae Rice.]

CLOSED SESSION

At 9:42 A.M., Commissioner Wallin, seconded by Commissioner Turnbow, moved to enter Closed Session to discuss Attorney/Client Matters, per G. S. 143-318.11(a)(3) and Land Acquisition, per G. S. 143-318.11(a)(5)(i). The following lawsuits were included in discussion during closed session: The Town of Boone lawsuit regarding sales tax distribution and the lawsuit against the Town of Boone regarding the water allocation.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

Vice-Chairman Kennedy, seconded by Commissioner Wallin, moved to resume the open meeting at 10:36 A.M.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

ADJOURN

Commissioner Turnbow, seconded by Commissioner Wallin, moved to adjourn the meeting at 10:37 A.M.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

John Welch, Chairman

ATTEST:

Anita J. Fogle, Clerk to the Board

Watauga County Board of Commissioners

MINUTES

WATAUGA COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS TUESDAY, AUGUST 18, 2020

The Watauga County Board of Commissioners held a regular meeting, as scheduled, on Tuesday, August 18, 2020, at 5:30 P.M. remotely with the meeting originating in the Commissioners' Conference Room located in the Watauga County Administration Building, Boone, North Carolina.

Chairman Welch called the remote electronic meeting to order at 5:41 P.M. The following were present:

PRESENT VIA ELECTRONIC MEANS:

John Welch, Chairman
Billy Kennedy, Vice-Chairman
Larry Turnbow, Commissioner
Charlie Wallin, Commissioner
Perry Yates, Commissioner
Anthony di Santi, County Attorney
Deron Geouque, County Manager

Commissioner Wallin opened with a prayer and Commissioner Turnbow led the Pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Chairman Welch called for additions and/or corrections to the August 4, 2020, regular meeting and closed session minutes.

Commissioner Yates, seconded by Commissioner Turnbow, moved to approve the August 4, 2020, regular meeting minutes as presented.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

Commissioner Yates, seconded by Commissioner Turnbow, moved to approve the August 4, 2020, closed session minutes as presented.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Chairman Welch called for additions and/or corrections to the August 18, 2020, agenda.

Commissioner Turnbow, seconded by Commissioner Wallin, moved to approve the August 18, 2020, agenda as presented.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19) COMMUNITY UPDATE

Ms. Jennifer Greene, AppHealthCare Director, was to provide an update on the Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic; however, Ms. Greene wasn't available at the time of the meeting. Therefore, the update was tabled until the September 1, 2020, meeting.

RIVERS WALK UTILITY EASEMENT REQUEST

Mr. Alan Crees, with Municipal Engineering Services, presented a request for a water easement on County-owned property for the Town of Boone. The easement through the West Annex property would allow for a tap on to the new twelve-inch water main on West King Street. The water line would then go across the West Annex property on the western side of the Cooperative Extension Building to connect to the Rivers Walk Project.

Mr. Crees stated that originally there were two options for the water line. One was for the water line to run under Burrell Street from West King Street and the other was for the line to run on the eastern side of the Cooperative Extension Building where Watauga Medics' ambulance base is located.

Mr. Crees stated that contractors met with County Manager Geouque and County Maintenance Director, Mr. Robert Marsh, to formulate the better route so as to not interfere with ambulance services during the construction phase. Mr. Crees stated the County had also requested a fire hydrant be located at the County's unpaved lot (Impound Lot) adjacent to the Rivers Walk Project and a tap be installed in the event the County improved the property for future use.

During discussion, concerns were raised regarding the route of the waterline across County property. County Manager Geouque stated that a Department of Transportation Right-of-Way inhibited the Burrell Street option and if the County improved the Impound Lot the line nearest that area may, at that time, have to be relocated. Mr. Crees stated that the line could come straight out of the Poplar Grove Road Line in place of curving toward the project or the line could be pushed to the edge of the drive closer to Poplar Grove Road. Rivers Walk Attorney, Mr. Tucker Deal, joined the discussion to add that the County could elect the exact location of the portion of the water line located on County property.

Commissioner Yates, seconded by Commissioner Turnbow, moved to approve the easement as to be prepared by the County Attorney with the route for the water line to be located to the best advantage of the County.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

TAX MATTERS

A. Monthly Collections Report

County Manager Geouque, on behalf of Tax Administrator, Mr. Larry Warren, presented the Tax Collections

Report for the month of July 2020. The report was presented for information only and, therefore, no action was required.

B. Refunds and Releases

County Manager Geouque presented the Refunds and Releases Report for July 2020 for Board approval:
TO BE TYPED IN MINUTE BOOK

Vice-Chairman Kennedy, seconded by Commissioner Yates, moved to approve the Refunds and Releases Report for July 2020 as presented.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

BUDGET AMENDMENTS

Ms. Misty Watson, Finance Director, reviewed the following budget amendments:

Account #	Description	Debit	Credit
105550-422000	Food and Provisions	\$38,127	
103300-332008	FFCRA Grant		\$38,127

The amendment recognized the acceptance of the NC Division of Aging and Adults Services funding for the FFCRA Act as approved per Board action on June 9, 2020

104286-457002	Capital Outlay – Leasehold Improvements		\$24,655
109800-498021	Transfer to Capital Projects Fund	\$24,655	
213980-398100	Transfer from General Fund		\$24,655
213991-399101	Appropriated Fund Balance	\$24,655	

The amendment returned unused CIP funds from the Anne-Marie paving project to CIP.

293270-312009	Occupancy Tax Revenues		\$32,000
294140-469900	Watauga County District U TDA	\$32,000	

The amendment recognized additional projected occupancy tax revenues above original budgeted amount.

Commissioner Turnbow, seconded by Vice-Chairman Kennedy, moved to approve the budget amendments as presented by Ms. Watson.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

MISCELLANEOUS ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

A. Request from Watauga Humane Society Regarding Current Loan

County Manager Geouque stated that the Watauga Humane Society had requested to modify their current loan agreement with the County. The current loan went into effect November 26, 2019, with a maturity date of December 1, 2029. The Humane Society had requested the Board authorize interest only payments from September 1, 2020, through August 1, 2021, which would extend the loan expiration date to December 1, 2030.

Commissioner Turnbow stated that the Humane Society had required updates to the dog kennels. The same type of updates, to the cat condos, were made in 2019 with funds generated through fundraisers. With the COVID-19 pandemic, fundraisers have not generated enough funds in 2020 to cover the required dog kennel updates.

Commissioner Turnbow, seconded by Commissioner Yates, moved to authorize the loan modification and direct the County Attorney to draft the necessary changes to the current loan agreement.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

B. Boards and Commissions

Recreation Commission

Chairman Welch stated that Dr. Joy James had been recommended by Dr. Melissa Weddell, the Recreation Management Chair, to replace Dr. Stephanie West, as an Appalachian State University (ASU) representative to the Recreation Commission for a three-year term.

Chairman Yates, seconded by Commissioner Turnbow, moved to waive the second reading and appoint Dr. Joy James to a three-year term to serve as an Appalachian State University (ASU) representative to the Watauga County Recreation Commission.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

C. Announcements

Chairman Welch stated that there were no announcements.

Vice-Chairman Kennedy asked County Attorney di Santi if there was anything he could share with the public in regards to the Rainbow Trail Board of Adjustment Appeal. Mr. di Santi stated that the case was pending before Judge Gavenus in Superior Court.

Chairman Welch stated that more information would be provided on a future agenda.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Chairman Welch stated that written comments were made available to view on the County's website and at the County Manager's Office.

[Clerk's Note: Written comments were received by the 5:00 P.M. deadline on August 17, 2020, from the following: Tony Hemp, Melissa Riley, and Jill Flood.]

CLOSED SESSION

At 6:19 P.M., Commissioner Wallin, seconded by Commissioner Turnbow, moved to enter Closed Session to discuss Attorney/Client Matters, per G. S. 143-318.11(a)(3) and Land Acquisition, per G. S. 143-318.11(a)(5)(i). The following lawsuits were included in discussion during closed session: The Rainbow Trail Board of Adjustment Appeal, the Town of Boone lawsuit regarding sales tax distribution and the lawsuit against the Town of Boone regarding the water allocation.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

Vice-Chairman Kennedy, seconded by Commissioner Yates, moved to resume the open meeting at 6:51 P.M.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

ADJOURN

Commissioner Turnbow, seconded by Commissioner Wallin, moved to adjourn the meeting at 6:52 P.M.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

John Welch, Chairman

ATTEST:

Anita J. Fogle, Clerk to the Board

Watauga County Board of Commissioners

MINUTES

WATAUGA COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 1, 2020

The Watauga County Board of Commissioners held a regular meeting, as scheduled, on Tuesday, September 1, 2020, at 8:30 A.M. remotely with the meeting originating in the Commissioners' Conference Room located in the Watauga County Administration Building, Boone, North Carolina.

Chairman Welch called the remote electronic meeting to order at 8:31 A.M. All votes were taken by roll call. The following were present:

PRESENT VIA ELECTRONIC MEANS:

John Welch, Chairman
Billy Kennedy, Vice-Chairman
Larry Turnbow, Commissioner
Charlie Wallin, Commissioner
Perry Yates, Commissioner
Anthony di Santi, County Attorney
Deron Geouque, County Manager
Anita J. Fogle, Clerk to the Board

Commissioner Yates opened with a prayer and Vice-Chairman Kennedy led the Pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Chairman Welch called for additions and/or corrections to the August 18, 2020, regular meeting and closed session minutes.

Commissioner Wallin requested to make the following correction to indicate that Commissioner Wallin gave the invocation:

“Commissioner ~~Yates~~ **Wallin** opened with a prayer and Commissioner Turnbow led the Pledge of Allegiance.”

Vice-Chairman Kennedy, seconded by Commissioner Turnbow, moved to approve the August 18, 2020, regular meeting minutes as amended.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

Vice-Chairman Kennedy, seconded by Commissioner Turnbow, moved to approve the August 18, 2020, closed session minutes as presented.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Chairman Welch called for additions and/or corrections to the September 1, 2020, agenda.

County Manager Geouque requested to add a proposed Town of Boone Conditional District Zoning Map Amendment request for a Watauga Medical Center project.

Commissioner Turnbow, seconded by Commissioner Wallin, moved to approve the September 1, 2020, agenda as amended.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19) COMMUNITY UPDATE

Ms. Jennifer Greene, AppHealthCare Director, provided an update on the Coronavirus (COVID-19). The report was for information only and, therefore, no action was required.

UPDATE ON NEW RIVER CONSERVANCY PROJECTS IN WATAUGA COUNTY

Mr. George Santucci, New River Conservancy President, presented updates on the following projects in Watauga County: the South Fork New River Restoration project that runs along Brookshire Park; the Middle Fork New River Restoration project along Section 1B of the Greenway; a stormwater planning project on Winklers Creek; and a daylighting project for Boone Creek through the Peacock Parking Lot on Appalachian State University campus. The presentation was for information only and, therefore, no action was required.

PROPOSED ACCEPTANCE OF CORONAVIRUS AID, RELIEF, AND ECONOMIC SECURITY (CARES) ACT ALLOCATION FOR PROJECT ON AGING

Ms. Angie Boitnotte, Project on Aging Director, stated that Watauga County was eligible to receive \$94,057 in Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act funding from the North Carolina Division of Aging and Adult Services. The funds must be used to respond to the Coronavirus emergency by providing Older Americans Act activities related to the response. No county match was required and funds must be expended by September 30, 2021. Ms. Boitnotte proposed the funds be allocated as follows:

Service	Unit-Based Allocation	Non-Unit Allocation	Totals
In-Home Aide Level I	\$7,500	\$5,000	\$12,500
In-Home Aide Level II	\$7,500		\$7,500
Congregate Meals	\$19,000	\$1,000	\$20,000
Home Delivered Meals	\$41,072	\$3,000	\$44,072
Senior Center		\$9,985	\$9,985
TOTALS	\$75,072	\$18,985	\$94,057

Vice-Chairman Kennedy, seconded by Commissioner Wallin, moved to authorize the plan to expend the allocation of CARES funds as presented.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

PROPOSED RENEWAL OF COMMUNICATIONS MAINTENANCE CONTRACTS WITH MOBILE COMMUNICATIONS AMERICA

Mr. Will Holt, Emergency Services Director, presented proposed renewals for three maintenance contracts totaling \$37,866 with Mobile Communications America (formerly Wireless Communications). The first contract was for console infrastructure equipment, the second for fixed infrastructure equipment, and the third for mobile radios (including those used by the Sheriff's Office). Adequate funds were budgeted to cover the expense.

Commissioner Turnbow, seconded by Commissioner Yates, moved to approve the three contracts with Mobile Communications America as presented by Mr. Holt.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

PROPOSED ENGINEERING SERVICES FOR SANITATION SCALE AND TRANSFER STATION AREA IMPROVEMENTS

County Manager Geouque, on behalf of Mr. Rex Buck, Operations Services Director, presented proposed agreements with McGill Associates, P.A., to address the on-going traffic flow, maneuverability and accessibility challenges at the County's Transfer Station Facility. The cost was \$159,800 for all of the services required. Adequate funds were budgeted to cover the expense.

Commissioner Yates shared the following concerns: citizens can only dump at no cost on Saturdays (of which Commissioner Yates suggested changing back to Monday through Saturday) and portions of this project may have to be redone when future projects are scheduled. Vice-Chairman Kennedy suggested perhaps adding one additional day to the schedule for no cost dumping. Chairman Welch and Commissioner Wallin agreed that adding a weekday (along with the current Saturday hours of 8:00 A.M. to 4:00 P.M.) for dumping could be a solution. Chairman Welch stated that great points had been made; however, the agreements for consideration were budgeted items that have needed to be addressed for a long time.

County Manager Geouque stated that, when constructed, the new scale house would be a smaller building with scales on both sides (one for weighing in and one for weighing out) which would help to alleviate wait times on Saturdays as well as the general flow of traffic.

After discussion, Vice-Chairman Kennedy, seconded by Commissioner Turnbow, moved to accept the proposals from McGill, Associates, P.A. in the amount \$159,800 for design improvements at the landfill facility.

VOTE: Aye-4(Welch, Kennedy, Turnbow, Wallin)
Nay-1(Yates)

RAINBOW TRAIL BOARD OF ADJUSTMENT APPEAL UPDATE

County Attorney di Santi shared the following timeline regarding the Rainbow Trail Board of Adjustment Appeal:

November 2013	Appalachian Materials leased property on Rainbow Trail to Radford Quarries, Inc. to operate an asphalt plant
June 15, 2015	A High Impact Land Use (HILU) Ordinance permit application was submitted for the project
June 22, 2015	Mr. Joe Furman denied the application due to finding the permit deficient on a number of items and not meeting the requirements of the HILU Ordinance including the proposed location being within 1,500 feet of an educational facility (the Margaret Gragg Education Center)
July 17, 2015	Appalachian Materials appealed to the Watauga County Board of Adjustment
October 14-16, 2015	After a three-day hearing, the Board of Adjustment (BOA) affirmed Mr. Furman's decision and found the application deficient on numerous items and due to the location being within 1,500 feet of the Margaret Gragg Education Center. Appalachian Materials timely appealed the BOA decision to the Superior Court of Watauga County.
September 8, 2017	Superior Court Judge Horne affirmed the Board of Adjustment's decision by ruling that the location of the proposed asphalt plant was within 1,500 of an education facility.
November 6, 2018	The case was appealed to the North Carolina Court of Appeals which reversed the Superior Court decision and ruled that the Margaret Gragg Education Center was not an education facility as defined by the HILU and remanded the case to the North Carolina Superior Court for proceedings was consistent with its decision.
December 11, 2018	Watauga County petitioned the Supreme Court for discretionary review of the discussion of the Court of Appeals
March 27, 2019	The Supreme Court denied the petition for discretionary review so the ruling of the Court of Appeals decision stood which remanded the case to the Superior Court of Watauga county for proceedings consistent with the Court of Appeals decision.
After March 2020	After over one year of waiting for Appalachian Materials to schedule a hearing before Superior Court of Watauga County regarding the remand from the Court of Appeals, Watauga County filed a Motion to Dismiss for failure to prosecute the claim which was heard in the Superior Court July 1, 2020.

June 29, 2020 Session	In response to the Motion to Dismiss, Appalachian Materials filed a Motion requesting the Superior Court to issue an Order to the Board of Adjustment and Ordinance Administrator (OA) to issue the HILU permit to construct and operate the asphalt plant. This was heard before Judge Gavenus who denied the County's Motion to Dismiss and has the request to order the Board of Adjustment and Ordinance Administrator to issue the HILU permit under consideration.
	The next action depends on the ruling of the court regarding the issuance of the permit which is expected any time. Either the County will be ordered to issue the permit or, as the County argued, the case will be remanded to the BOA and OA pursuant to the Court of Appeals decision for proceedings that were consistent with its ruling. The BOA and OA cannot consider the fact that the Margaret E. Gragg Education Center is within 1,500 of the site. The County will argue that there has not been sufficient information submitted to the Ordinance Administrator or Board of Adjustment to qualify for the issuance of the permit and that the BOA and OA can require the additional information to be submitted by the applicant.
	A ruling was expected very soon from Judge Gavenus.

[Clerk's Note: County Attorney di Santi was updated by his law partner, Ms. Chelsea Garrett during the meeting regarding action taken by Judge Gavenus on this issue and action was taken by the Board at the end of this meeting, after closed session.]

MISCELLANEOUS ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

A. Town of Boone Conditional District Zoning Map Amendment Request for A Watauga Medical Center Project

County Manager Geouque stated that a request had been received (since the agenda was prepared) for the County to submit a Conditional District Zoning Map Amendment for a Watauga Medical Center project to the Town of Boone. Mr. Geouque had requested the Board add it to the agenda to make the Board members and public aware of the request. Mr. Geouque recommended the Board table consideration until the next meeting to allow time to review the request in more detail.

Vice-Chairman Kennedy, who sits on the Medical Center Board, clarified that future construction at the Medical Center would be in phases and this request was part of Phase I which would address issues at their Central Energy Plant.

Chairman Welch tabled further discussion and consideration until the September 15, 2020, meeting.

B. Proposed Forest Service Lease Agreement for Space in the East Annex

County Manager Geouque stated that the North Carolina Forest Service had requested to use office space in the Cooperative Extension Building. Their current office building, located on County-leased property, had experienced mold issues which required the Forest Service to search for a new location. The Forest Service requested to lease the available office space at the Cooperative Extension Building for a term of two (2) years

beginning October 1, 2020 and ending September 30, 2022.

Property owned by the County may be leased or rented for such terms and upon such conditions as the Board may determine, for up to ten (10) years. Property may be rented or leased only pursuant to a resolution of the Board authorizing the execution of the lease or rental agreement adopted at a regular Board meeting upon a 10 day public notice. Notice shall be given by publication describing the property to be leased or rented, stating the annual rental or lease payments, and announcing the Board's intent to authorize the lease or rental at its next regular meeting.

County Manager Geouque stated that the resolution had been adopted and the 10-day public notice given; therefore, the PO-28 form and lease were presented for consideration of approval.

Vice-Chairman Kennedy, seconded by Commissioner Wallin, moved to approve the lease and completion of PO-28 Lease proposal form.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

B. Transfer of Mabel Elementary School to the Watauga County Board of Education

County Manager Geouque stated that approximately ten (10) years ago, the Watauga County School Board transferred Mabel Elementary School to Watauga County as part of the Qualified School Construction Bond. The Bond was in the amount of \$1,290,274 and required the School System to transfer the property since the County would be responsible for the Bond. The Bond obligations have now been met and the property may be transferred back to the School System. County Manager Geouque presented a Warranty Deed as prepared by the County Attorney.

Commissioner Turnbow, seconded by Commissioner Yates, moved to approve the Warranty Deed transferring Mabel Elementary School to the Watauga County Board of Education.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

C. Boards and Commissions

County Manager Geouque share the below:

Valle Crucis Historic Preservation Commission

The Valle Crucis Historic Preservation Commission terms of Ms. Susan Mast and Ms. Heidi Tester expire in September. Specific requirements, as mentioned in Mr. Furman's memo, must be met to serve on the Commission. Ms. Mast and Ms. Tester meet those requirements and are both willing to continue to serve if reappointed. The terms are for three (3) years. This is a first reading.

Vice-Chairman Kennedy, seconded by Commissioner Turnbow, moved to waive the second reading and reappoint both Ms. Susan Mast and Ms. Heidi Tester to three-year terms on the Valle Crucis Historic Preservation Commission.

VOTE: Aye-5

D. Announcements

County Manager Geouque announced that the Trustees of Caldwell Community College & Technical Institute has invited the Board of Commissioners to a meeting on Wednesday, September 23, 2020, at 6:00 P.M. at the Watauga Student Services Center located at the Watauga Campus on Hwy 105 Bypass, Boone, NC, in Room 112.

Concerns were mentioned in regards to the meeting being in-person and not virtual during the ongoing pandemic. County Manager Geouque stated that he would get more information from Dr. Poarch as to how safety measures will be met.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Chairman Welch stated that no written comments were received.

CLOSED SESSION

At 9:58 A.M., Commissioner Wallin, seconded by Commissioner Yates, moved to enter Closed Session to discuss Attorney/Client Matters, per G. S. 143-318.11(a)(3) and Land Acquisition, per G. S. 143-318.11(a)(5)(i). The following lawsuits were included in discussion during closed session: The Rainbow Trail Board of Adjustment Appeal.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

Commissioner Turnbow, seconded by Vice-Chairman Kennedy, moved to resume the open meeting at 10:39 A.M.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

AMEND THE AGENDA

Commissioner Wallin, seconded by Commissioner Yates, moved to amend the agenda to add action after closed session to consider new information regarding the Rainbow Trail Board of Adjustment appeal.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

ACTION AFTER CLOSED SESSION

County Attorney di Santi stated that while giving his earlier report his law partner, Ms. Chelsea Garratt, informed him to say that she had received a memo from Judge Gavenus giving direction for a ruling to be entered affirming the December Court of Appeals Order to issue a permit for construction and operation of an asphalt plant at the Rainbow Trail site. To the applicant, Appalachian Materials, Inc.

Commissioner Turnbow, seconded by Vice-Chairman Kennedy, moved to direct the County Attorney to file an appeal to Judge Gavenus' decision to the North Carolina Court of Appeals.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

ADJOURN

Commissioner Wallin, seconded by Commissioner Yates, moved to adjourn the meeting at 10:43 A.M.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

John Welch, Chairman

ATTEST:

Anita J. Fogle, Clerk to the Board

Watauga County Board of Commissioners

MINUTES

WATAUGA COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS TUESDAY, OCTOBER 20, 2020

The Watauga County Board of Commissioners held a regular meeting, as scheduled, on Tuesday, October 20, 2020, at 5:30 P.M. remotely with the meeting originating in the Commissioners' Conference Room located in the Community Room of the Community Recreation Center, Boone, North Carolina.

Chairman Welch called the remote electronic meeting to order at 5:37 P.M. The following were present:

PRESENT: John Welch, Chairman
 Billy Kennedy, Vice-Chairman
 Charlie Wallin, Commissioner
 Larry Turnbow, Commissioner
 Perry Yates, Commissioner
 Anthony di Santi, County Attorney
 Deron Geouque, County Manager
 Anita J. Fogle, Clerk to the Board

Commissioner Wallin opened with a prayer and Vice-Chairman Kennedy led the Pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Chairman Welch called for additions and/or corrections to the October 6, 2020, regular meeting and closed session minutes.

Vice-Chairman Kennedy, seconded by Commissioner Yates, moved to approve the October 6, 2020, regular meeting minutes as presented.

VOTE: Aye-5
 Nay-0

Vice-Chairman Kennedy, seconded by Commissioner Yates, moved to approve the October 6, 2020, closed session minutes as presented.

VOTE: Aye-5
 Nay-0

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Chairman Welch called for additions and/or corrections to the October 20, 2020, agenda.

County Manager Geouque requested to add consideration of a resolution in support of "Ski Well Be Well" and

a proposed Golden Leaf Foundation Grant to provide a local kill-chill facility for processing meat.

Vice-Chairman Kennedy, seconded by Commissioner Wallin, moved to approve the October 20, 2020, agenda as amended.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

PUBLIC HEARING TO ALLOW CITIZEN COMMENT ON THE SUBMISSION OF AN APPLICATION FOR 2020 COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT FUNDS FOR THE CORONAVIRUS PROGRAM

Two public hearings were required for the grant and the first hearing was held on October 6, 2020.

Commissioner Turnbow, seconded by Vice-Chairman Kennedy, moved to call the public hearing to order at 5:41 P.M.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

The NC Department of Commerce recently announced the Community Development Block Grant Coronavirus Program (CDBG-CV). The grant was on a first-come-first-serve basis and Watauga County was eligible for up to \$900,000. Mr. Furman has been soliciting potential projects with several agencies/organizations and working with a committee including Ms. Michelle Ball, High Country Council of Government, Ms. Melissa Soto, W.A.M.Y. Community Action, and Ms. Marti Phillips, High Country United Way.

Mr. Furman stated that the proposed program for which an application for CDBG-CV funds would be submitted consists of three (3) components as follows. 1) Subsistence payments for rent, mortgage, utilities to prevent eviction, foreclosure, or service disconnection which could also include funds to establish/continue internet service, in areas where service currently exists, for a defined time period; 2) Food distribution; and 3) Mental health services. Mr. Furman stated that the program areas would address the issues caused by COVID-19 of loss of income, isolation or increased need for connectivity, and anxiety or depression, etc.

Program partners would include High Country United Way, W.A.M.Y. Community Action, Hospitality House, Daymark Recovery Services, and Watauga County Project on Aging. Grant preparation and grant compliance administrative assistance would be provided by High Country Council of Governments, other administration by W.A.M.Y. Community Action, and High Country United Way.

Mr. Furman presented the following tentative budget:

Subsistence:	\$510,000
Food Distribution:	\$200,000
Mental Health Services:	\$100,000
Administration:	\$90,000
TOTAL:	\$900,000

There was no public comment; however, written public comments would be accepted in regards to the public hearing through Wednesday, October 21, 2020.

Commissioner Yates, seconded by Commissioner Wallin, moved to close the public hearing at 5:46 P.M.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

[Clerk's Note: No public comments were received by the deadline of Wednesday, October 21, 2020.]

PROPOSED RESOLUTION FOR WATAUGA COUNTY APPLICATION FOR COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT FUNDING FOR THE WATAUGA COVID RELIEF PROJECT

Mr. Furman presented a proposed “Resolution for Watauga County Application for Community Development Block Grant Funding for the Watauga COVID Relief Project.” The resolution would authorize staff to submit a formal application for the grant funding.

Commissioner Turnbow, seconded by Vice-Chairman Kennedy, moved to adopt the “Resolution for Watauga County Application for Community Development Block Grant Funding for the Watauga COVID Relief Project.”

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19) COMMUNITY UPDATE

Ms. Jennifer Greene, AppHealthCare Director, provided an update on the Coronavirus (COVID-19). The report was for information only and, therefore, no action was required.

PROJECT ON AGING ANNUAL REPORT

Ms. Angie Boitnotte, Project on Aging Director, presented the Fiscal Year 2020 annual comprehensive evaluation of the agency’s operations and policies as required by the NC Division of Health Service Regulation.

Commissioner Turnbow, seconded by Commissioner Wallin, moved to accept the Project on Aging’s Fiscal Year 2020 Annual Report as presented.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

TAX MATTERS

A. Monthly Collections Report

Tax Administrator, Mr. Larry Warren, presented the Tax Collections Report for the month of September 2020. The report was presented for information only and, therefore, no action was required.

B. Refunds and Releases

Mr. Warren presented the Refunds and Releases Report for September 2020 for Board approval:

TO BE TYPED IN MINUTE BOOK

Vice-Chairman Kennedy, seconded by Commissioner Turnbow, moved to approve the Refunds and Releases Report for September 2020 as presented.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

PROPOSED INMATE CATASTROPHIC INSURANCE CONTRACT

County Manager Geouque, on behalf of Ms. Misty Watson, Finance Director, presented the contract renewal with Insurance Management Consultants for catastrophic insurance. The insurance shields the County from large medical claims that occur while inmates are being housed in the Watauga County Jail. Mr. Geouque stated that rates were based on inmate population which was reduced during the past year due to COVID-19. The proposed contract with Insurance Management Consultants, Inc. for catastrophic insurance coverage was in the amount of \$36,896, which was a \$5,494 decrease from the previous year, with a \$10,000 deductible. Adequate funds are available to cover the contracted cost.

Commissioner Yates, seconded by Commissioner Wallin, moved to renew the contract with Insurance Management Consultants, Inc. for catastrophic insurance coverage in the amount of \$36,896 with a \$10,000 deductible.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

PROPOSED GOLDEN LEAF FOUNDATION GRANT TO PROVIDE A LOCAL KILL-CHILL FACILITY FOR PROCESSING MEAT

County Manager Geouque presented a proposed project for the Golden Leaf Northwest Sector Community Based Grant Initiative program to create and construct new facilities for livestock slaughter and processing in Watauga County. The goal of the project was for Watauga County to provide the location for a local “kill-chill” facility as well as leveraged funding for the construction of a USDA certified facility to meet the demand of local and regional producers. Mr. Geouque stated that the County had already been considering working with Cooperative Extension to construct a kill floor near the County’s Sanitation Department. Having the facility located at the Sanitation Department would also help with long-term composting recycling needs.

The County Manager stated that the County planned to partner with the Town of Boone if grant funds were received as water and sewer would be required for the “kill-chill” facility.

Commissioner Yates, seconded by Vice-Chairman Kennedy, moved to direct the County Manager to proceed with the proposal and grant application as presented.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

MISCELLANEOUS ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

A. Proposed Resolution in Support of “Ski Well Be Well”

The County Manager presented a proposed resolution in support of the “Ski Well Be Well” model which will provide the best safety practices for local Ski Resorts to open and operate in a safe and responsible manner during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Commissioner Wallin, seconded by Commissioner Turnbow, moved to adopt the resolution as presented.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

B. New Community Recreation Center Update

The County Manager Geouque presented an update regarding the new Community Recreation Center (CRC). Mr. Geouque stated that the County was disappointed that the CRC hadn’t yet opened due to COVID-19 restrictions, including the Governor’s Statewide Phase III restriction of thirty percent (30%) occupancy. Mr. Geouque stated that staff was considering a phased opening and Parks and Recreation had already brought back soccer and pickleball. Mr. Geouque stated that the swimming pool would most likely be the last to open as it would cost the most to operate and had the most risks involved. The facility would have to be staffed correctly as well.

Mr. Geouque stated that the County began running ads to hire staff in February and had to stop due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Even though there were no major issues with the building, punch list items needed to be completed. Staff has planned to move into the facility on October 23. Mr. Geouque stated that it would take approximately two months to open once the hiring process began which would allow time for running ads, hiring, and training new employees. With it being a new facility, not established prior to COVID-19, staff has been cautious when making the decision to open. Also, Ms. Jennifer Greene, the Director of AppHealthCare, and Ms. Mandy Cohen, Secretary of the North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services, had expressed concerns.

Representatives of local swim teams had recently sent several emails to the Board (as listed on the County’s website under public comments) requesting to use the pool for practice only; not meets at this time. Lengthy discussion was held in regards to opening the pool only for swim team practices.

After discussion, the Board agreed, by consensus, to direct the County Manager to get more information from and continue conversations with Ms. Jennifer Greene and to determine the staffing needs required to bring the swim team in for practices.

C. Boards and Commissions

County Manager Geouque presented the following for consideration:

Board of Adjustment

The terms of Alyson Browett (Valle Crucis Historic District), current Chair; John Prickett (Howard’s Creek Watershed), current Vice-Chair; Emily Bish (Foscoe Grandfather Community), Alternate, were set to expire in November. All were willing to continue to serve for an additional three (3) year term. New General Statute NCGS 160D for planning makes no mention of representation of each zoned/regulated area; however, Mr. Joe Furman, Planning and Inspections Director, had indicated that would probably be a good idea when possible or “practicable” per the former statute.

Vice-Chairman Kennedy, seconded by Commissioner Yates, moved to waive the second reading and reappoint Ms. Alyson Browett, Mr. John Prickett, and Ms. Emily Bish to three (3) year terms on the Watauga County Board of Adjustment.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

C. Announcements

County Manager Geouque announced that, due to the Commissioners' Board Room being an official polling site on Election Day, the November 3, 2020, regular meeting of the Board of Commissioners had been cancelled. The next regular meeting of the Board would be on Tuesday, November 17, 2020, at 5:30 P.M.

The Board agreed, by consensus, to hold the meeting remotely, through Zoom, with the Board of Commissioners meeting in person at the Community Recreation Center.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Chairman Welch stated that written comments were made, submitted, and made available to view on the County's website and at the County Manager's Office.

[Clerk's Note: Written comments were received by the 5:00 P.M. deadline on October 19, 2020, from the following: Ms. Anne Ward, Mr. Chip Williamson, Mr. Witold Kosmala, Ms. Mary Sheryl Horine, Ms. Jami Kent, and Mr. John Whitehead.]

CLOSED SESSION

At 7:03 P.M., Commissioner Wallin, seconded by Vice-Chairman Kennedy, moved to enter Closed Session to discuss Attorney/Client Matters, per G. S. 143-318.11(a)(3) and Personnel Matters, per G. S. 143-318.11(a)(6).

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

Vice-Chairman Kennedy, seconded by Commissioner Wallin, moved to resume the open meeting at 7:51 P.M.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

ADJOURN

Vice-Chairman Kennedy, seconded by Commissioner Wallin, moved to adjourn the meeting at 7:51 P.M.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

John Welch, Chairman

ATTEST:

Anita J. Fogle, Clerk to the Board

Watauga County Board of Commissioners

MINUTES

WATAUGA COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 17, 2020

The Watauga County Board of Commissioners held a regular meeting, as scheduled, on Tuesday, November 17, 2020, at 5:30 P.M. remotely with the meeting originating in the Community Room located in the Watauga County Community Recreation Center, Boone, North Carolina.

Vice-Chairman Kennedy called the remote electronic meeting to order at 5:35 P.M. The following were present:

PRESENT: Billy Kennedy, Vice-Chairman
Charlie Wallin, Commissioner
Larry Turnbow, Commissioner
Perry Yates, Commissioner
Andrea Capua, County Attorney
Deron Geouque, County Manager
Anita J. Fogle, Clerk to the Board

Vice-Chairman Kennedy stated that Chairman Welch was not in attendance due to another commitment.

Commissioner Yates opened with a prayer and Commissioner Turnbow led the Pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Vice-Chairman Kennedy called for additions and/or corrections to the October 20, 2020, regular meeting and closed session minutes.

Commissioner Turnbow, seconded by Commissioner Yates, moved to approve the October 20, 2020, regular meeting minutes as presented.

VOTE: Aye-4(Kennedy, Turnbow, Wallin, Yates)
Nay-0
Absent-1(Welch)

Commissioner Turnbow, seconded by Commissioner Yates, moved to approve the October 20, 2020, closed session minutes as presented.

VOTE: Aye-4(Kennedy, Turnbow, Wallin, Yates)
Nay-0
Absent-1(Welch)

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Vice-Chairman Kennedy called for additions and/or corrections to the November 17, 2020, agenda.

Commissioner Turnbow requested to add a funding request from Jonathan Hartsell with Blue Ridge Resource Conservation & Development Council, Inc. for a restoration project at Todd Island.

Commissioner Yates, seconded by Commissioner Turnbow, moved to approve the November 17, 2020, agenda as amended.

VOTE: Aye-4(Kennedy, Turnbow, Wallin, Yates)
Nay-0
Absent-1(Welch)

CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19) COMMUNITY UPDATE

Ms. Jennifer Greene, AppHealthCare Director, provided an update on the Coronavirus (COVID-19). The report was for information only and, therefore, no action was required.

PROPOSED TED MACKORELL USAGE AGREEMENT

Mr. Vincent Nicolsen, legal counsel for Appalachian FC, discussed the potential for the team to locate in Watauga County and utilize Ted Mackorell Soccer Complex for games. The management committee, comprised of County, HCSA, and ASU members, has met and agreed that accommodations could be made to allow for this unique partnership. The group would be making two (2) requests. The first was a facility use agreement and the second was authorization from the Board to sell alcohol at the facility during the games. Staff believed, if the Board granted permission to sell alcohol for Appalachian FC, that Appalachian State University (ASU) may make a similar request in the future.

County Attorney Capua suggested that concept bullets be presented by the organization for consideration prior to preparing an agreement. County Manager Geouque stated that, even though the organization would be applying for the alcohol permit, the County would have to give permission since the complex is County-owned. Commissioner Wallin stated that the alcohol sale request would have to go through the ABC Board as well.

Mr. Jason O'Keefe, former ASU Soccer Coach, stated that beer only (no liquor or wine) sales would be down the road and the organization would take liability. The organization wanted to blend into the community and bring soccer to kids and adults alike. The organization would be locally owned, invested, and supported. Mr. O'Keefe stated that the model was viable without the sale of alcohol but may not flourish; however, he didn't believe it would be a deal-breaker.

During the discussion, Commissioner Yates, seconded by Commissioner Turnbow, moved to direct the organization to go to the Town of Boone and ABC Board for the alcohol sales permit and to work with the County Attorney and County Manager to prepare a proposed stand-alone agreement for consideration at a future meeting.

VOTE: Aye-4(Kennedy, Turnbow, Wallin, Yates)
Nay-0

TAX MATTERS

A. Monthly Collections Report

Tax Administrator, Mr. Larry Warren, presented the Tax Collections Report for the month of October 2020. The report was presented for information only and, therefore, no action was required.

B. Refunds and Releases

Mr. Warren presented the Refunds and Releases Report for October 2020 for Board approval:

TO BE TYPED IN MINUTE BOOK

Commissioner Turnbow, seconded by Commissioner Wallin, moved to approve the Refunds and Releases Report for October 2020 as presented.

VOTE: Aye-4(Kennedy, Turnbow, Wallin, Yates)
Nay-0
Absent-1(Welch)

NC DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY AND CUSTOMER SERVICE “BACKYARD COMPOSTING GRANT” APPLICATION REQUEST

Mr. Cole Kiziah, Recycling Coordinator, requested authorization to apply for grant funding from the North Carolina Department of Environmental Quality and Customer Service, “Backyard Composting Grant.” The overall project costs were \$13,899.80. The total Grant Request was \$11,140.24, with the total cost to the County being \$2,759.56

The grant deadline was prior to the November 17, 2020, meeting so staff submitted the grant; however, should the Board wish not to participate in the grant, staff could withdraw the request. Mr. Kiziah stated that if all composting units were utilized to the limit, there would be approximately \$4,000 of savings in landfill fees. Mr. Kiziah stated that this project would be a great introduction for a future composting facility.

Commissioner Yates, seconded by Commissioner Wallin, moved to formally approve the submission of the grant as presented by Mr. Kiziah.

VOTE: Aye-4(Kennedy, Turnbow, Wallin, Yates)
Nay-0
Absent-1(Welch)

VISTA AT TROUT LAKE SUBDIVISION PERFORMANCE GUARANTEE

Mr. Joe Furman, Planning and Inspections Director, stated that, pursuant to Section 92 of the subdivision regulations, the developer of Vistas at Trout Lake had requested the Board of Commissioners’ approval of a bond, which guaranteed the completion of the required infrastructure and landscaping. Since the project was less than 10 units, staff approves the final plat for recording (Section 81.06). The Planning Board approved the

preliminary plat of the development on July 20, 2020.

Commissioner Yates, seconded by Commissioner Wallin, moved to accept the bond for infrastructure and landscaping for Vistas at Trout Lake as presented by Mr. Furman.

VOTE: Aye-4(Kennedy, Turnbow, Wallin, Yates)
Nay-0
Absent-1(Welch)

PARKS AND RECREATION MATTERS

A. Request for Floor Protection System and Bench Runners for Community Recreation Center

Mr. Stephen Poulos, Parks and Recreation Director, requested, after extensive research, the Board accept a bid proposal from Blankenship Associates, Inc. in the amount of \$25,063.33 for protective floor covering for two of the gym floors at the new community recreation center. The coverings would be tested for reliability prior to purchasing covers for all of the gym floors.

Commissioner Turnbow, seconded by Commissioner Yates, moved to accept the proposal as presented by Mr. Poulos.

VOTE: Aye-4(Kennedy, Turnbow, Wallin, Yates)
Nay-0
Absent-1(Welch)

B. Proposed Opening Plan for Community Recreation Center

Mr. Stephen Poulos reviewed the following three options available in the proposed opening plan for the Community Recreation Center: Option 1 was to open the facility only for the Watauga High School Swim Team; Option 2 was opening the facility for the WHS Swim Team and the general public; Option 3 would keep the facility closed until COVID 19 restrictions were lifted to allow for 50% capacity or higher of the facility.

Commissioner Yates recommended tabling a decision until a future meeting based on the recent increases in COVID-19 cases.

Vice-Chairman Kennedy thanked staff for the research that went into the opening plan options and tabled further discussion until a future meeting.

BLUE RIDGE RESOURCE CONSERVATION & DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL, INC. FUNDING REQUEST FOR A RESTORATION PROJECT AT TODD ISLAND

Commissioner Turnbow stated that a grant fell through leaving the Blue Ridge Resource Conservation & Development (BRRC&D) Council with a \$40,000 shortfall for their restoration project at Todd Island.

Since the park was used by both Watauga and Ashe County residents, Commissioner Turnbow, seconded by Commissioner Yates, moved to donate \$15,000 to the project with the caveat that Ashe County also donate \$15,000 and the BRRC&D leverage the additional \$10,000.

VOTE: Aye-4(Kennedy, Turnbow, Wallin, Yates)
Nay-0
Absent-1(Welch)

COUNTY ATTORNEY CAPUA STATEMENT

County Attorney Capua stated that she had worked closely with the Board of Elections in recent months and wanted to comment on how proud and impressed she was with the process in Watauga County as well as the professionalism of Mr. Matt Snyder, Elections Director, and staff. The Board of Elections worked well together showing respect and rising to the occasion.

MISCELLANEOUS ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

A. December Meeting Schedule

County Manager Geouque stated that the first Board of Commissioners meeting in December needed to be moved to Monday, December 7, 2020, as Commissioner-Elects were required to be sworn-in on the first Monday of December following the election. The meeting will recess to allow for the swearing in ceremony of the Commissioners-Elect.

Commissioner Wallin, seconded by Commissioner Turnbow, moved to reschedule the Tuesday, December 1, 2020, Board meeting to Monday, December 7, 2020.

VOTE: Aye-4(Kennedy, Turnbow, Wallin, Yates)
Nay-0
Absent-1(Welch)

B. Proposed Student Resource Officer (SRO) for Watauga County Schools

County Manager Geouque stated that the Board previously approved accepting the Student Resource Officer (SRO) position at the Watauga High School. A proposed Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the Watauga County Board of Education and the Watauga County Sheriff's Office was presented for consideration. The County Attorney has reviewed the MOU.

Commissioner Yates, seconded by Commissioner Wallin, moved to accept the Memorandum of Understanding between the County and the Watauga County School System as presented.

VOTE: Aye-4(Kennedy, Turnbow, Wallin, Yates)
Nay-0
Absent-1(Welch)

C. Review of Boards and Commissioner on which Commissioners are Members

County Manager Geouque presented, per Commissioner request, a list of Boards and Commissions was for discussion regarding liaison roles or Board appointment.

Commissioner Turnbow stated that there was no requirement for the Commissioner appointee to vote on the Children's Council and felt that it was more appropriate for Commissioners to serve as liaisons to non-profit

Boards and Commissions.

After discussion Vice-Chairman Kennedy tabled further discussion until a future meeting.

D. Boards and Commissions

County Manager Geouque presented the following for consideration:

Appalachian Regional Library

The Watauga County Library Board recommended the appointment of Ms. Margaret Love to the Appalachian Regional Library Board to replace Ms. Mary Reichel who has moved out of town.

Commissioner Yates, seconded by Commissioner Turnbow, moved to waive the second reading and appoint Ms. Margaret Love to the Appalachian Regional Library Board.

VOTE: Aye-4(Kennedy, Turnbow, Wallin, Yates)
Nay-0
Absent-1(Welch)

E. Announcements

County Manager Geouque announced the following:

The Board's next meeting will be held on Monday, December 7, 2020, at 8:30 A.M.

The Essentials of County Government course will be held virtually on the following dates:

Tract 1: December 11, 2020; January 8, 2021; February 26, 2021

Tract 2: January 22, 2021; February 25, 2021, March 23, 2021

County Manager Geouque also reminded the Commissioners-Elect that Ethics training will be required.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment.

CLOSED SESSION

At 6:56 P.M., Commissioner Yates, seconded by Commissioner Wallin, moved to enter Closed Session to discuss Attorney/Client Matters, per G. S. 143-318.11(a)(3).

VOTE: Aye-4(Kennedy, Turnbow, Wallin, Yates)
Nay-0
Absent-1(Welch)

Commissioner Yates, seconded by Commissioner Turnbow, moved to resume the open meeting at 7:43 P.M.

VOTE: Aye-4(Kennedy, Turnbow, Wallin, Yates)

Nay-0
Absent-1(Welch)

ADJOURN

Vice-Chairman Kennedy adjourned the meeting at 7:43 P.M.

VOTE: Aye-4(Kennedy, Turnbow, Wallin, Yates)
Nay-0
Absent-1(Welch)

Billy Kennedy, Vice-Chairman

ATTEST:

Anita J. Fogle, Clerk to the Board

Watauga County Board of Commissioners

MINUTES

WATAUGA COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS TUESDAY, DECEMBER 7, 2020

The Watauga County Board of Commissioners held a regular meeting on Tuesday, December 7, 2020, at 8:30 A.M. remotely with the meeting originating in the Community Room located in the Watauga County Community Recreation Center, Boone, North Carolina.

Chairman Welch called the remote electronic meeting to order at 8:35 A.M. The following were present:

PRESENT: John Welch, Chairman
 Billy Kennedy, Vice-Chairman
 Larry Turnbow, Commissioner
 Charlie Wallin, Commissioner
 Perry Yates, Commissioner
 Anthony di Santi, County Attorney
 Andrea Capua, County Attorney
 Deron Geouque, County Manager
 Anita J. Fogle, Clerk to the Board

Commissioner Yates opened with a prayer and Vice-Chairman Kennedy led the Pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Chairman Welch called for additions and/or corrections to the November 17, 2020, regular meeting and closed session minutes.

Vice-Chairman Kennedy, seconded by Commissioner Turnbow, moved to approve the November 17, 2020, regular meeting minutes as presented.

VOTE: Aye-5
 Nay-0

Vice-Chairman Kennedy, seconded by Commissioner Turnbow, moved to approve the November 17, 2020, closed session minutes as presented.

VOTE: Aye-5
 Nay-0

ADDITION TO THE AGENDA

Commissioner Turnbow, seconded by Commissioner Yates, moved to add a Presentation of a Proclamation to the agenda.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

PRESENTATION OF PROCLAMATION TO COMMISSIONER PERRY YATES

Chairman Welch read a Proclamation presented to Commissioner Perry Yates by the Board of Commissioners honoring his service to the County.

WATAUGA RIVERKEEPER PRESENTATION

Mr. Andy Hill with Watauga Riverkeepers thanked Commissioner Yates for his service to the County and stated that he had a plaque to present him at a later date in person.

RECESS MEETING FOR SWEARING IN OF NEW COMMISSIONERS

At 8:43 A.M. Vice-Chairman Kennedy, seconded by Commissioner Turnbow, moved to recess the meeting to allow for Commissioners-Elect Carrington Pertalion, Charlie Wallin, and John Welch to take their oath of office.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

RECONVENE

County Manager Geouque reconvened the meeting at 9:01 A.M. in the Commissioners' Board Room with Commissioners Kennedy, Pertalion, Turnbow, Wallin, and Welch.

BOARD ORGANIZATIONAL MATTERS

A. Election of Officers

County Manager Geouque called for nominations for Chairman of the Watauga County Board of Commissioners.

Vice-Chairman Kennedy, seconded by Commissioner Wallin, moved to nominate Commissioner Welch for Chairman.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

The meeting was turned over to Chairman Welch.

Chairman Welch called for nominations for Vice-Chairman of the Watauga County Board of Commissioners.

Commissioner Turnbow, seconded by Commissioner Wallin, moved to nominate Commissioner Kennedy for Vice-Chairman.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

B. Staff Appointments

Commissioner Turnbow, seconded by Vice-Chairman Kennedy, moved to reappoint Deron Geouque as the County Manager.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

Commissioner Turnbow, seconded by Vice-Chairman Kennedy, moved to reappoint Anita Fogle as Clerk to the Board.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

Commissioner Turnbow, seconded by Vice-Chairman Kennedy, moved to reappoint both Monica Harrison and Macy Hafner as Substitute Clerks to the Board.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

Commissioner Turnbow, seconded by Vice-Chairman Kennedy, moved to reappoint di Santi, Watson, Capua, Wilson, & Garrett as the Law Firm representing Watauga County as legal counsel for Watauga County.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

Commissioner Turnbow, seconded by Vice-Chairman Kennedy, moved to reappoint di Santi, Watson, Capua, Wilson, & Garrett as the Law Firm representing as legal counsel for Watauga County Department of Social Services and the Child Support Enforcement Offices and authorized di Santi, Watson, Capua, Wilson, & Garrett to appoint another attorney, at the current rate, in the event their firm had a conflict of interest.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

C. Fidelity Bonds

The following individual fidelity bonds were presented for approval:

<u>Position</u>	<u>Bond Amount</u>	<u>Statutory Requirement</u>
Finance Director	\$50,000	No less than \$50,000, per NCGS 159-29
Deputy Finance Director (County Manager)	\$50,000	
Tax Collector	\$50,000	Amount considered reasonable by BCC, per NCGS 105-349-c
Register of Deeds	\$50,000	At least \$10,000 but no more

than \$50,000, per NCGS 161-4

Sheriff

\$25,000

Amount considered reasonable by BCC, but
no more than \$25,000 max, per NCGS 162-8

Commissioner Wallin, seconded by Vice-Chairman Kennedy, moved to approve the individual fidelity bonds as presented.

VOTE: Aye-5

Nay-0

D. Commissioner Appointments to Boards & Commissions

Each Commissioner nominates a representative to the Boone Rural Fire Protection Service District Board and the Watauga County Planning Board whose terms run concurrent with the term of the appointing Commissioner. Boone Rural Fire Service District Board members must own property and reside within the Fire Service District. Planning Board members must live within the appointing Commissioner's District and action must be taken by the entire Board of Commissioners to make these appointments.

The Boone Rural Fire Protection Service District Board of Directors is responsible for overseeing the tax and setting the tax rate on a yearly basis. Below are the current members:

Member	Appointment Date	Term Expiration Date	Commissioner
VACANT		12/2022	District 1 – Pertation
Lee Stroup	12/2016	12/2024	District 2 – Welch
Jimmy Marsh	12/2018	12/2022	District 3 – Kennedy
Katy Abrams	12/2018	12/2022	District 4 – Turnbow
Mary Cavanaugh	05/2019	12/2024	District 5 - Wallin

Commissioner Pertation tabled appointment of her district representative to the Boone Rural Fire Protection Service District Board to a future meeting.

Commissioner Turnbow stated that Ms. Abrams has moved and he tabled appointment of her replacement to a future meeting.

Chairman Welch reappointed Mr. Lee Stroup to serve as his district representative and Commissioner Wallin reappointed Ms. Mary Cavanaugh as his district representative to the Boone Rural Fire Protection Service District Board.

Vice-Chairman Kennedy, seconded by Commissioner Wallin, moved to accept all the above appointments as presented.

VOTE: Aye-5

Nay-0

The Watauga County Planning Board develops and recommends policies, ordinances, administrative procedures and other means for carrying out plans in a coordinated and efficient manner. Below are the current members:

Member	Appointment Date	Term Expiration Date	Commissioner
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VACANT		12/2022	District 1 – Pertalion
Neil Hartley	12/2016	12/2024	District 2 – Welch
Dennis Scanlin	12/2018	12/2022	District 3 – Kennedy
Marsha Walpole	12/2018	12/2022	District 4 – Turnbow
Diane Tilson	05/2018	12/2024	District 5 - Wallin
Kimmy Tiedemann	12/2019	12/2023	At-Large
Richard Mattar	12/2017	12/2021	At-Large

Commissioner Pertalion tabled appointment of her district representative to the Planning Board to a future meeting.

Chairman Welch reappointed Mr. Neil Hartley to serve as his district representative and Commissioner Wallin reappointed Ms. Diane Tilson as his district representative to the Planning Board.

Vice-Chairman Kennedy, seconded by Commissioner Wallin, moved to accept all the above appointments as presented.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

Each year the Chairman appoints Commissioners to serve as representatives on several Boards and Commissions. Some of these are legal requirements and some are at the request of the agencies.

Chairman Welch presented the following Commissioner Board appointments for consideration:

Board/Commission	Member
Appalachian District Health Department	Pertalion
Appalachian Theatre Board of Trustees Ex-Officio Member	Wallin or Welch
AppalCART Authority	Wallin
Blue Ridge Resource Conservation & Development Area	Turnbow
Caldwell Community College & Technical Institute – Watauga Advisory Board	Welch
Children’s Council	Pertalion
Child Protection Team	Kennedy
Cooperative Extension Advisory Leadership Board	Pertalion
Economic Development Commission (EDC)	Turnbow
Educational Planning Committee (2 appointees)	Wallin & Welch
EMS Advisory Committee	Pertalion
High Country Council of Governments (including the Executive Board and the Rural Transportation Advisory Committee)	Turnbow
Juvenile Crime Prevention Council (JCPC)	Welch
Humane Society	Turnbow
Library Board	Kennedy
Motor Vehicle Valuation Review Committee	BCC
New River Service Authority Board	Wallin
Northwest Regional Housing Authority (5-year term expires Dec. 12, 2024)	Pat Vines

POA Advisory Committee (Home & Community Care Block Grant)	Pertalion
Sheriff's Office Liaison	Kennedy & Turnbow
Vaya County Commissioner Advisory Board	Wallin
Social Services Advisory Board	Wallin
Watauga County Arts Council (added February 2020)	Pertalion
Watauga County Fire Commission	Welch
Watauga County Personnel Advisory Committee	Chair/Vice-Chair
Watauga County Recreation Commission	Welch
Watauga Medical Center Board of Trustees	Kennedy
W.A.M.Y. Community Action	Wallin
Watauga Opportunities, Inc.	Turnbow
Workforce Development Board (WDB)	Chairman

Vice-Chairman Kennedy, seconded by Commissioner Wallin, moved to accept the above appointments as presented.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

E. Regular Meeting Schedule

Chairman Welch stated that the Board of Commissioners' regular meetings were currently scheduled for the first Tuesday of each month at 8:30 A.M. and the third Tuesday of each month at 5:30 P.M.

After discussion, Commissioner Turnbow, seconded by Vice-Chairman Kennedy, moved to change the regular meeting schedule for the Watauga County Board of Commissioners to the following: the first and third Tuesday of each month with both meetings beginning at 5:30 P.M.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Chairman Welch called for additions and/or corrections to the December 7, 2020, agenda.

Vice-Chairman Kennedy, seconded by Commissioner Wallin, moved to approve the December 7, 2020, agenda as presented and including the earlier addition.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

MISCELLANEOUS ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

A. Request for Direction on Reviewing RFQs for New Valle Crucis Elementary School Architect

County Manager Geouque stated that Request for Qualifications (RFQs) were recently solicited for architectural services for the proposed new Valle Crucis Elementary School. The deadline for proposals was November 13, 2020. The Board may wish to utilize the Educational Planning Committee, which included Chairman Welch and Commissioner Wallin, to meet with Dr. Scott Elliott, School Superintendent, and potentially one or two School

Board Members to review the proposals and make a recommendation to the Commissioners for the selection of an architect for the proposed Valle Crucis Elementary School. County Manager Geouque stated that points would be built into the architectural services agreement which would allow the project to be stopped, if needed. The County Manager stated that the Board of Commissioners would be the entity hiring the architect as well as, in the future, the Construction Manager At Risk (CMAR) and/or design build organization for the project.

Commissioner Turnbow, seconded by Vice-Chairman Kennedy, moved to empower the Education Planning Committee to review the RFQs received for architectural services for the new Valle Crucis Elementary School.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

B. January's Meeting Schedule

County Manager Geouque stated that the Board has traditionally cancelled one of the meetings in either December or January depending on how the holidays fell. Due to where Christmas and New Year fall during the week, staff would recommend the Board cancel the first meeting in January as there would be insufficient time to prepare the Board packets. Historically, December and the first weeks in January have few issues requiring Board action.

Vice-Chairman Kennedy, seconded by Commissioner Pertalion, moved to cancel the first meeting in January as presented by the County Manager.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

C. Appointment of the North Carolina Association of County Commissioners' (NCACC) Legislative Goals Conference Voting Delegate

County Manager Geouque stated that the North Carolina Association of County Commissioners' (NCACC) Legislative Goals Conference was scheduled for January 14-15, 2021, via virtual format. Each county in attendance was required to select a voting member for the Conference. Submission of the voting delegate was due by January 11, 2021.

Vice-Chairman Kennedy, seconded by Commissioner Pertalion, moved to appoint Commissioner Wallin as the Watauga County voting delegate at the North Carolina Association of County Commissioners Legislative Goals Conference.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

Chairman Welch recognized Commissioner Wallin for being appointed to serve on the NCACC Presidential Task Force on Food System Resiliency.

D. Announcements

Chairman Welch recognized Watauga Democrat Reporter, Kayla Lasure, upon her recent promotion to Editor.

County Manager Geouque announced the following:

- Due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic the Annual County Christmas Luncheon has been cancelled for 2020.

Vice-Chairman Kennedy stated that he will miss the appreciation service. Commissioner Turnbow asked County Manager Geouque if there was a way to serve employees a boxed lunch. Mr. Geouque stated that an appreciation gift would still be given to each employee; however, with COVID restrictions, it would be best to postpone having the appreciation service and meal until next December. The Board agreed with the County Manager.

[Clerk's Note: At 9:25 A.M., IT Director, Mr. Drew Eggers, informed the Board that Zoom, the technology site used for the electronic meeting, had crashed. The Board paused discussions until Mr. Eggers corrected the issue. Once corrected, the County Manager continued with announcements at 9:30 A.M.]

- Vaya Health cordially invited the Board to the 2020 Virtual Legislative Reception on Friday, December 11, 2020, from 10:00 - 11:00 A.M. Mr. Brian Ingraham, President and CEO, will share about the public Managed Care Organization (MCO) that oversees Medicaid, Federal, State and local funding for services and provides support related to mental health, substance use disorder and intellectual/developmental disabilities for 22 counties in western North Carolina.

Vice-Chairman Kennedy encouraged attendance of the Virtual Legislative Reception as Vaya Health funds Daymark Recovery Services. Commissioner Wallin stated that the Legislative Reception was important this year with upcoming legislative sessions to possibly include funding cuts for mental health services.

- Ethics for Elected Officials Online Training - Incumbents only could receive the required ethics training, via Zoom, on February 26, 2021, or March 23, 2021. Newly elected County Commissioners would receive the training through the Essentials of County Government course.
- The Essentials of County Government course was scheduled to be held virtually on the following dates:

Tract 1: December 11, 2020; January 8, 2021; February 26, 2021

Tract 2: January 22, 2021; February 25, 2021, March 23, 2021

PUBLIC COMMENT

No public comments were received.

CLOSED SESSION

At 9:38 A.M., Vice-Chairman Kennedy, seconded by Commissioner Turnbow, moved to enter Closed Session to discuss Attorney/Client Matters, per G. S. 143-318.11(a)(3) and Land Acquisition, per G. S. 143-318.11(a)(5)(i). The following lawsuits were included in discussion during closed session: The Town of Boone lawsuit regarding sales tax distribution, the lawsuit against the Town of Boone regarding the water allocation.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

Commissioner Wallin, seconded by Commissioner Turnbow, moved to resume the open meeting at 11:28 A.M.

VOTE: Aye-5

Nay-0

ADJOURN

Vice-Chairman Kennedy, seconded by Commissioner Pertalion, moved to adjourn the meeting at 11:28 A.M.

VOTE: Aye-5

Nay-0

John Welch, Chairman

ATTEST:

Anita J. Fogle, Clerk to the Board

Watauga County Board of Commissioners

MINUTES

WATAUGA COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS TUESDAY, DECEMBER 15, 2020

The Watauga County Board of Commissioners held a regular meeting, as scheduled, on Tuesday, December 15, 2020, at 5:30 P.M. remotely with the meeting originating in the Community Room located in the Watauga County Community Recreation Center, Boone, North Carolina.

Chairman Welch called the remote electronic meeting to order at 5:33 P.M. The following were present:

PRESENT: John Welch, Chairman
 Billy Kennedy, Vice-Chairman
 Carrington Pertalion, Commissioner
 Charlie Wallin, Commissioner
 Larry Turnbow, Commissioner
 Deron Geouque, County Manager
 Macy Hafner, Substitute Clerk to the Board

Commissioner Wallin opened with a prayer and Commissioner Turnbow led the Pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Chairman Welch called for additions and/or corrections to the December 7, 2020, regular meeting and closed session minutes.

Vice-Chairman Kennedy, seconded by Commissioner Turnbow, moved to approve the December 7, 2020, regular meeting minutes as presented.

VOTE: Aye-5
 Nay-0

Vice-Chairman Kennedy seconded by Commissioner Turnbow moved to approve the December 7, 2020, closed session minutes as presented.

VOTE: Aye-5
 Nay-0

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Chairman Welch called for additions and/or corrections to the December 15, 2020, agenda.

Vice-Chairman Kennedy requested nominations for the Watauga Medical Center Board of Trustees be

considered for appointment under Boards and Commissions.

Commissioner Wallin, seconded by Vice-Chairman Kennedy moved to approve the December 15, 2020, agenda as changed.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19) COMMUNITY UPDATE

Ms. Jennifer Greene, AppHealthCare Director, provided an update on the Coronavirus (COVID-19). The report was for information only and, therefore, no action was required.

UPDATE ON THE PRITZKER CHILDREN'S INITIATIVE (PCI)

Ms. Crystal Kelly updated the Board on the Pritzker Children's Initiative. The presentation was for information only and, therefore, no action is required.

TAX MATTERS

A. Monthly Collections Report

Tax Administrator, Mr. Larry Warren, presented the Tax Collections Report for the month of November 2020. The report was presented for information only and, therefore, no action was required.

B. Refunds and Releases

Mr. Warren presented the Refunds and Releases Report for November 2020 for Board approval:

TO BE TYPED IN MINUTE BOOK

Vice-Chairman Kennedy, seconded by Commissioner Pertalion, moved to approve the Refunds and Releases Report for November 2020 as presented.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

REQUEST TO ACCEPT FY 2021 SENIOR'S HEALTH INSURANCE INFORMATION PROGRAM (SHIIP) GRANT/CONTRACT

Ms. Angie Boitnotte, Director of Project on Aging (POA), requested the Board accept the FY 2021 grant/contract for the Senior's Health Insurance Information Program (SHIIP). The grant was for \$6,079 and required no County funds. The funds would be used to provide assistance and outreach to low-income citizens.

Vice-Chairman Kennedy seconded by Commissioner Turnbow moved to accept the Senior's Health Insurance Information Program (SHIIP) grant in the amount of \$6,079.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

EMERGENCY SERVICES MATTERS

A. Communications Tower Engineering Request

Mr. Will Holt, Emergency Services Director, requested the Commissioners approve engineering services from Engineered Tower Solutions, PLLC, in the amount of \$30,000 which would include the Rich Mountain and the Communication Center towers. Adequate funds were budgeted to cover the expense and was part of the emergency communications upgrade plan.

Vice-Chairman Kennedy seconded by Commissioner Wallin moved to accept the proposal from Engineered Tower Solutions, PLLC, for tower engineering services in the amount of \$30,000.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

B. Request to Extend Due Diligence Period

Mr. Will Holt requested the Commissioners extend the due diligence period for the Sampson Road property. The County was purchasing the property to construct an emergency communication tower. The reason for the extension was regulatory delays at the federal level. The property owner was amenable to the extension. The extension would add an additional six (6) months to the contract.

Vice-Chairman Kennedy seconded by Commissioner Turnbow moved to approve the extension of the due diligence period.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

BID AWARDS FOR COMMUNITY RECREATION CENTER OUTDOOR FACILITIES

Mr. Robert Marsh, Maintenance Director, presented bids for fencing, paving, color coating, striping and equipment for the new basketball, pickleball, and tennis courts. Staff recommended the low bidders McCall Fencing for fencing, Tri County Paving for asphalt paving, and Triangle Fence for color coating, striping and equipment in the amounts of \$50,730, \$104,298.99, and \$58,250, respectively.

Commissioner Turnbow seconded by Vice-Chairman Kennedy moved to accept bidder McCall Fencing in the amount of \$50,730 for fencing.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

Vice-Chairman Kennedy seconded by Commissioner Wallin moved to accept bidder Tri County Paving in the amount of \$104,298.99 for asphalt paving.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

Commissioner Turnbow seconded by Commissioner Pertalion moved to accept bidder Triangle Fence in the amount of \$58,250 for color coating, striping, and equipment.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

PROPOSED OPENING PLAN FOR COMMUNITY RECREATION CENTER

Per Commissioner direction, staff has prepared an opening plan for the new Community Recreation Center (CRC). The plan provides three (3) options for the Board's consideration. Option 1 is to open the facility only for the Watauga High School Swim Team. Option 2 is opening the facility for the WHS Swim Team and the general public. Option 3 would keep the facility closed until COVID 19 restrictions are lifted to allow for 50% capacity or higher of the facility.

The Commissioners discussed potential ways of shortening the time from when COVID-19 restrictions are lifted to the actual hiring of personnel and opening of the facility.

Vice-Chairman Kennedy pointed out the increase in cases in the County and suggested waiting to open the CRC. Medical personnel have expressed concern that January has the potential to be the worst month we've seen. He did not want the CRC as one more risk for COVID-19 spread.

Commissioner Turnbow agreed with Vice-Chairman Kennedy, and stated changes in regulations will be forthcoming in the next week or two. Conditions are currently spiking strongly and suggested we wait and see the impact of the new regulations. If restrictions are relaxed, we need to find a way to expedite the hiring process and open the facility. Commissioner Turnbow expressed we all want the facility open but we need to wait and see what the Governor's office suggests.

Commissioner Wallin expressed concern that due to the CRC not being open, we are sending citizens from Watauga County to other surrounding counties to utilize their recreation facilities. Watauga County is not giving a place here to recreate and sending our citizens to Avery County and they are not obeying rules as well as we are. If we are not trying to hire staff early, the County will lose out on all of the potential revenue from people making New Year's resolutions to join gyms.

Vice-Chairman Kennedy responded that the County was not making anyone go to Avery county. Each parent makes the decision about what is right for their child. Nobody is forcing these children and families to go to Avery County. He wished they could train here. While we understand these are teenagers and they need exercise, whatever we do for one person, we have to do for everyone in the County.

Commissioner Turnbow stated he would not allow somebody else to make a decision for his child. Given the circumstances, he understood parents' decisions to take their children to another county but that does not mean he would make that decision. He would not take responsibility for another parent's decision for their children.

The County Manager stated that it's not only when the restrictions allow us to open up but also when it is safe to do so. Watauga recently went from yellow to orange on the State's alert system. The County experienced a spike after Thanksgiving and anticipated another spike after Christmas. Additionally, University students will possibly be returning from break in January potentially providing another spike in COVID-19 cases. The County's actions are for the safety of our citizens and staff.

Chairman Welch felt the County Manager should have permission to expedite the hiring process in the event

COVID-19 restrictions are lessened. He recommended staff do everything possible to open the facility as quickly as possible once restrictions allowed it.

Mr. Stephen Poulos wanted to hire people but needed to have an opening date first. It is difficult to hire staff when you don't have a specific date for people to accept a job. A good majority of the employees will be Appalachian State University Students, staffed to do whatever commitment was needed, to expedite the process.

County Manager Geouque stated worst case scenario is two (2) months' time to advertise for the position, hire, and train the new personnel. Staff will do everything possible to reduce the two (2) month time period. It was consensus of the Board to authorize the County Manager and staff to take whatever measures necessary to shorten the time period from when restrictions are lifted to opening the new facility.

MISCELLANEOUS ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

A. Proposed Demolition of Turner Property Structures

County Manager Geouque stated that in February 2020, the Commissioners held a special called meeting with the Town of Boone to discuss the Turner House Property. After the meeting, direction was given to have a firm provide conceptual drawing(s) and soil borings to determine the viability of a parking deck at the Town owned Queen Street lot. The County and Town provided two proposals and the Town's proposal was selected due to the cost being less. In July, McGill Associates presented a rendering and cost estimate of the proposed deck at the Queen Street lot to the Board. The price tag was \$10 to \$15 million dollars but no soil borings were completed to determine the viability of the project. Continuing to delay construction of the parking lot/deck to meet the long-term parking needs of the courthouse facility only increases the escalation of cost to the County. Bids were received for demolition of the Turner House and the lowest bidder was D.H. Griffin in the amount of \$21,300. Due to the price and the uncertainty of the viability of the project, staff seeks direction from the Board on how to proceed.

Adequate funds have been budgeted to cover the expense of the demolition. Should the Board wish to proceed forward; action is required to accept D.H. Griffin's bid in the amount of \$21,300 to demolish the Turner House.

Commissioner Turnbow seconded by Vice-Chairman Kennedy moved to accept D.H. Griffin's bid in the amount of \$21,300 to demolish the Turner House.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

B. Boards and Commissions

County Manager Geouque presented the following:

Boone Rural Fire Protection Service District Board **Watauga County Planning Board**

Each Commissioner nominates a representative to the Boone Rural Fire Protection Service District Board and the Watauga County Planning Board whose terms run concurrent with the term of the appointing Commissioner. Planning Board members must live within the appointing Commissioner's District and action must be taken by the entire Board of Commissioners to make these appointments. Boone Rural Fire Service District Board members must own property and reside within the respective Fire Service District.

Commissioner Turnbow stated that Ms. Katy Abrams had moved out of his district and he was looking for a replacement.

Vice-Chairman Kennedy stated that he was also looking to select a replacement for his Planning Board member and was awaiting confirmation indicating the individual would like to serve on the Planning Board.

Commissioner Pertalion nominated Mr. Dave Robertson for her representative on the Planning Board.

Commissioner Pertalion also stated that she has someone in mind for the Boone Rural Fire Service District Board who is awaiting confirmation that the meetings would be virtual and could be done by telephone.

Commissioner Wallin seconded by Commissioner Turnbow, moved to waive the second reading and approve Mr. Dave Robertson as Commissioner Pertalion's representative on the Planning Board.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

Watauga Medical Center Board of Trustees

The Watauga Medical Center Board of Trustees recommended the reappointment of Dr. Paul Dagher, MD, and Ms. Mary Louise Roberts, and the appointment of Ms. Meagan Phillips as Board Trustees. Each of their terms would be effective January 1, 2021, through December 31, 2023. These were first readings.

Commissioner Turnbow, seconded by Commissioner Pertalion, moved to waive the second reading and reappoint Dr. Paul Dagher, MD, and Ms. Mary Louise Roberts, and to appoint Ms. Meagan Phillips as Watauga County representatives on the Watauga Medical Center Board of Trustees with each of their terms to end on December 31, 2023.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

C. Announcements

County Manager Geouque announced that the Ethics for Elected Officials Online Training - Incumbents only can receive the required ethics training, via Zoom, on February 26, 2021, or March 23, 2021. Newly elected County Commissioners would receive the training through the Essentials of County Government course.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Written public comments were submitted by Mr. Cameron St. Clair, Ms. Pam Williamson, and Dr. Eric Plaa

CLOSED SESSION

At 7:19 P.M., Vice-Chairman Kennedy, seconded by Commissioner Wallin, moved to enter Closed Session to discuss Attorney/Client Matters, per G. S. 143-318.11(a)(3) and Land Acquisition, per G. S. 143-318.11(a)(5)(i).

VOTE: Aye-5

Nay-0

Vice-Chairman Kennedy, seconded by Commissioner Wallin, moved to resume the open meeting at 8:15 P.M.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

ADJOURN

Vice-Chairman Kennedy, seconded by Commissioner Pertalion, moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:15 P.M.

VOTE: Aye-5
Nay-0

John Welch, Chairman

ATTEST: Macy Hafner, Substitute Clerk to the Board

Watauga County Board of Commissioners

MINUTES

WATAUGA COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS TUESDAY, JANUARY 19, 2021

The Watauga County Board of Commissioners held a regular meeting, as scheduled, on Tuesday, January 19, 2021, at 5:30 P.M. remotely with the meeting originating in the Community Room located in the Watauga County Community Recreation Center, Boone, North Carolina.

Vice-Chairman Kennedy called the remote electronic meeting to order at 5:32 P.M. The following were present:

PRESENT: Billy Kennedy, Vice-Chairman
Carrington Pertalion, Commissioner
Charlie Wallin, Commissioner
Larry Turnbow, Commissioner
Anthony di Santi, County Attorney
Deron Geouque, County Manager
Anita J. Fogle, Clerk to the Board

Vice-Chairman Kennedy stated that Chairman Welch was absent from the meeting due to a family matter.

Commissioner Wallin opened with a prayer and Commissioner Turnbow led the Pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Vice-Chairman Kennedy called for additions and/or corrections to the December 15, 2020, regular meeting and closed session minutes.

Vice-Chairman Kennedy presented the following proposed correction to the December 15, 2020, regular minutes for consideration:

Watauga Medical Center Board of Trustees

The Watauga Medical Center Board of Trustees recommended the reappointment of Dr. Paul Dagher, MD, and Ms. Mary Louise Roberts, and the appointment of Ms. Meagan Phillips as Board Trustees. Each of their terms would be effective January 1, ~~2020~~ **2021**, through December 31, ~~2022~~ **2023**. These were first readings.

Commissioner Turnbow, seconded by Commissioner Pertalion, moved to waive the second reading and reappoint Dr. Paul Dagher, MD, and Ms. Mary Louise Roberts, and to appoint Ms. Meagan Phillips as Watauga County representatives on the Watauga Medical Center Board of Trustees with each of their terms to end on December 31, ~~2022~~ **2023**.

VOTE: Aye-4(Kennedy, Pertalion, Turnbow, Wallin)
Nay-0

Absent-1(Welch)

Commissioner Pertalion, seconded by Commissioner Turnbow, moved to approve the December 15, 2020, regular meeting minutes as amended.

VOTE: Aye-4(Kennedy, Pertalion, Turnbow, Wallin)
Nay-0
Absent-1(Welch)

Commissioner Wallin, seconded by Commissioner Pertalion, moved to approve the December 15, 2020, closed session minutes as presented.

VOTE: Aye-4(Kennedy, Pertalion, Turnbow, Wallin)
Nay-0
Absent-1(Welch)

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Vice-Chairman Kennedy called for additions and/or corrections to the January 19, 2021, agenda.

Vice-Chairman Kennedy requested to add a discussion regarding COVID vaccines.

[Clerk's Note: County Manager Geouque suggested adding the topic prior to Miscellaneous Administrative Matters; however, as it was appropriate, Mr. Kennedy spoke on the matter during the Coronavirus (COVID-19) Community Update.]

County Manager Geouque stated that he would present the radio infrastructure budget amendment request on behalf of Mr. Will Holt and that a public hearing would be requested during the proposed fifth amendment to the Watauga Medical Center lease agreement discussion.

Commissioner Turnbow, seconded by Commissioner Pertalion, moved to approve the January 19, 2021, agenda as amended.

VOTE: Aye-4(Kennedy, Pertalion, Turnbow, Wallin)
Nay-0
Absent-1(Welch)

CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19) COMMUNITY UPDATE

Ms. Jennifer Greene, AppHealthCare Director, provided an update on the Coronavirus (COVID-19). The report was for information only and, therefore, no action was required.

Vice-Chairman Kennedy stated that, if the new floor coverings for the gymnasiums at the new Community Recreation Center (CRC), were available by February 1, the County would like to make the CRC available for future vaccination clinics.

PROPOSED FIFTH AMENDMENT TO WATAUGA MEDICAL CENTER LEASE AGREEMENT

Mr. Jim Deal, President-Elect of the Watauga Medical Center Board of Trustees, presented a fifth amendment to the County lease for Watauga Medical Center (WMC). Mr. Deal explained the amendment was needed to extend the lease as required for WMC's bond financing for the new Central Energy Plant and a hospital wing, which would include new surgical operating and patient care rooms. The term of the bond for hospital improvements was anticipated to be approximately thirty-five (35) years and the lease would be required to be five (5) years longer than the bond. The Board of Trustees has requested an extension of the current twenty-seven (27) year lease with the term expiration date changing from 2034 to 2061. Mr. Deal also presented a proposed resolution and requested a public hearing be set for February 16, 2021, Board of Commissioners meeting to allow for public comment on the resolution, proposed bonds, and lease agreement.

Commissioner Turnbow, seconded by Commissioner Wallin, moved to recuse Commissioner Pertalion as she was employed by Watauga Medical Center.

VOTE: Aye-4(Kennedy, Pertalion, Turnbow, Wallin)
Nay-0
Absent-1(Welch)

Commissioner Turnbow, seconded by Commissioner Wallin, moved to set a public hearing for Tuesday, February 16, 2021, at 5:30 P.M. and to approve the wording of the proposed resolution (which would be considered for adoption after the public hearing along with the proposed fifth amendment to the lease agreement).

VOTE: Aye-3(Kennedy, Turnbow, Wallin)
Nay-0
Absent-1(Welch)
Recused-1(Pertalion)

Commissioner Turnbow, seconded by Commissioner Wallin, moved to reinstate Commissioner Pertalion to the meeting.

VOTE: Aye-3(Kennedy, Turnbow, Wallin)
Nay-0
Absent-1(Welch)
Recused-1(Pertalion)

PRESENTATION OF FY 2020 AUDIT

Ms. Cindy Randolph with C. Randolph, CPA, PLLC, presented the Fiscal Year 2020 County audit and thanked the Board for allowing her to perform the audit. Ms. Randolph stated that it was a pleasure working with the County Manager, Finance Director, and staff throughout the audit process. Ms. Randolph stated that there were no material weaknesses in the internal control audit and any past concerns had been corrected. Below were some of the financial highlights:

- The total assets of the County exceeded its liabilities at the close of the fiscal year by \$173,057,263.
- The County's unassigned fund balance for the general fund was \$25,226,121 at the end of the year, representing 46.1% of total General Fund expenditures. This was an increase of \$4,728,123 in the unassigned fund balance from the previous year.
- The current year collection rate for property taxes was 98.59% which was a decrease from last year's

99.01%. The County was still well above the statewide average of 98.28% for entities of similar populations in fiscal year 2018-19.

- **Outstanding debt principal decreased by \$3,414,027.** Total outstanding debt principal at June 30, 2020 was \$46,190,000. Watauga County's legal debt limit was \$696,594,671 so the County continued to be well below the state limits.
- S&P updated their review of the County's financials and reaffirmed the County's stable outlook and credit rating at AA.

Ms. Randolph stated that the County was in excellent fiscal condition and the audit had been submitted to and approved by the Local Government Commission (LGC).

County Manager Geouque stated that staff planned to request, in the future, additional fund balance monies to be used, in part, to raise employees' salaries to be equitable to Appalachian State University and Town of Boone employee salaries as the County was conservative at the beginning of the current Fiscal Year and did not provide cost of living adjustments (COLAs) to employees in July 2020.

FINANCE MATTERS

A. Budget Amendments

Ms. Misty Watson, Finance Director, reviewed the following budget amendments:

Account #	Description	Debit	Credit
103839-332100	COVID Response Grant Expenses		\$33,739
104170-449050	COVID Response Grant Expenses	\$33,739	

The amendment recognized funds received from the Center for Tech and Civil Life for the public purpose of planning and operating safe and secure election administration. No match was required.

103300-332004	Senior Center Grant		\$14,020
105550-449900	Senior Center Grant Expenses	\$14,020	

The amendment recognized the acceptance of the Senior Center grant funds as approved per Board action on October 6, 2020. County funds were required as match funds were already in the Project on Aging (POA) budget.

104170-449022	CARES Funding Expenses	\$38,000	
103300-314702	CARES Funding		\$38,000

The amendment recognized the acceptance of funds received under Session Law 2020-97 for a sub grant reserved for Board of Elections under the CARES Act Supplemental Funds. No match was required.

103300-346000	Coronavirus Relief Fund		\$10,000
104330-449001	CRF – Watauga County	\$10,000	

The amendment recognized the acceptance of additional funds received under Session Law 2020-4 for a portable broadband kit for the local health department to facilitate the real time transmission of testing data from COVID-19 mobile testing sites located in rural areas served by the local health department. No match was required.

103300-351000	USDA Cooperative Extension Grant	\$8,333	
10495-449920	Cooperative Extension Grant		\$8,333

The amendment recognized the acceptance of the grant project for Veteran Farmers with a partnership between Appalachian State University and NC Cooperative Extension per action taken at the April 7, 2020, Board meeting. No match was required.

104141-469500	Contracted Services	\$160,000	
103991-399100	Fund Balance		\$160,000

The amendment recognized funds for tax revaluation appraisal services with Vincent Valuations LLC. Adequate funds were carried forward as restricted in fund balance from previous years.

103300-332006	SHIIP Grant		\$6,079
105550-449901	SHIIP Grant Expenses	\$6,079	

The amendment recognized the acceptance of the State Health Insurance Information Program (SHIIP) grant funds per Board action taken on December 15, 2020. No match was required.

103300-332101	One-Stop Bonuses – Board of Elections		\$25,057
104170-412601	One-Stop Bonuses	\$25,057	

The amendment recognized the acceptance of one-stop bonuses received from the NC State Board of Elections. No match was required.

103300-346000	Coronavirus Relief Fund		\$986,937
104330-449003	CRF – Town of Boone	\$119,484	
104330-449004	CRF – Town of Seven Devils	\$13,188	
104330-449005	CRF – Town of Beech Mountain	\$94,058	
104330-449006	CRF – Appalachian Regional Healthcare	\$159,514	
104330-449007	CRF – Watauga County School System	\$108,307	
104330-449001	CRF – Watauga County	\$160,501	
104330-449008	CRF – App Health Care	\$331,885	

The amendment recognized the carryover of unspent funds received under Session Law 2020-4 for money reserved for local governments under the Coronavirus Relief Fund and FEMA reimbursement for COVID-19 related expenses.

143300-332010	CARES LIEAP		\$68,701
145410-449031	CARES LIEAP	\$68,701	

The amendment recognized the acceptance of Pandemic LIEAP (Low Income Energy Assistance Payments) grant funds from the Division of Social Services. No match is required.

145310-449200	CARES APS/CPS	\$13,032	
143300-332009	CARES APS/CPS		\$13,032

The amendment recognized the acceptance of Adult Protective Services/Child Protective Services grant funds under the CARES Act. No match was required.

Commissioner Turnbow, seconded by Commissioner Wallin, moved to approve the budget amendments as presented by Ms. Watson.

VOTE: Aye-4(Kennedy, Pertalion, Turnbow, Wallin)
Nay-0
Absent-1(Welch)

B. FY 2020 Carry Forward Purchase Orders

Ms. Watson presented Carry Forward Purchase Orders for Fiscal Year 2020. The Carry Forward Purchase Orders were for projects already budgeted but not finished or in some cases just starting.

Commissioner Pertalion, seconded by Commissioner Turnbow, moved to approve the Carry Forward Purchase Orders as presented by Ms. Watson.

VOTE: Aye-4(Kennedy, Pertalion, Turnbow, Wallin)
Nay-0
Absent-1(Welch)

WATAUGA COUNTY SCHOOLS MATTERS

A. Watauga County Schools Update

Dr. Scott Elliott, Watauga County School Superintendent, presented an update on Watauga County Schools. Dr. Elliott thanked the Board of Commissioners, County Manager, and Finance Director for COVID funds received which were greatly appreciated. With some school systems in the State being closed or using only remote learning; Watauga County Schools were fortunate to be operating under a two-day in person/three-day remote schedule. Dr. Elliott stated that Watauga County Schools were prepared due to funding received for computers, nurses (of which one and one-half positions were added with COVID relief funding), etc. Two hundred and fifty thousand (250,000) meals have also been provided through the school system during the pandemic. Dr. Elliott thanked Ms. Jennifer Greene, Director of AppHealthCare, for the assistance of her staff in getting rapid tests administered on site at local schools. Dr. Elliott thanked the County for advocating for broadband services and stated that hotspots were currently being provided to students in need. Facilities were being maintained. Two teachers recently received awards including Ms. Erin Ellington who has been named Northwest North Carolina's Regional Teacher of the Year. Dr. Elliott was proud of the recent COVID vaccination clinic held at Watauga High School and thanked all partners involved with organizing the clinic, including Mr. Will Holt, Watauga County Emergency Services Director, Dr. Chuck Mantooth, Executive Director of Watauga Medical Center, and Ms. Jennifer Greene, Executive Director of AppHealthCare. Dr. Elliott was complimentary of Board of Elections Director, Mr. Matt Snyder, and staff while using the schools for voting during the pandemic. Dr. Elliott also thanked the Board for the recent Student Resource Officer (SRO) agreement which allowed for placing Deputy

Sheriff/Lieutenant Morrison as the SRO at Watauga High School.

B. Lottery Funds Request

Dr. Elliott presented a request for the release of funds from the State Education Lottery Fund. A total amount of \$250,000 was requested to replace worn carpet and/or tile in classrooms for safety (\$30,000), replace cafeteria equipment (\$55,000), replace phone and bell systems (VOIP) (\$80,000), replace classroom doors for safety (\$15,000), and renovate/replace sections of school roofs (\$45,000).

Ms. Ly Marze, Director of Finance for Watauga County Schools, clarified that Lottery funds could be used for these VOIP expenses as they were approved for the use with the State Lottery prior to making the request.

Commissioner Pertalion, seconded by Commissioner Wallin, moved to approved the release of State Education Lottery Funds as requested.

VOTE: Aye-4(Kennedy, Pertalion, Turnbow, Wallin)
Nay-0
Absent-1(Welch)

PROPOSED HIGH COUNTRY KILL/CHILL FACILITY

Mr. Jim Hamilton, Cooperative Extension Director, gave an update on the proposed project for the Golden Leaf Northwest Sector Community Based Grant Initiative program to create and construct new facilities for livestock slaughter and processing in Watauga County. The goal of the project was for Watauga County to provide the location for a local kill/chill facility (of which Mr. Hamilton stated that an official name for the facility would be considered) as well as leveraged funding for the construction of a USDA certified facility to meet the demand of local and regional producers.

Mr. Hamilton stated that the County was invited to submit a full proposal to Golden Leaf which was due February 11, 2021. The total amount requested was \$1.4 million with the facility proposed to serve the counties of Ashe, Alleghany, Avery, Caldwell, Mitchell, and Watauga. Watauga County would serve as the fiscal lead agent for the project. After meeting with a consultant, Mr. Hamilton stated that the project could cost considerably more than the proposed grant funds and, therefore, the financials were being reviewed to determine if a successful request could be submitted. After an initial meeting, the amount requested was hoped to potentially be increased due to the infrastructure cost associated with the project; however, Mr. Hamilton stated that a Zoom meeting was held early in the day at which the County was informed that the ask amount for the grant could not be increased and, therefore, it would be up to the partners to come up with funds needed to complete the project. Mr. Hamilton stated that the full grant request submittal was due by February 11 with supplemental information due by March 15. The Golden Leaf Board would meet during the first week of April to decide on grant awards. If the grant was awarded, the Board of Commissioners would need to take further action to accept the funds.

Commissioner Turnbow, seconded by Commissioner Pertalion, moved to authorize the submittal of the full proposal for the kill/chill facility to the Golden Leaf Northwest Sector Community Based Grant Initiative.

VOTE: Aye-4(Kennedy, Pertalion, Turnbow, Wallin)
Nay-0
Absent-1(Welch)

TAX MATTERS

A. Monthly Collections Report

Tax Administrator, Mr. Larry Warren, presented the Tax Collections Report for the month of December 2020. The report was presented for information only and, therefore, no action was required.

B. Refunds and Releases

Mr. Warren presented the Refunds and Releases Report for December 2020 for Board approval:

TO BE TYPED IN MINUTE BOOK

Commissioner Turnbow, seconded by Commissioner Pertalion, moved to approve the Refunds and Releases Report for December 2020 as presented.

VOTE: Aye-4(Kennedy, Pertalion, Turnbow, Wallin)
Nay-0
Absent-1(Welch)

C. Board of Equalization and Review Schedule

Mr. Larry Warren, Tax Administrator, requested direction in the scheduling of the 2021 Board of Equalization and Review (E&R). Mr. Warren stated that a special Board of Equalization and Review could be created to serve with the Board of Commissioner serving as the Board of E&R as it has in previous years including the County Manager serving as an alternate member. Mr. Warren presented a proposed resolution creating the Board of E&R. The member compensation also needed to be set and, for the past several years, it was set at \$75.00 per session with the County Manager receiving no additional compensation over his salary. Mr. Warren suggested the convening date for the Board of E&R be scheduled for Monday, April 19, 2021, from 4:00 P.M. to 7:00 P.M. and the adjournment date be scheduled for Thursday, April 29, 2021, at 5:00 P.M. Board members reviewed their calendars for additional meeting dates and discussed changing the adjournment date to Tuesday, April 27, 2021.

Commissioner Turnbow, seconded by Commissioner Wallin, moved to set the convening date as Monday, April 19, 2021, from 4:00 P.M. to 7:00 P.M.; meeting dates on Wednesday, April 21, 2021, and Friday, April 23, 2021, with both beginning at 4:00 P.M.; and the adjournment date as Tuesday, April 27, 2021, at 5:00 P.M.

VOTE: Aye-4(Kennedy, Pertalion, Turnbow, Wallin)
Nay-0
Absent-1(Welch)

Commissioner Turnbow, seconded by Commissioner Pertalion, moved to adopt the resolution establishing the Board of Equalization and Review with the County Manager to serve as an alternate, if needed to form a quorum, and to set the member compensation at \$75.00 with the County Manager receiving no additional compensation.

VOTE: Aye-4(Kennedy, Pertalion, Turnbow, Wallin)
Nay-0
Absent-1(Welch)

MAINTENANCE MATTERS

A. Bid Award for Courtroom #2 A/V System

Mr. Robert Marsh, Maintenance Director, stated that he had received bids, as follows, for the A/V system for ongoing renovations in Courtroom #2:

Bid Summary for Courtroom #2 A/V System		
Bidder	Contact	Amount
Creekside Electronics Boone, NC	Lane Robinson	\$20,021
Clark Powell Winston Salem, NC	Gary Bennett	\$27,343
Freedom Electric Boone, NC	Charles Safirit	No Bid Received

Mr. Marsh stated that the A/V system would complete the renovations to the Courtroom. Creekside Electronics was the lowest responsive bidder and adequate funds were budgeted to cover the expense in the renovation project line.

Commissioner Pertalion, seconded by Commissioner Wallin, moved to award the bid to Creekside Electronics, in the amount of \$20,021, as presented by Mr. Marsh.

VOTE: Aye-4(Kennedy, Pertalion, Turnbow, Wallin)
Nay-0
Absent-1(Welch)

B. Bid Award for Complex Sports Facility

Mr. Robert Marsh, stated that the Timmons Group, Project Engineer for the County's Complex Sports Facility, received bids for lighting the Complex Fields on December 23, 2020. The scope of work included lighting the softball field, basketball court, and tennis courts. The following bids were received:

Bid Summary for Complex Sports Facility Lighting		
Bidder	Contact	Amount
Tommy Lawrence Electric Roxboro, NC	Tommy Lawrence	\$235,861
E. F. Belk & Son Mooresville, NC	Chip Belk	\$388,020
Qualite Hillsdale, MI	Todd Krohn	\$442,049

Of the bids received, Tommy Lawrence Electric was the lowest responsive bidder. Tommy Lawrence Electric also has a history of working with the County as they completed the sports lighting on the two adjacent County softball fields in 2007. Adequate funds were available to cover the expense in the budgeted amount for the project.

County Manager Geouque reminded the Board that the County was waiting on Town of Boone permits for the project and, therefore, modifications may be required which could require further Board action prior to the project being completed.

Commissioner Turnbow, seconded by Commissioner Wallin, moved to award the bid to Tommy Lawrence Electric, in the amount of \$235,861, as presented by Mr. Marsh.

VOTE: Aye-4(Kennedy, Pertalion, Turnbow, Wallin)
Nay-0
Absent-1(Welch)

RADIO INFRASTRUCTURE BUDGET AMENDMENT REQUEST

County Manager Geouque, on behalf of Mr. Will Holt, Emergency Services Director, requested the Board authorize the use of \$100,000 from the Emergency Communications line in the County's Capital Improvement Plan (CIP). Additional funding was requested due to the progress occurring with the system improvements.

Commissioner Pertalion, seconded by Commissioner Turnbow, moved to authorize the use of \$100,000 from the Emergency Communications line in the County's Capital Improvement Plan (CIP).

VOTE: Aye-4(Kennedy, Pertalion, Turnbow, Wallin)
Nay-0
Absent-1(Welch)

MISCELLANEOUS ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

A. Selection of an Architect for the New Valle Crucis Elementary School

County Manager Geouque stated that the County solicited Requests for Qualifications (RFQs) for architectural services for the new Valle Crucis Elementary School. The proposals were due November 13, 2020. The Facilities Committee consisting of Chairman Welch, Commissioner Wallin, County Manager Geouque, Watauga County School Board Chairman Gary Childers, and School Superintendent Dr. Scott Elliott reviewed the nine (9) proposals which were received. After a thorough review, along with substantial discussion, the members unanimously agreed to recommend the selection of Clark Nexsen to the Board of Commissioners for consideration.

Clark Nexsen was recommended due to their recent success with the design and construction of the County's new Community Recreation Center (CRC). The County has worked with Clark Nexsen over the past ten (10) years. Clark Nexsen also has work experience with the school system having recently completed a comprehensive study of their facilities. In addition, Clark Nexsen assisted with the due diligence on the property acquired for the new school. Their involvement in the due diligence period has provided Clark Nexsen with extensive knowledge of the current site and its conditions.

County Manager Geouque stated that the Committee recommended the selection of Clark Nexsen as the architect for the new school and the authorization for the County Manager to negotiate a contract which would include clauses allowing the County out of the contract in the event the economy, pandemic, or other reasons caused construction of the school to stop.

Commissioner Turnbow, seconded by Commissioner Pertalion, moved to select Clark Nexsen as the architect for the new Valle Crucis School and to authorize the County Manager to negotiate a contract which would include clauses allowing the County out of the contract in the event the economy, pandemic, or other reasons caused a stop to the construction of the school.

VOTE: Aye-4(Kennedy, Pertain, Turnbow, Wallin)
Nay-0
Absent-1(Welch)

B. Discussion of Turner House Demolition

County Manager Geouque stated that the Boone Town Manager, Mr. John Ward, sent an email inquiring if the County was interested in any further discussions or exploration of the joint Queen Street Parking Lot.

After discussions, including the concern that the Town of Boone never sought soil borings for geotechnical findings on the property and that the Town of Boone charges for parking and the County does not, the Board agreed, by consensus, to move forward with an independent plan to provide more parking for citizens closer to the Courthouse.

C. Proposed Dates for Annual Pre-Budget Retreat

County Manager Geouque presented the following proposed dates for the Annual Pre-Budget Retreat: February 8 and 9 or February 11 and 12 with times proposed from 12:00 –7:00 P.M. and 9:00 A.M.–1:00 P.M. Two days were required for the Retreat.

By consensus, the Board agreed to schedule the Annual Pre-Budget Retreat on February 8, 2021, from 12:00 to 7:00 P.M. and February 9, 2021, from 9:00 A.M. to 1:00 P.M.

D. Proposed Dates for Budget Work Sessions

County Manager Geouque presented the following proposed dates for the two budget work sessions held each year. The work sessions were scheduled for a time after the Manager’s proposed budget would be presented to the Board at the first regular meeting in May. The proposed dates for the budget work sessions were May 6 and 7 or May 13 and 14 with times proposed from 12:00 – 8:00 P.M. and 9:00 A.M.–1:00 P.M.

By consensus, the Board agreed to schedule the two Budget Work Sessions for May 13, 2021, from 12:00 to 8:00 P.M. and May 14, 2021, from 9:00 A.M. to 1:00 P.M.

E. Proposed Resolution to Support the North Carolina Association of County Commissioners (NCACC) Initiative on Food Resiliency

County Manager Geouque presented a proposed resolution that the North Carolina Association of County Commissioners (NCACC) requested the Board adopt promoting food system resiliency.

Commissioner Wallin, who serves on the NCACC Presidential Task Force on Food System Resiliency, shared that he believed Watauga County’s numbers were underreported due to many not wanting to ask for help.

Commissioner Wallin, seconded by Commissioner Pertain, moved to adopt the *Resolution to Support the North Carolina Association of County Commissioners (NCACC) Initiative on Food Resiliency* as presented by the County Manager.

VOTE: Aye-4(Kennedy, Pertain, Turnbow, Wallin)
Nay-0

Absent-1(Welch)

F. Proposed Resolution Supporting the Approval and Adoption of the High Country Council of Governments Charter

County Manager Geouque presented a proposed resolution which supported amendments to the High Country Council of Governments' existing Charter.

Commissioner Turnbow, who serves as the Watauga County representative on their Board, stated that there were no negative impacts from the proposed changes and stated that the amendments were well overdue.

Commissioner Turnbow, seconded by Commissioner Pertalion, moved to adopt the *Resolution Supporting the Approval and Adoption of the High Country Council of Governments Charter* as presented by the County Manager.

VOTE: Aye-4(Kennedy, Pertalion, Turnbow, Wallin)
Nay-0
Absent-1(Welch)

G. Boards and Commissions

County Manager Geouque presented the following:

Adult Care Home Community Advisory Committee

Ms. Stevie John, Regional Long Term Care Ombudsman with High Country Council of Governments, submitted Ms. Janet Specht for reappointment to serve a three-year term on the Watauga County Nursing Home Community Advisory Committee. Ms. John also submitted Ms. Wanda Brach for appointment to the Watauga County Nursing Home Community Advisory Committee.

Commissioner Turnbow, seconded by Commissioner Pertalion, moved to waive the second reading and reappoint Ms. Janet Specht and appoint Ms. Wanda Brach to the Watauga County Nursing Home Community Advisory Committee.

VOTE: Aye-4(Kennedy, Pertalion, Turnbow, Wallin)
Nay-0
Absent-1(Welch)

Recreation Commission

The terms of Recreation Commission members representing the Blowing Rock, Mabel, and Cove Creek elementary school districts were up for appointment. Parks and Recreation Director, Stephen Poulos, had requested recommendations for appointments to fill these positions. Cove Creek Principal, Scott Carter, recommends the reappointment of Toby Cone to represent the Cove Creek School district. Blowing Rock principal, Patrick Sukow, recommends the reappointment of Jared Everett as the Blowing Rock School district representative. Mabel Principal, Elin Reuben, recommends the reappointment of Roxanne Saltman to represent the Mabel School district.

Commissioner Pertalion, seconded by Commissioner Turnbow, moved to reappoint Toby Cone, as a representative of the Cove Creek School district; Jared Everett, as a representative of the Blowing Rock School district; and Roxanne Saltman, as a representative of the Mabel School district, to the Recreation Commission.

VOTE: Aye-4(Kennedy, Pertalion, Turnbow, Wallin)
Nay-0
Absent-1(Welch)

Boone Rural Fire Protection Service District Board and the Watauga County Planning Board

Each Commissioner nominates a representative to the Boone Rural Fire Protection Service District Board and the Watauga County Planning Board whose terms run concurrent with the term of the appointing Commissioner. Planning Board members must live within the appointing Commissioner's District and action must be taken by the entire Board of Commissioners to make these appointments. Boone Rural Fire Service District Board members must own property and reside within the Fire Service District.

Commissioner Pertalion stated that she was working with Boone Fire Chief, Jimmy Isaacs, and Boone Rural Fire Protection Service District Board member, Jimmy Marsh, to find a representative to serve. Commissioner Turnbow stated that Katy Abrams, his representative on the Boone Rural Fire Protection Service District Board, had moved and, therefore, he was also in the process of finding a representative to serve. Vice-Chairman Kennedy stated that Dennis Scanlin wished to be replaced as his representative on the Planning Board.

H. Announcements

County Manager Geouque announced that Watauga County Parks and Recreation had teamed up with Hospitality House, Casting Bread, and Hunger & Health Coalition to collect food items. If interested in participating, please drop items off at the new Community Recreation Center (CRC) between 8:00 A.M. and 5:00 P.M. through Friday, February 12, 2021.

PUBLIC COMMENT

A public comment was received from Dalton George regarding substandard housing. After brief discussion, the Board requested the document be forwarded to Mr. Joe Furman, Planning and Inspections Director, and placed on the Annual Pre-Budget Retreat agenda for discussion.

CLOSED SESSION

At 7:49 P.M., Commissioner Wallin, seconded by Commissioner Pertalion, moved to enter Closed Session to discuss Attorney/Client Matters, per G. S. 143-318.11(a)(3) and Land Acquisition, per G. S. 143-318.11(a)(5)(i).

VOTE: Aye-4(Kennedy, Pertalion, Turnbow, Wallin)
Nay-0
Absent-1(Welch)

Commissioner Wallin, seconded by Commissioner Pertalion, moved to resume the open meeting at 8:55 P.M.

VOTE: Aye-4(Kennedy, Pertalion, Turnbow, Wallin)
Nay-0
Absent-1(Welch)

ADJOURN

Vice-Chairman Kennedy adjourned the meeting at 8:55 P.M.

VOTE: Aye-4(Kennedy, Pertalion, Turnbow, Wallin)
Nay-0
Absent-1(Welch)

Billy Kennedy, Vice-Chairman

ATTEST:

Anita J. Fogle, Clerk to the Board



Town of Boone Downtown Planning Projects B1 Expansion & Downtown Boone Local Historic District

Date: February 22, 2021

Initial Presentation to Planning Commission

Presentation materials prepared by Town of Boone Planning & Inspections Department with mapping assistance by Town GIS



Communication: Downtown Projects Presentation (Downtown Projects Update)

Presentation Outline of Concurrent Projects

B1 Expansion

- Summary
- History – Timeline
- UDO Text Amendment Summary
- Mapping

Downtown Boone Local Historic District

- Summary
- History- Timeline
- Architectural Survey of Downtown Boone Summary
- Designation Report Summary
- Design Guidelines Summary
- Mapping

Downtown Boone Local Historic District Overlay together with B1 Expansion Proposed Zoning

Comprehensive Plan Relation to Downtown Planning Projects

Presentation Tools

Next Steps

Link to Documents:

https://gisviewer.townofboone.net/webdocs/CAC_HPC_WorkProducts/

1. Map 1- Downtown District Boundary Area
2. Map 2- Downtown District Boundary Area – Existing Zoning
3. Map 3- Proposed B1 Downtown Interface Zoning District
4. Map 4- Proposed B1 Downtown Core Zoning District
5. Map 5- Proposed Downtown Boone District Overall Proposed Zoning
6. Map 6- Proposed Downtown Boone Local Historic District Overlay – Existing Zoning
7. Map 7- Proposed Downtown Boone Local Historic District Overlay with B1 Expansion Proposed Zoning
8. Draft Revisions to UDO
9. Comprehensive Survey of Downtown Boone, NC
10. Report and Recommendation for the Designation of the Downtown Boone Local Historic District
11. Draft Downtown Boone Design Guideline and Handbook

Communication: Downtown Projects Presentation (Downtown Projects Update)

B1 Expansion Summary

- Replaces and expands the current B1 Central Business Zoning District;
- Creation of new zoning districts: B-1 Downtown Core & B1 Downtown Interface
- Proposed B-1 Downtown UDO Standards -creates new standards for both new B1 districts
- Reworks the entire UDO – provides a separate Article for each zoning district
- Entire work product involves both a UDO Text and a Zoning Map Amendment where approximately 254 parcels in the downtown area are rezoned.

B1 Expansion History - Timeline

Date	Event Description
07-2010	Council authorized the CAC to work on Community Appearance Standards.
08-2010	In August 2010, the CAC recommended separate downtown design standards.
1-27-2011	Joint meeting with CAC & HPC first joint meeting to discuss downtown design standards.
1-26-2012	Joint meeting with CAC & HPC for discussion on HPC's draft design guidelines for a historic district and the CAC's work product related to UDO downtown design standards
8-14-2013	Joint meeting with CAC & HPC for discussion on HPC's draft design guidelines for a historic district and the CAC's work product related to UDO downtown design standards
11-10-2015	Joint meeting with CAC & TC for discussion on CAC's work product related to UDO downtown design standards
11-19-2015	TC approved UDO text amendment to provide specific standards for the B-1 Central Business District. This amendment was a measure to ensure appropriate materials for the B-1 Central Business District are utilized while the final recommendations of the CAC's work product related to design standards were completed.
12-2015/ 2-2016	CAC created a survey which was sent out to the MSD/community asking questions about B1 Design Standards.
10-11-2016	The CAC met with Council to present the idea of creating two new zoning districts to replace and expand the B1 Central Business district. This concept was approved.
12-12-2017	Joint meeting with TC, CAC, & HPC to discuss the boundaries of the project area for the CAC's discussion on their work product related to UDO downtown design standards.

B1 Expansion History - Timeline

Date	Event Description
03-20-2018	Joint meeting with TC, CAC, & HPC to discuss downtown related planning projects. Council authorized a “stop-gap” text amendment until the final UDO design standards could be completed.
04-26-2018	Council approved UDO text amendment to create Article 18 Central Business District Standards. This text was created to be a “stop-gap” until the final design standards could be completed. Standards based on the Secretary of Interior’s Guidelines for Rehabilitation.
9-30-2020	Joint meeting with TC, CAC & HPC to present work products. State Historic Preservation Office representatives attended. Staff authorized to meet with CAC & HPC Chairs to discuss potential map changes or other text changes that may be necessary to bring the documents in alignment. Council authorized HPC’s district designation report and directed Town Attorney to begin review.
10-27-2020	Joint meeting with TC, CAC & HPC to review work products. Consensus to move forward with work products from all boards provided that Council authorized Staff to work with Committee Chairs on the following: Boundaries -should they be changed, final recommendations taking into account concerns from all parties; Content - review and identify any easily resolved issues and note any issues that need further conversations; Discuss what fall under the purview of the historic district regulations and what is under purview of the underlying zoning district; Come up with a proposal for next steps
11-03-2020	Planning Staff and Town Manager met with Committee Chairs to discuss items in the preceding line. Made recommendations to Council.
11-19-2020	Revisions to proposed zoning map and text amendment for the CAC work product suggested by Committee Chairs was approved by Town Council.
11-24-2020	CAC also approved the revisions to proposed zoning map and text amendment suggested by Committee Chairs.

B1 Expansion-UDO Text Amendment Summary

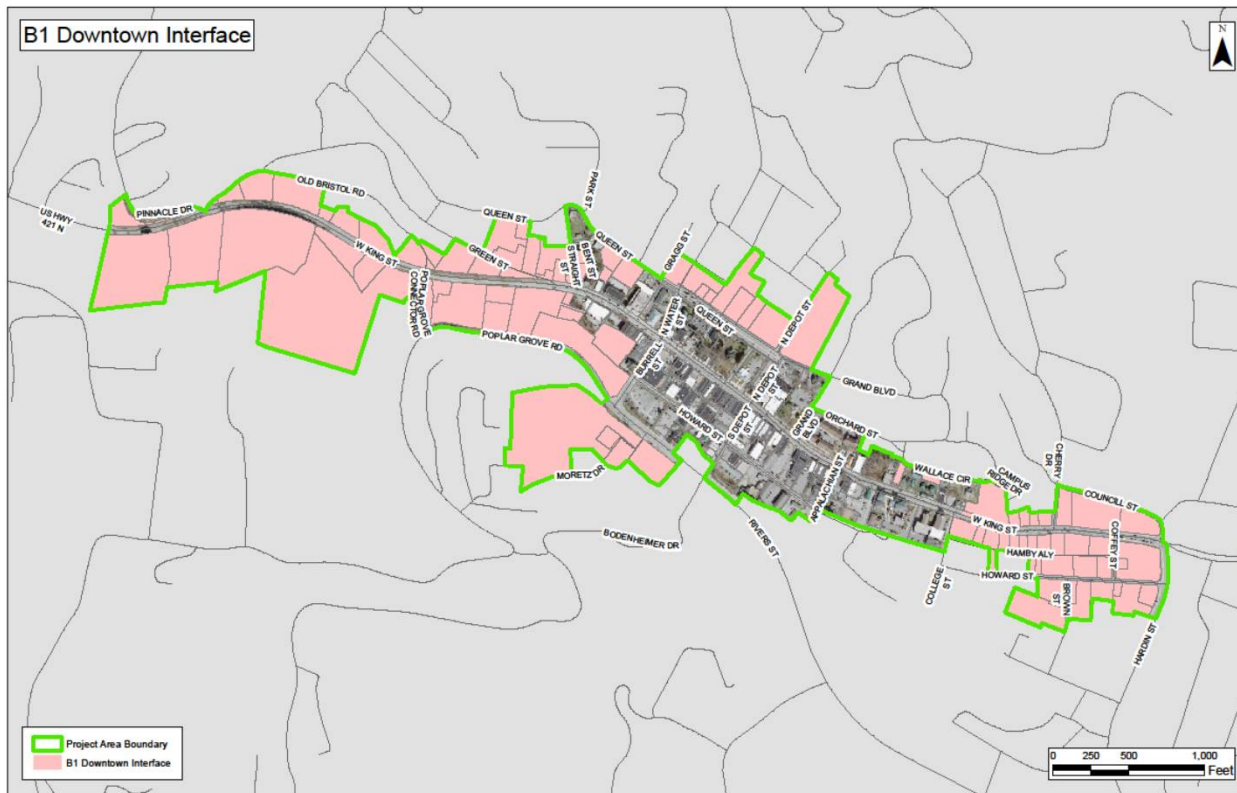
- Draft has been prepared as if each zoning district has its own standalone article. As you go through the draft you will see notes on what the final product would look like. For this to work, UDO Articles 14-34 and Appendix B would have to be repealed and new Articles 14-59 would be adopted.
 - Creates the B1 Downtown Core (B1-DC) and the B1 Downtown Interface (B1-DI) zoning districts. These district encompass the Town of Boone's downtown area and represent, in large measure, the last vestiges of the Town's original character. Regulations in these districts are intended to preserve and maintain a small town, high country atmosphere. Preservation and adaptive reuse of existing historic buildings is encouraged and new construction shall be appropriately scaled to be sympathetic to the existing built environment. Design and regulatory standards for these districts reinforce the character of the downtown as a pedestrian friendly area by encouraging architectural solutions that are visually interesting, and are compatible in scale and character to the surrounding area. To help accomplish this, the area is divided into the two (2) districts, each with its own character and scale which contribute to the overall vitality of the downtown area
1. **B1 Downtown Core District:** The Downtown Core District is the center of the downtown area and contains the greatest concentration of historic commercial buildings. This district establishes a continuous building facade at the street frontage to strengthen the identity of downtown as a pedestrian destination where pedestrians feel comfortable through the careful selection of building materials, human scale design, and ground floor fenestration. Standards in this district reinforce the historic nature of the existing built environment through regulation of appearance, height, scale and mass.
 2. **B1 Downtown Interface District:** The Downtown Interface District serves as a gateway into the downtown area and as the transition between the B1 Downtown Core District and adjacent zoning districts. Development in this district must be sensitive to issues of compatibility with the Downtown Core District as well as surrounding zoning districts, many which are low-density residential.
- Creates unique design standards for B1 Downtown Core and B1 Downtown Interface

[illegible]

Communication: Downtown Projects Presentation (Downtown Projects Update)



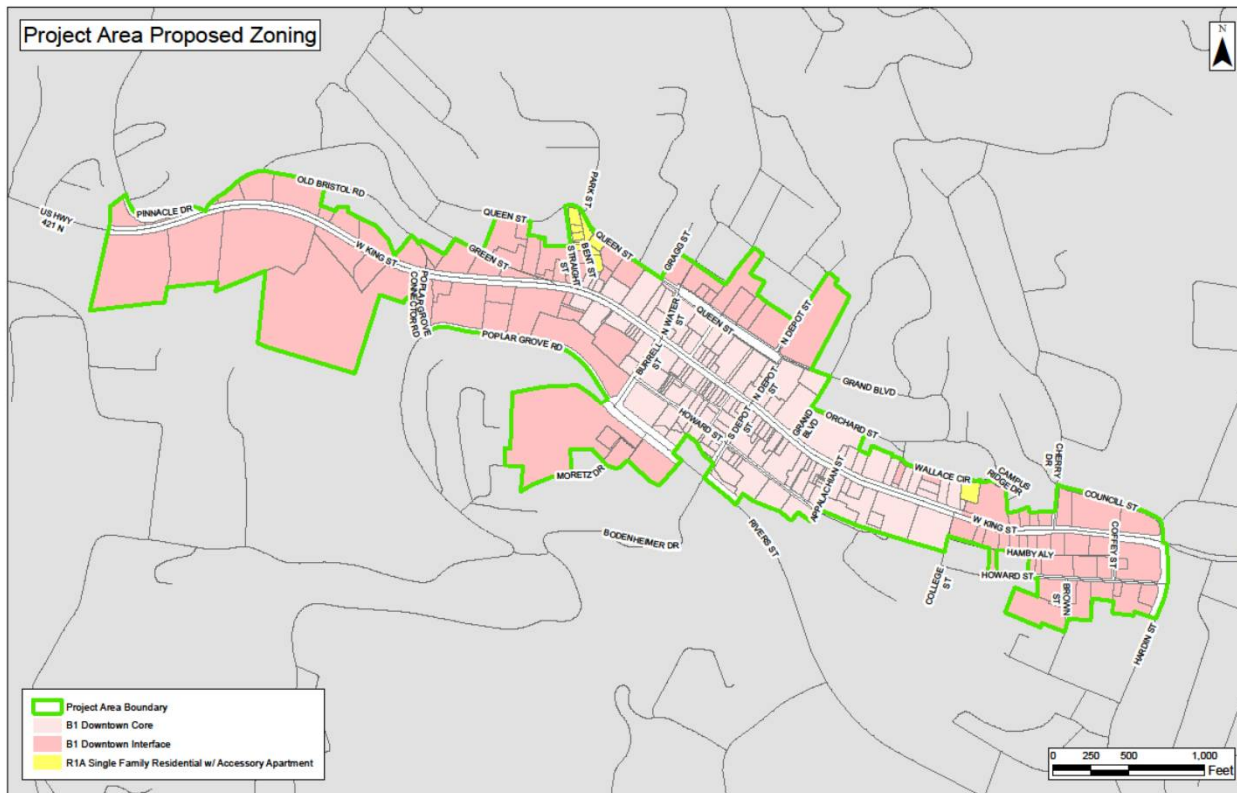
B1 Expansion – Proposed B1 Downtown Interface Zoning District



B1 Expansion – Proposed B1 Downtown Core Zoning District



B1 Expansion – Proposed Zoning of Entire Project Area





**Comprehensive Architectural Survey of
Downtown Boone, North Carolina
FINAL REPORT**

Dr. Eric W. Plaag

With Contributions from

Paul Fuller
Nicole Holladay
Carson Hamilton

February 2021

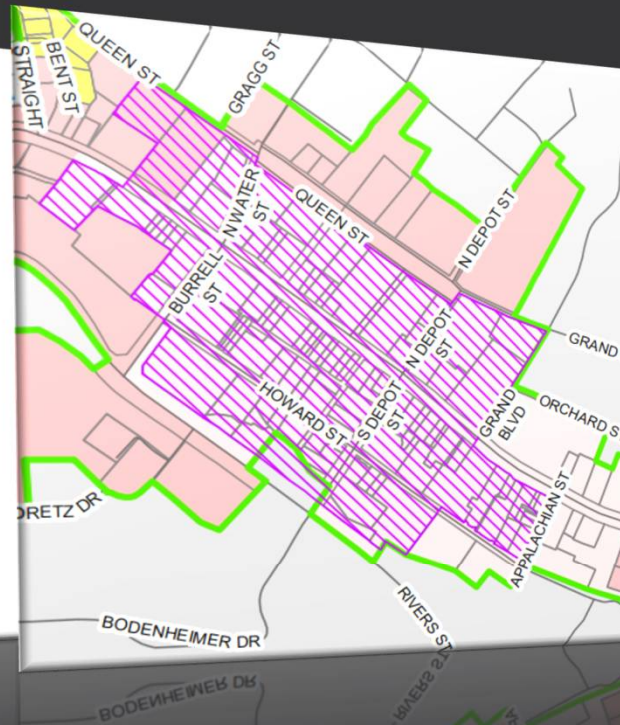
**REPORT AND RECOMMENDATION
FOR THE
DESIGNATION OF THE
DOWNTOWN BOONE LOCAL HISTORIC DISTRICT
BOONE, NORTH CAROLINA**

DRAFT VERSION, February 2021

Prepared by Dr. Eric W. Plaag

Adopted by the Boone Historic Preservation Commission

August 11, 2020



**Downtown Boone
Local Historic District
Design Guidelines
And Handbook**



The Town of Boone circa 1930s from the hill near the R. L. Clay House looking northeast. Photo courtesy of James House Collection. Digitized by the Boone Historic Preservation Commission.

Town of Boone Historic Preservation Commission

DRAFT, Final Draft January 7, 2020



Downtown Boone Local Historic District

Summary-Downtown Boone Local Historic District

- Goal: creation of a Downtown Boone Local Historic District overlay
- Overlay districts are those which overlap one or more general use districts and contain standards in addition to the general use district zoning standards. Where requirements conflict, Overlay district standards supersede general use district standards.
- 2 documents required for creation: Comprehensive Architectural Survey of Downtown Boone, NC and Report and Recommendation for the Designation of the Downtown Boone Local Historic District, Boone, NC
- Entire work product involves both a UDO Text and a Zoning Map Amendment where approximately 122 parcels in the downtown area are impacted by the application of the zoning overlay
- Development within the project will be subject to minor and major COA process
- Secretary of Interior Design Standards for Rehabilitation & Downtown Boone Local Historic District Design Guidelines and Handbook

Summary Downtown Boone Local Historic District Timeline

Date	Event Description
1-27-2011	Joint meeting with CAC & HPC first joint meeting to discuss downtown design standards.
1-26-2012	Joint meeting with CAC & HPC for discussion on HPC's draft design guidelines for a historic district and the CAC's work product related to UDO downtown design standards
8-14-2013	Joint meeting with CAC & HPC for discussion on HPC's draft design guidelines for a historic district and the CAC's work product related to UDO downtown design standards
2015	The Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) was authorized by Council to undertake a historic survey of the Municipal Service District (MSD), along with 4 additional properties outside of the MSD.
9-23-2015	HPC hosted a community outreach at the Watauga County Library regarding the Historic Resources Survey of Downtown Boone. Property owners and business owners within the MSD were invited. Representatives from State Historic Preservation Commission Office were present.
12-12-2017	Joint meeting with TC, CAC, & HPC to discuss the boundaries of the project area for the CAC's discussion on their work product related to UDO downtown design standards.
03-20-2018	Joint meeting with TC, CAC, & HPC to discuss downtown related planning projects. Council authorized a "stop-gap" text amendment until the final UDO design standards could be completed.
08-11-2019	Final Report, Comprehensive Architectural Survey of Downtown Boone, North Carolina was completed and approved by the HPC.

Summary Downtown Boone Local Historic District Timeline

Date	Event Description
09/17/2019	Town Council authorized HPC send the Final Report, Comprehensive Architectural Survey of Downtown Boone, North Carolina with proposed Downtown Historic District boundary map to the NC State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) for advisory review. Authorization was also given to HPC to undertake the next step in preparing a “district designation report” with the understanding that the HPC would report back to Council with specifics on the boundaries of the district before submitting district designation report to SHPO.
12/29/2019	Final Report, Comprehensive Architectural Survey of Downtown Boone, North Carolina was completed and sent to SHPO for advisory review.
01/07/2020	Downtown Boone Local Historic District Design Guidelines and Handbook approved by HPC.
02/11/2020	Final version of the district designation report “Report and Recommendation for the Designation of the Downtown Boone Local Historic District, Boone, North Carolina” expected to be reviewed and approved by the HPC.
9-30-2020	Joint meeting with TC, CAC & HPC to present work products. State Historic Preservation Office representatives attended. Staff authorized to meet with CAC & HPC Chairs to discuss potential map changes or other text changes that may be necessary to bring the documents in alignment. Council authorized HPC’s district designation report and directed Town Attorney to begin review.

Summary Downtown Boone Local Historic District Timeline

Date	Event Description
10-27-2020	Joint meeting with TC, CAC & HPC to review work products. Town Council approved “Report and Recommendation for the Designation of the Downtown Boone Local Historic District, Boone, North Carolina’ and approved it being sent to SHPO for review. Consensus to move forward with work products from all boards provided that Council authorized Staff to work with Committee Chairs on the following: Boundaries -should they be changed, final recommendations taking into account concerns from all parties; Content - review and identify any easily resolved issues and note any issues that need further conversations; Discuss what fall under the purview of the historic district regulations and what is under purview of the underlying zoning district; Come up with a proposal for next steps
11-03-2020	Planning Staff and Town Manager met with Committee Chairs to discuss items in the preceding line. Made recommendations to Council.
11-19-2020	Revisions to proposed zoning map and text amendment for the CAC work product suggested by Committee Chairs was approved by Town Council.
02/09/2021	HPC approved revision to “Final Report, Comprehensive Architectural Survey of Downtown Boone, North Carolina “ & “Report and Recommendation for the Designation of the Downtown Boone Local Historic District, Boone, North Carolina” for typographical errors and update Oscar and Suma Hardin House demolition.
Currently	Staff working with SHPO on submittal of & “Report and Recommendation for the Designation of the Downtown Boone Local Historic District, Boone, North Carolina”

Summary- Architectural Survey of Downtown Boone

Comprehensive Architectural Survey of Downtown Boone, North Carolina

- Comprehensive research of 127 survey eligible properties in the MSD and 4 properties lying just outside the MSD. Research details the architectural and historical significance of each property and illustrates the many factors that influenced the development of Boone's historic downtown area between 1890 and 1970.
- Used to identify properties eligible for inclusion in potential historic district

Summary-Designation Report

Report and Recommendation for the Designation of the Downtown Boone Local Historic District, Boone, North Carolina

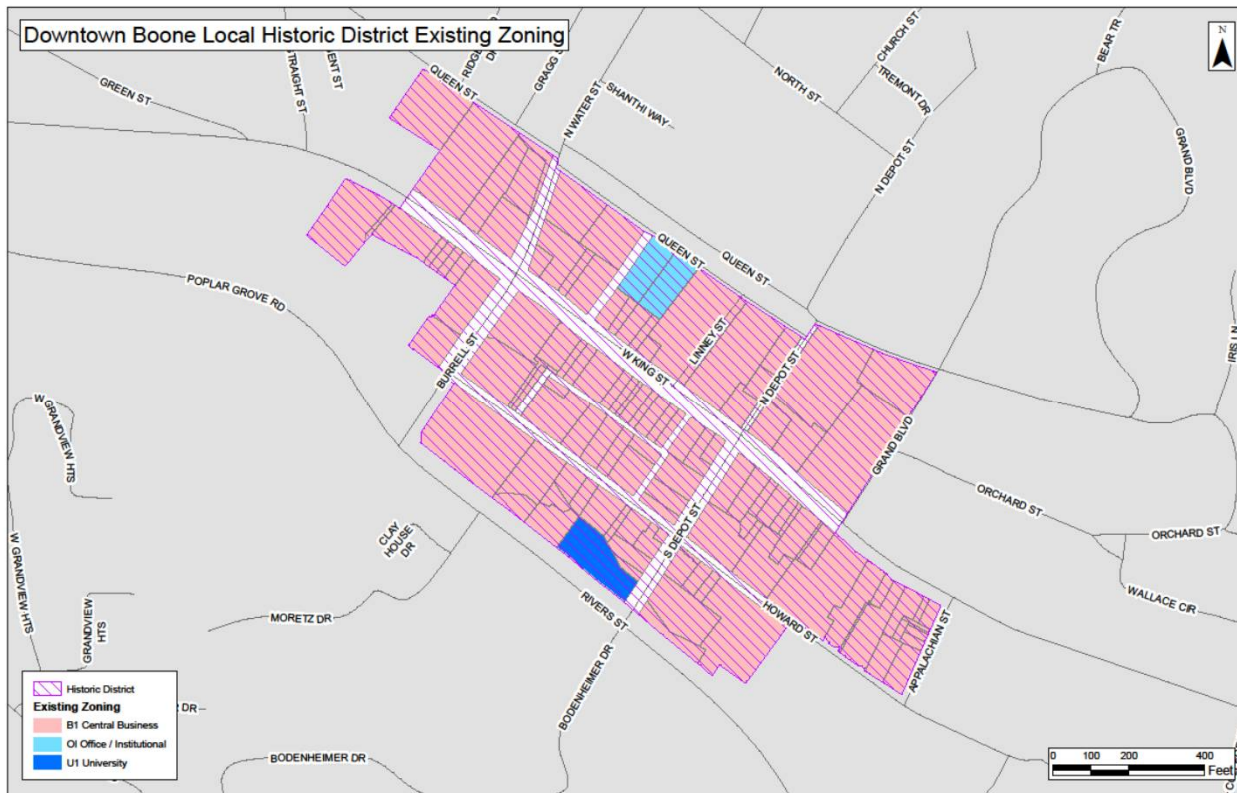
- History of the Comprehensive Architectural Survey, period of significance for district ranges from 1918-1964, recommendation for a local historic district, 2016 Comprehensive Plan Update Consistency, brief description of each property within the proposed district.

Summary-Design Guidelines

Downtown Boone Local Historic District Design Guidelines and Handbook- DRAFT FOR GUIDANCE

- Historic Preservation in Boone, Why Preservation Matters, Historic Districts, Legal Overview of Historic Preservation Legislation, Historical Influence of Boone's Architecture, Commission Procedures, Design Guidelines for Residential Properties within the District, Design Guidelines for Commercial Property within the District, Design Guidelines for Historic Streetscapes, Landscapes, Monuments, and Other Resources in the District, Guidelines for Relocation and Demolition, Bibliography, Glossary of Architectural Terms, Appendices.
- Drafted to provide starting point in conversation about district guidelines
- Must make decision on adoption- with or after Historic District Designation

Downtown Boone Local Historic District Overlay with Existing Zoning



Communication: Downtown Projects Presentation (Downtown Projects Update)



Relation of Downtown Planning Projects to Comprehensive Plan

2.1 THE ECONOMY

2.1.1 Economic Development

A. The Town shall protect and enhance a high quality of life, image, cultural amenities, and natural beauty as the most effective, long term component of an economic development strategy.

D. Economic development efforts shall encourage the revitalization and reuse of currently unused or underutilized structures, sites and infrastructure in appropriately located areas.

2.1.4 Downtown

A. A compatible design character for the downtown area, drawing upon the locality's original High Country small town features, shall be identified, reinforced and supported to put forth a quality image and sense of place.

C. A variety of mutually compatible and supportive mixed uses shall be encouraged in the downtown area.

F. The maintenance and revitalization of downtown Boone, as well as planning for its future development, will reflect the realities and qualities befitting its geographical setting and function as a center of (1) commercial and service activities, (2) educational and cultural activities, events and (3) public services.

Relation of Downtown Planning Projects to Comprehensive Plan

2.3 THE COMMUNITY

2.3.2 Community Character

- A. The identification, restoration and active use of structures, buildings, monuments, and neighborhoods of historic or architectural significance shall be encouraged as a means of enhancing their economic and cultural value to the planning area.
- B. Multiple and appropriate adaptive reuse of historic resources shall be encouraged.
- C. Wise development of the tourism potential of the area's architectural, historic, scenic and natural resources shall be encouraged.
- D. The destruction of significant architectural, historic, scenic, natural and archaeological resources in the planning area shall be discouraged.
- E. New development, redevelopment and rehabilitation of structures and sites shall occur in a manner which is consistent with the neighborhood and architectural context of the immediate area, and supportive, whenever possible, of Boone's original community character as a High Country small town.

Relation of Downtown Planning Projects to Comprehensive Plan

2.3.2 Public Involvement

- A. Public involvement shall be encouraged in decisions concerning land use and development by making the public aware of proposed developments at the earliest opportunity, as well as fostering communication among developers, the Town, the County, the University, and the general public.
- B. Neighborhood and special area planning shall be encouraged to foster public involvement in the production of closely tailored, action oriented special area plans and programs.
- D. Special committees, advisory panels, educational forums, public workshops, leadership seminars, town meetings and media contacts shall be encouraged and fostered to enhance the effectiveness of citizen involvement in community planning and action.

Presentation Tools

- Presentation of Story Map.

<https://arcg.is/1Hua8r>

- Creation of Other Presentation Tools

NOTE: The story maps are being finalized as Staff reviews the data to ensure accuracy. Completed work products expected prior to public input meeting(s) publication.

Next Steps

Future Meeting Dates

Council approved schedule:

- February 12, 2021: Presentation to TC at Planning Retreat
- Digital packages: ArcGIS Story Map
- February 22, 2021: Present to PC at regularly scheduled meeting; invite schedule public input meetings at this time
- March 2021: Schedule special Planning Commission meeting so that PC can give initial comments to Planning Staff – invite HPC & CAC Committee Chairs & Vice-Chairs
- March/April 2021: Public input meeting(s); date TBD
- March/April 2021: Joint Meeting with TC, CAC, HPC, and PC to go over public input and make changes
- Schedule Special Public Hearing on UDO text amendments and zoning map amendments, final approval of any of the Downtown Boone Local Historic District documents
- Council vote on projects on regularly scheduled meeting or special called meeting (attempt to utilize already scheduled meetings)



North Carolina Department of Natural and Cultural Resources
State Historic Preservation Office

Ramona M. Bartos, Administrator

Governor Roy Cooper

Secretary D. Reid Wilson

March 19, 2021

Christy Turner, Senior Planner
Town of Boone, NC

Via email: Christy.turner@townofboone.net

RE: Proposed Designation of the **Downtown Boone Local Historic District, Boone, Watauga County.**

Dear Ms. Turner:

Thank you for the report we received on the proposed designation of the Downtown Boone Local Historic District. We have reviewed the report and offer the following comments in accordance with North Carolina General Statute 160D-944.

According to the report, Downtown Boone is composed of a rich concentration of commercial, institutional, and residential buildings of varied architectural influence that illustrate Boone's commercial development from 1918 to 1964.

The Office of State Archaeology (OSA) reviewed the proposed district and advises that there is potential for archaeological resources associated with the earliest Native American occupations (Archaic period-19th century) of the area to be present in the vicinity, especially in the areas along the northern and eastern extents of the proposed historic district. With regard to the Euro-American occupation of the town from the early 19th through the 20th centuries, there may also be archaeological resources that remain intact, particularly in and around residential properties where there has been less modern intrusion through construction than along the main streets of the business district and in what are now parking lots. The OSA recommend that care be taken to avoid inadvertent destruction of any potential archaeological resources during ground disturbing activities. If ground disturbing activities are planned, OSA recommends a professional archaeologist first be consulted to help ensure impacts to archaeological resources are avoided or mitigated.

We have shared recommendations with staff for minor revisions to strengthen the report. With this, we believe the commission will have the information needed to determine whether the area possesses the requisite special local significance and integrity for local historic district designation.

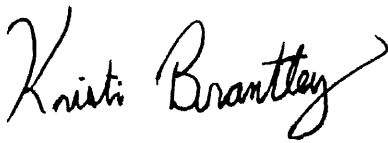
Historic district designation means the community recognizes the district is worthy of preservation because of its special significance to the local community. Any substantial changes in design, materials, and

appearance within the designated district would be subject to the design review procedures of the preservation commission.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the report. Please note, our comments are advisory only and therefore, non-binding. Once the governing board has received a recommendation from the Boone Historic Preservation Commission, it should proceed in the same manner as would otherwise be required for an amendment to the zoning ordinance. Once the decision has been made, please return a completed copy of the enclosed form to our office.

This letter serves as our comments on the proposed designation of the Downtown Boone Local Historic District. Please contact me at 919-814-6576 should you have any questions about our comments.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kristi Brantley". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a long, sweeping underline.

Kristi Brantley
Local Preservation Commissions/CLG Coordinator

CC: Commission Chair

Enclosure

>>> Eric Plaag [REDACTED] 4/8/2021 1:28 PM >>>
Hi Allison, Jane, and Christy,

Please note that I have also blind copied members of the HPC on this email, and this email should be included in the packet for the HPC meeting next Tuesday.

As the author of and principal historical consultant behind the draft Downtown Boone Local Historic District Designation Report, I have received and reviewed the comments from the NC SHPO regarding the district designation report, which were contained in a letter dated March 19, 2021, from Kristi Brantley, as well as in an email dated March 19, 2021, from Kristi Brantley. Both were addressed to Christy Turner and shared with me by Christy. I recommend that these materials from Kristi Brantley be shared with the HPC in the packet for next Tuesday's meeting so that they are fully informed on the state's response to the district designation report.

Per Planning staff request, I have made the various suggested changes on pages 6, and I have changed all references to "guidelines" to "standards" in accordance with recent revisions to the state statute. In addition, I corrected the misused word issue on page 68, and I added a brief section just before the inventory of resources that provides an assessment of the district's overall integrity. Finally, I added an appendix that contains a set of photographs of the resources in the district, which might help readers to familiarize themselves with the appearance of the buildings listed in the inventory. The order of these images follows the order of the inventory.

There were two other issues raised by NC SHPO staff that I wish to address separately. First, Annie McDonald had raised concerns about 891 West King Street not being included in the historic district boundary. Annie and I subsequently spoke by phone on March 29 about this issue. Her concern was that a fire or other catastrophic damage to 891 West King Street could lead to an adverse impact on the Smithey's Building (WT0584) to the east during any subsequent rehabilitation or reconstruction (or for that matter, new construction) at the 891 West King Street location, as a result of the shared wall. I explained

to Annie that the Town of Boone already has fairly stringent appearance standards for the downtown area as part of its B1 zoning rules and that these underlying appearance standards will be further strengthened as part of the designation of the B1 Downtown Core zone. This seemed to address her concern, and she indicated that we need not explore altering the boundary given those underlying zoning protections.

Second, I noted that Dylan Clark, the assistant state archaeologist, made comments about the potential for archaeological resources being located on properties in the proposed district. Clark made several recommendations about how such situations should be handled. In my professional view, such remarks are not appropriate to the district designation process, in that they address possible future circumstances to be reviewed in the Certificate of Appropriateness process and have nothing to do with the eligibility of the proposed district as outlined in the district designation report. For that reason, such statements do not belong in the district designation report. Rather, they should be included in the district design standards document; the draft version of this document already contains a fairly detailed section on archaeological resources, but I will review this to include Clark's statements if similar language is not already contained there.

I believe that addresses all issues with the district designation report, the latest revision of which I shared with Allison, Jane, and Christy this morning. I don't know if this revision requires a follow-up recommendation vote by the HPC, but if so, please include it in the packet for next week's HPC meeting.

In the meantime, let me know if you have any questions.

Best,

Eric Plaag, Principal Consultant
Carolina Historical Consulting, LLC

[REDACTED]

Christy Turner - EXTERNAL EMAIL - Boone Local Historic District

From: "Brantley, Kristi"
To: Christy Turner <
Date: 3/19/2021 3:54 PM
Subject: - Boone Local Historic District
Cc: "Brantley, Kristi"
Attachments: WT_Downtown Boone LHD_formal ltr.pdf; WT_Downtown Boone LHD_REQUEST FOR DESIGNATION CONFIRMATION.docx

Good afternoon Christy,

Attached is a copy of a letter written in response to the proposed designation of the **Downtown Boone Local Historic District, Boone, Watauga County**. Please share a copy with your Commission Chair. Also attached is a copy of the designation confirmation form for the property. Once the ordinance has been adopted to designate the property, please return a completed copy of the confirmation form to me with the date the ordinance was adopted.

Assistant State Archaeologist, Dylan Clark, reviewed the report and offers the following comments:

I have reviewed the Downtown Boone Local Historic District report. There is potential for archaeological resources associated with the earliest Native American occupations (Archaic period-19th century) of the area to be present in the vicinity, especially in the areas along the northern and eastern extents of the proposed historic district. With regard to the Euro-American occupation of the town from the early 19th through the 20th centuries, there may also be archaeological resources that remain intact, particularly in and around residential properties where there has been less modern intrusion through construction than along the main streets of the business district and in what are now parking lots. We recommend that care be taken to avoid inadvertent destruction of any potential archaeological resources during ground disturbing activities. If ground disturbing activities are planned, we recommend a professional archaeologist first be consulted to help ensure impacts to archaeological resources are avoided or mitigated.

Please contact Dylan Clark at dylan.clark@ncdcr.gov with any questions you may have regarding archaeological comments.

Additionally, Preservation Specialist, Annie McDonald, reviewed the report and offers the following comments:

Page 5 - Significance of the 2006 Comprehensive Plan Update: Outstanding use of the Boone Town Plan sections to justify the designation and bolster defensible decision-making.

Page 6 - Historical Significance: The summary statements are excellent. The opening sentence, which presently reads "The proposed district area is representative of several facets of downtown Boone's commercial development during the period from 1918 to 1964," could be bolstered by a minor addition and slight rewording to read "In accordance with §960D-944(a) Designation of Historic Districts, the proposed district area is deemed to be of special significance to the town of

Boone in terms of its history and architecture because it represents several facets of the town's commercial and physical development during the period from 1918 to 1964."

Page 6 - Boundary Justification: *It would be helpful to connect the boundaries back to the comprehensive plan and to address the inclusion of non-historic buildings and vacant parcels. Consider expanding this to say something to the effect of "The district boundaries were identified through the downtown survey report preparation process and reflect the highest and most dense concentration of historic resources associated with the architectural and historical themes outlined in this report. These properties have been identified as worthy of preservation in accordance with the 2006 Comprehensive Plan Update. Vacant parcels and non-historic buildings are included where reasonably appropriate to establish consistent boundaries.*

Page 6 - Historic District Design Guidelines: *All occurrences of "guidelines" should be changed to "standards" to ensure compliance with the recent revisions to the statute.*

Page 7 - Boundaries: *Why was the property at 891 West King Street not included? While likely non-historic, drawing the boundary down a building seems counter-intuitive to zoning practice. Hypothetically speaking, if that building were to be wholly or partially demolished, and new construction built in its place, would it be appropriate to review the new construction to determine what impact it might have on the building immediately east and inside the local district boundary?*

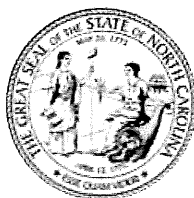
Pages 68-111 - Inventory: *The inclusion of the inventory and method of coding is excellent documentation for making a defensible decision about the designation and for future evaluation of COA applications. In the opening paragraph, should the seventh occurrence of the word "integrity" (on line 15) instead be "significance"? In addition, in the opening paragraph of the inventory, or in a separate section immediately preceding the inventory, the report should include an assessment of the district's overall integrity.*

With this additional information, we believe the designation report will provide the preservation commission and local governing board sufficient information to determine whether the Downtown Boone Local Historic District possesses the requisite special local significance and integrity for local historic district designation.

Please contact Annie McDonald at annie.mcdonald@ncdcr.gov with any questions you may have regarding our comments.

Have a great weekend!

Kristi



Kristi Brantley
CLG/Local Government Coordinator
NC State Historic Preservation Office
NC Dept. of Natural and Cultural Resources

#StayStrongNC

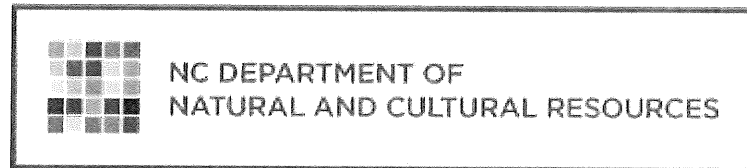
Learn more @ nc.gov/covid19

And don't forget your Ws! Wear. Wait. Wash.

WEAR a face covering.

WAIT 6 feet apart from other people.

WASH your hands often.



7.6 Rooftop additions to existing commercial block buildings, including those intended to accommodate elevator shafts, bars, decks, kitchen prep areas, social areas, or solar arrays, or to otherwise enable recreational use of open rooftops, are generally not appropriate if any portion of the rooftop addition is visible from the street-level right of way adjacent to the primary elevation.

- 7.6.A.** Rooftop additions should never be more than one story (10 feet) in height from the roof surface of the existing building.
- 7.6.B.** Rooftop additions should never destroy or damage character-defining features of an existing building, and they should be designed to be compatible with both the size, scale, color, material, form, style, and character of the building on which they are erected and the historic district as a whole. Rooftop additions should be subordinate to the existing building in size and design, and compatible with its massing, scale, materials, and features. Nevertheless, additions should be sufficiently differentiated as new elements from original components of the existing building.
- 7.6.C.** Rooftop additions should be positioned on the roof to eliminate the possibility of the structure being visible from the street-level right of way located along the building's primary elevation. For buildings located on corner lots, additions should not be visible from the streetside secondary elevation, either. In the vast majority of cases, this will mean positioning the addition within the one-third portion of the rooftop located closest to the tertiary elevation of the existing building. In many cases, rooftop additions are most feasible on buildings at least four stories in height located adjacent to taller buildings or existing high party walls that will help shield the rooftop addition from street-level view.
- 7.6.D.** Rooftop additions should maintain the lowest possible profile in their construction, so that walkways, decks, seating areas, solar arrays, and similar components are built as close as functionally possible to the original roof surface of the existing building.
- 7.6.E.** Rooftop additions must be approved through the Conditional District zoning process prior to being considered under the Certificate of Appropriateness process associated with these Standards.

Please note that Section 7 also needs to be renumbered. The first instance of 7.6 (regarding rooftop additions) should be deleted. Also, the last sentence of 13.3 should be deleted, and it would probably be a good idea to add the above text to Section 13, perhaps as a new 13.4, with subsequent numbering adjusted accordingly.

Austin & Barnes

include engraving

Corner Post - Footstones - Vases

Kershaw Pink & Pink Pearl - call for price

Corner Post: 6x6x4	M	Placed in cemetery	Grey granite Blue Ridge	Morning Rose Salisbury Pink	Imperial Jet Black	Eagle Jet Black American Black Dakota Mahogany	Baham Ruby
		• Picked up	45	60	70	70	70
			35	50	60	60	60

Footstones	MOTHER	10x5x4	65	75	85	90	90
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Tapered Granite Vases - Polish 2 Add \$70 for P5

5x5x9	90	-	-	-
8x6x10	110	180	195	216
8x6x12	125	202	216	238
8x8x12	145	260	258	281
8x8x14	175	292	291	319



Round Granite Vases - All Polished

4x10	170	260	178	265	21
6x10	211	329	207	321	26
7x12	227	398	258	406	32
8x14	283	446	291	454	42

Add an aluminum vase liner to any granite vase for \$15 (2 for \$25) Add flowers to any vase \$35 (2 for \$65)

Square Pedestal

12x12x4



No Core	72	88	105	110	12
With Core	87	103	120	125	13

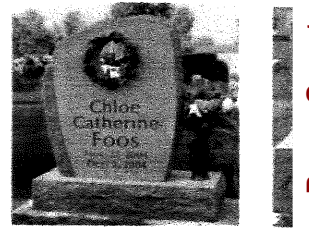
Round Marble Vases -

(Gray or White Variegated all Polished)

4x10	110
6x10	135
7x12	175
8x14	225



Choose the vase to complement



Design is included if purchased with monument. \$45 if Purchased Separately

Guaranteed Zinc Vases: \$220 - \$167 each

Trusted Bronze Vase

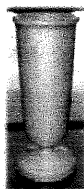
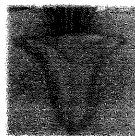
Classic or Crown for \$220

Paragon Vase for \$220

Gem Vase (smaller) \$175

Monarch Vase (flat*) \$167

* designed primarily for slant memorials



Monarch

Gem

Classic

Crown

Paragon

Choose from a wide range of colors offered exclusively for Zinc Vases (please specify color of vase on order)



Doric

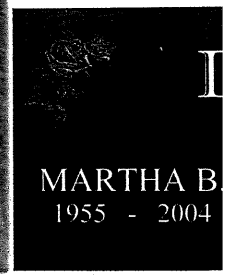


Greek

STAPLES

Grass Level Memorials

Price Includes: Polished or steeled top with lettering & flat design
Add 10% for shape carving.



Size In Inches Length-Width-Height	Gray Granite Blue Ridge	Pink Pearl/Kershaw Morning Rose Salisbury Pink	Imperial Jet Black	Dakota Mahogany American Black Eagle Jet Black	Ruby Red Bahama Blue
16x8x4 no vase*	207	275	357	428	470
20x10x4 no vase*	269	341	425	491	526

Single Memorial

Please add \$75 for a second name added to a single memorial

24x12x4	389	478	539	605	643
30x16x4	486	619	821	864	907
32x20x4	572	723	884	935	935

Companion Memorial

48x14x4 no vase*	790	1,034	1,183	1,318	1,371
48x16x4	906	1,186	1,366	1,468	1,515
54x18x4	1035	1,368	1,557	1,666	1,818
60x18x4	1,167	1,596	1,891	1,971	2,134
72x20x4	1,404	1,885	2,153	2,475	2,672

Select Memorials with beveled frame.

	Gray Granite	Jet Black Granite
32x24x4 single	997	1,254
62x24x4 double	1,499	2,229



Grass Marker should be at least 16" wide to accommodate most vase. See Page 1 for vase prices.

Austin & Barnes

Coping Lot & Landscape

Polish top, inside sawn, rock pitch outside

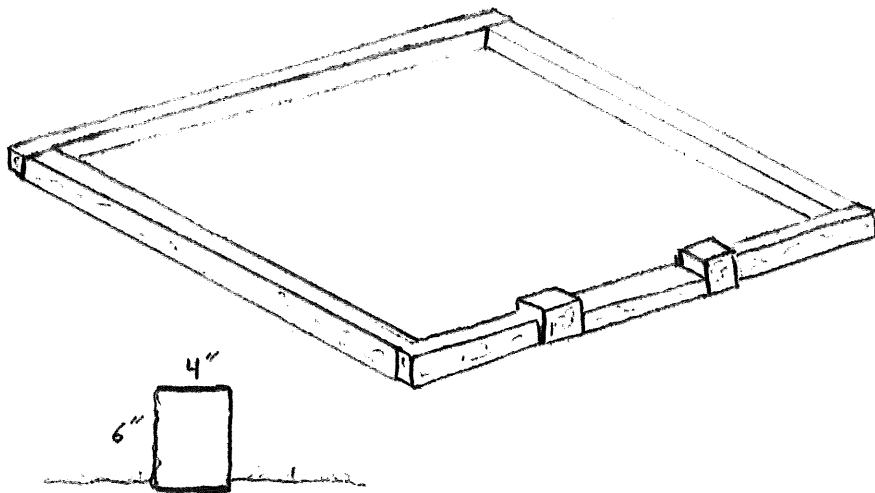
	Size	Blue Ridge	Pink Pearl/Kershaw Morning Rose Salisbury Pink	Imperial Jet Black	Dakota Mahogany American Black Eagle Jet Black	Ruby Red Bahama Blue	Blue Pearl	Georgia Marble
Coping	4" x 6"	37	67	80	97	97	97	100
Per Foot	6" x 6"	43	80	92	128	128	128	135

White Marble Chips Or Pea Gravel

Per square foot with landscape plastic barrier	\$6.50
Per Bag delivered (50 Lbs)	\$12.99
Existing Lot Clean Out, per square foot	\$6.50

Adjust existing coping: minimum \$100 charge or \$20 per foot.
Cost Item: Spot Joint \$50 in shop or \$75 each in cemetery

Add Blue Ridge Threshold with posts to a standard coping lot: \$635
Add \$135 for Name on Threshold.

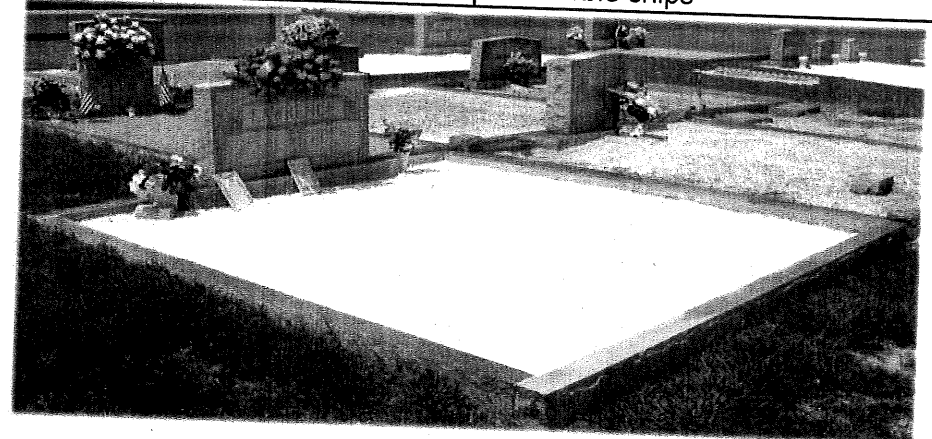


Side View

Threshold 36 x 8 x 4 with Posts 8x8x8

Quick Reference Coping Lot Examples

Single Grave \$1435	Double Grave \$2130
Coping Lot Size 5 ft. x 10 ft.	Coping Lot Size 10 ft. x 10 ft.
4 x 6 coping @ \$37 per foot 5 + 5 + 10 + 10 = 30 foot 30' x \$37 = \$1110 for coping	4 x 6 coping @ \$37 per foot 10 + 10 + 10 + 10 = 40 foot 40' x \$37 = \$1480 for coping
Marble Chips: 5' x 10' = 50 sq ft 50sq ft x \$6.50 = \$325 For marble chips	Marble Chips: 10' x 10' = 100 sq ft 100sq ft x \$6.50 = \$650 For marble chips

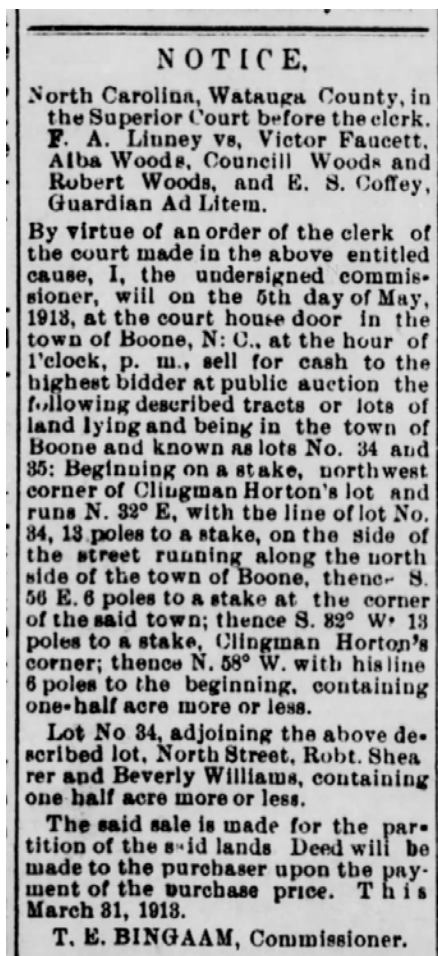


Coping will be installed as close to level as possible. Hillside lots may require additional landscaping charges. Call for pricing on hillside lots as well as measuring any coping lot.

North Street

North Street run in an east-west direction for two blocks between Water Street and Depot Street in Boone, NC.

North Street has been a named street in Boone for over 100 years. It is first referenced on page 2 of the Watauga Democrat on April 3, 1913 as part of land description in a legal notice posted by T.E. Bingham.



It appears on a plat of the Buena Vista subdivision files at the Watauga County Register of Deeds office on July 7, 1923. (Plat Book 1 page 4).

One assumes it was named North Street because it is the first street directly north of the major town arteries of King Street and Queen Street.

Mrs. Roberta Jackson, President of the Junaluska Heritage Association (personal communication, February 2, 2021) said that the portion of North Street found on the east side of Carolina Avenue, was known as Howard Street in the 1920s. She had not heard a good explanation for this or knew when it became North Street.

Depot Street

Available images of downtown Boone from 1885, 1907, 1915 do not show Depot Street. A dirt cart path that ran between the Critcher Hotel and the Yellow House Tavern on King Street to Back Street (Current Rivers Street) seems to be the basis for what became Depot Street in 1918-1919. The cart path was widened and improved to accommodate travelers and commercial enterprises using a new train depot built on the path's southwest corner in conjunction with the arrival of Boone's first regular train service, the East Tennessee and Western North Carolina Railroad (commonly known as Tweetsie). It can be assumed that the street was named Depot Street because of the new railroad built on the southside of the new street.

On August 4, 1919 the Boone Town Council voted to pay ½ the cost of numerous sidewalks in town (the other half to be paid by property owners whose property abutted the streets) including one from King Street to the train depot. The Watauga Democrat report of this decision did not call this section of new sidewalk Depot Street.

The first mention (I could find) of Depot Street in the Watauga Democrat was on March 20, 1919 in an article describing the erection of a new garage on the street.

The 1928 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map of Boone shows South Depot Street as described above and adds 2 blocks of North Depot Street. However, the northern end of the street is not shown, as the road seems to continue off the top of the map.

The 1947 Sanborn Maps 1 and 2 of Boone show portions of North and South Depot Street. These portions appear to be the same as the 1928 map and the current configuration of Depot Street.

The 1964 and 1974 "Points of Interest" maps of Boone show North and South Depot Streets are the same configuration as we have today in 2021.