

MITCHELL COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

REGULAR SESSION

MINUTES

FEBRUARY 7, 2005

NORTH CAROLINA

MITCHELL COUNTY

The Mitchell County Board of Commissioners met in Regular Session on February 7, 2005 at 6:00 p.m. in the Commissioners' Conference Room, Administration Building, Bakersville, NC. Those present for the meeting were Keith Masters, Chairman; Ken Hollifield, Vice-Chairman; Phil Byrd, Member; Mike Hensley, Member; Jim Saylor, Member; and Kathy Young, CMC to the Board. Also present were Mavis Parsley, Finance Officer; Nathan Hall, Reporter with the Mitchell-News Journal; Steve Murphy, Reporter with WTOE/WKYK; Graham Fields, Senator Dole's Office; Kathy Manship, Congressman McHenry's Office; Joe Brannock, Senator Burr's Office; Taylor Dellinger and H. Dewitt Blackwell, Western Piedmont Council of Governments; John Perry, Village of Penland; Shirley Hise, Mitchell County Chamber of Commerce; Van Phillips, Mitchell County EDC; Keith Holtsclaw, Chairman, Mitchell County EDC; Patti Jenson, Mitchell County Travel & Tourism; Brian Hyder, Ray Miller and Randy Miller from Country Cable Vision; Stephanie Wiseman, Communications Director; Jim Stamey, Maintenance Director; Brian Garland, Tax Collector; Bill Weeks, May Coalition; Blaine Biddix, Roger Wilson, Ralph Snyder, Fred Pitman, David Carpenter, Ed & Jana Reid, Hazel Yelton, Elena Street, Carl Braswell and Jean Saylor.

1. **CALL TO ORDER** – Chairman Masters called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.
2. **INVOCATION** – Commissioner Hollifield gave the invocation.
3. **ADDITIONS/CHANGES TO THE AGENDA** – Commissioner Byrd moved to add the appointment to the LME Board and to start discussion of possibility or probability of naming or looking for a temporary County Manager to the agenda. Commissioner Hollifield seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.
4. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES** – No action was taken on the January 3, 2005 minutes.
5. **ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION/DECISION**
 - A. **Economic Development Long and Short Term Goals** – The Board discussed their economic development goals for Mitchell County with the representatives from Congressman McHenry's Office; Senator Dole's Office and Senator Burr's Office.

Graham Fields from Senator Dole's Office told the Board they would do everything they could for Mitchell County in Economic Development

Programs or funding. He stated they would look out for Mitchell County. Mr. Fields welcomed any contact from the Board. Kathy Manship told the Board she would be contacting them to set up a time for Congressman McHenry personally to meet with them.

Joe Brannock stated Senator Burr appreciated the invitation and would welcome any contact the Board would like to have with him.

- B. Western Piedmont Labor Area Industry Growth Analysis** – Tyler Dellinger and H. Dewitt Blackwell from Western Piedmont Labor Area Industry Growth Analysis: Phase One and Phase Two Report to the Board. Mr. Dellinger informed the Board the phase that included Mitchell County would be ready by June or July.
- C. Charter Franchise Agreement Update** – John Howell provided the Board with an update on the Charter Franchise Agreement. The Board was given the opportunity to discuss any concerns they might have concerning the Charter Franchise.
- D. Sale of property located on Shootout Mountain** – Commissioner Byrd told the Board he and Commissioner Saylor had visited the property that Mitchell County owns on Shootout Mountain. He stated that he had contacted Tax Collector Garland concerning any additional property that the county might own in that area. Tax Collector Garland provided Commissioner Byrd with a list of additional property the county owns. Commissioner Byrd stated he had contacted County Attorney Hise regarding this matter.

County Attorney Hise informed the Board they could sell the property individually or collectively. He told the Board he had prepared a Notice of Sale of Real Estate for the Board to approve to sell all the property in that area.

Commissioner Saylor moved to approve the Notice of Sale of Real Estate (a copy is hereby attached and becomes a part of the minutes). Commissioner Hensley seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.

- E. Tier Rating** – Chairman Masters discussed Mitchell County's current Tier Rating with the Board. He asked all the Board to work on the Tier Rating as much as possible by contacting our Representatives and Senators.
- F. New Courthouse HVAC Issues** – Jim Stamey, Maintenance Director, discussed the current problems with the heating system at the new Courthouse. Maintenance Director Stamey is to do additional research on this issue and make a report to the Board at their next meeting.
- G. Health Department Issues** – Chairman Masters informed the Board there were some issues at the Health Department that the Board needed to address. He said the carpet needed to be replaced, the walls need to be painted and there is a drainage problem in front of the building.

Maintenance Director, Stamey told the Board there were 265 yards of carpet at the Health Department and it would take approximately \$4,700 to replace it and to put tile in the front lobby area. The Board asked Maintenance Director Stamey to verify the areas where the carpet needed to be replaced and to make a report to the Board at their next meeting.

Chairman Masters asked that Clerk to the Board Young contact County Manager Whitson regarding the drainage issue and make a report back to the Board.

H. Temporary County Manager – Chairman Masters

6. PUBLIC HEARINGS/MEETINGS

- A. 2005 Board of Equalization and Review** – Commissioner Hollifield moved to approve the week of April 11th through 15th as the dates for the Board of Equalization and Review. The Board will meet from 9:00 a.m. until 4:00 p.m. Monday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday. The Board will meet on Tuesday from 5:00 p.m. until 9:00 p.m. Commissioner Byrd seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.
- B. Secondary Road Hearing** – Commissioner Hensley moved to approve April 21st at 6:00 p.m. as the date and time for the Secondary Road Hearing. Commissioner Byrd seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.
- C. Planning Session** – Commissioner Hensley moved to approve March 4th as the date for the Planning Session. Commissioner Byrd seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.

Commissioners Hensley and Byrd are to work with Clerk to the Board Young on the agenda for the Planning Session.

- D. Discussion of Temporary County Manager** – Chairman Masters told the Board he felt it was necessary to discuss the possibility of naming a temporary county manager because there were so many things happening that it was mandatory to have someone on site in that position. He stated he felt a position of a Temporary County Manager needed to be created until Ryan is back from active duty. Chairman Masters said he did not feel that this would need to be a full time position.

By consensus the Board agreed to pursue the creation and naming of temporary county manager.

Chairman Masters asked County Attorney Hise if the position would have to be advertised. County Attorney Hise told the Board they would not have to advertise the position.

Chairman Masters informed the Board he had discuss this position with Philip Castro, who is retired from Baxters' with 33 years. Mr. Castro has managerial responsibilities for a long time. Chairman Masters told the Board that Mr. Castro is interested in this position. He said Mr. Castro has a Masters Degree from ETSU and is short a few hours from a PHD.

Commissioner Saylor asked Chairman Master if he would recommend Mr. Castro. Chairman Masters stated he would. Commissioner Hollifield asked if the Board could bring Mr. Castro in to meet with them.

Commissioner Saylor moved to appoint Phil Castro as Temporary County Manager upon the recommendation of Chairman Masters with the salary to be worked out. Commissioner Byrd stated there were a lot of unanswered questions concerning time and amount of pay before he could vote on the matter. Commissioner Hensley seconded the motion and it carried 3 to 2. Commissioner Byrd and Commissioner Hollifield opposed the motion. Commissioner Byrd stated he had a problem voting for someone he had never met personally or even spoken to. He said he trusted Chairman Masters, but there were a lot of unanswered questions concerning this issue. Commissioner Hollifield agreed with Commissioner Byrd and stated he would like to have the opportunity to meet him.

County Attorney Hise asked the Board to ensure the number of hours Mr. Castro worked would be less than the number of hours to be considered a full-time employee.

7. RESOLUTIONS/PROCLAMATIONS/ORDINANCES

- A. Resolution Supporting Medicaid Phase-Out for County Cost Share** – Commissioner Hollifield moved to adopt the Resolution Supporting Medicaid Phase-Out for County Cost Share (a copy is hereby attached and becomes a part of the minutes). Commissioner Hensley seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.

8. REPORTS/PRESENTATIONS

- A. Northwestern Regional Housing Authority** – Chairman Masters reviewed the report on the Northwestern Regional Housing Authority (a copy is hereby attached and becomes a part of the minutes) with the Board.

9. APPOINTMENTS

- A. Senior Tar Heel Legislature Delegate and Alternate** – Chairman Masters told the Board they needed to appoint an Alternate and Delegate to the Senior Tar Heel Legislature. Ken Carroll is currently serving as the Delegate and Clarence Tichenor is serving as the alternate.

Commissioner Hensley moved to appoint Hazel Yelton as the Delegate and Ken Carroll as the alternate. Commissioner Saylor seconded the motion and it carried unanimously. Commissioner Hensley requested that Ms. Yelton attend the Mitchell County Council on Aging meetings.

- B. Mitchell County Transportation Advisory Board** – Commissioner Saylor moved to appoint Stephanie Grice, Hazel Yelton and Deb Buchanan to the Mitchell County Transportation Advisory Board.

- C. EnergyXchange Board** – Commissioner Hensley moved to appoint Commissioner Hollifield and Commissioner Saylor to the EnergyXchange Board if their by-laws will allow. Commissioner Hollifield seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.

By consensus the Board agreed to request quarterly reports from Boards and Committees the Board members serve on.

- D. LME Board** – Commissioner Saylor moved to appoint Commissioner Hensley to the LME Board. Commissioner Byrd seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.

10. RELEASES/REFUNDS

- A. Releases/Refunds for Board Approval** – Commissioner Hollifield moved to approve the Releases/Refunds for Board Approval (a copy is hereby attached and becomes a part of the minutes). Commissioner Hensley seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.

- B. Releases/Refunds Approved by County Manager** – A copy of the Releases/Refunds for Approval by County Manager is hereby attached and becomes a part of the minutes.

11. COUNTY MANAGER'S REPORT

- A. Request from County Manager Whitson** – Chairman Masters reviewed the request from County Manager Whitson with the Board. Not action was taken on this item.
- B. EWP Project** – Clerk to the Board Young gave the Board an update on

the Emergency Watershed Protection Project.

12. **BOARD COMMENTS** - None

13. **CLOSED SESSION** - None

14. **CITIZEN & AUDIENCE COMMENTS**

A. **Matters on the Printed Agenda**

B. **Matters not on the Printed Agenda**

15. **ADJOURNMENT** – Commissioner Hollifield moved to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Byrd seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 8:50 p.m.

MITCHELL COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

Keith Masters, Chairman

Ken Hollifield, Vice-Chairman

Phil Byrd, Member

Mike Hensley, Member

Jim Saylor, Member

ATTEST:

Kathy Young, Clerk to the Board