

**PERSON COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

**JUNE 1, 2020**

**MEMBERS PRESENT**

**OTHERS PRESENT**

B. Ray Jeffers  
Jimmy B. Clayton  
Kyle W. Puryear  
Gordon Powell  
C. Derrick Sims

Heidi York, County Manager  
Brenda B. Reaves, Clerk to the Board  
C. Ronald Aycock, County Attorney

The Board of Commissioners for the County of Person, North Carolina, met in regular session on Monday, June 1, 2020 at 7:00pm in the Person County Office Building Auditorium.

Chairman Jeffers called the meeting to order. Vice Chairman Powell offered an invocation and Commissioner Puryear led the group in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. Ron Aycock attended and participated in the Board meeting via telephone conference call.

**DISCUSSION/ADJUSTMENT/APPROVAL OF AGENDA:**

A **motion** was made by Chairman Jeffers to add two items to the agenda: 1) Application for CARES Act funding for EDA economic resilience and recovery grant, and 2) a Closed Session related to the current Cyber Incident and to approve the agenda as adjusted; the motion **carried 5-0**.

**PUBLIC HEARING:**

**FISCAL YEAR 2020-2021 RECOMMENDED BUDGET:**

A **motion** was made by Vice Chairman Powell and **carried 5-0** to open the duly advertised public hearing for the Fiscal Year 2020-2021 Recommended Budget.

County Manager, Heidi York noted the Board was required to conduct its public hearing on the Manager's Recommended Budget to hear comments from citizens.

There were no individuals appearing before the Board to speak in favor of the Fiscal Year 2020-2021 Recommended Budget.

Speaking in opposition to the Manager's Recommended Budget was Mr. Jason Fletcher of 685 Clay Long Road, Hurdle Mills and Chief of the Timberlake Volunteer Fire Department (TVFD). Mr. Fletcher stated he had previously sent the Board of Commissioners and Ms. York a letter requesting an increase in funding for the TVFD. He noted that the TVFD had accomplished its number one goal to lower the ISO rating from a 9 to a 4 for the residents in the TVFD fire district which went into effect on this date. He further noted other goals were to purchase a tanker truck and to have a paid part-time firefighter at the station on Monday-Friday. Mr. Fletcher said the call volume

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was still high and they are continuing to replace aging equipment as well as purchasing up to date personal protective equipment for its members. Mr. Fletcher said the increased funding would be a reward for their hard work and as an incentive to other VFDs to work toward lowering their district ISO fire rating.

A **motion** was made by Chairman Jeffers and **carried 5-0** to close the public hearing for the Fiscal Year 2020-2021 Recommended Budget.

Vice Chairman Powell requested the County Manager bring back to the Board the proposed cuts in the budget to reduce the property tax rate by one penny. Ms. York stated she would bring proposed cuts to the Board's first budget work session.

Commissioner Clayton noted he realized a sizeable difference in his personal home insurance premium with the TVFD lowered ISO fire rating.

#### **INFORMAL COMMENTS:**

The following individual appeared before the Board to make informal comments:

Mr. John Seepe of 277 Barefoot Landing Lane, Semora, a new resident in Person County who wanted to introduce himself to the Board and to offer his availability to dialogue and participate as a friendly neighbor in the community.

#### **DISCUSSION/ADJUSTMENT/APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA:**

A **motion** was made by Vice Chairman Powell and **carried 5-0** to approve the Consent Agenda with the following items:

- A. Approval of Minutes of May 18, 2020,
- B. Budget Amendment #19, and
- C. Person County Juvenile Crime Prevention Council Funding Plan for Fiscal Year 2020-2021

#### **PERSON COUNTY'S UTILIZATION PLAN FOR THE STATE'S COVID-19 RELIEF FUND ALLOCATION:**

County Manager, Heidi York told the group the County received a letter dated May 7, 2020 from the State advising funding was available through the established Coronavirus Relief Fund under the CARES Act. Person County's allocation would be \$892,515 for eligible spending directly related to expenditures incurred for the COVID-19 pandemic between March 1, 2020 and December 31, 2020.

Ms. York stated Person County's Emergency Management Director, Douglas Young and Finance Director, Amy Wehrenberg led the effort with county and city departments to submit the required documents along with a utilization plan summary on how Person County proposed to use its share of funds to meet the State's deadline.

Ms. Wehrenberg stated that the State has not determined when the allocation will be made available to counties. She added that the State noted counties can choose to share their allotment with municipalities in their county for eligible costs; the City of Roxboro has submitted expenses however, Ms. Wehrenberg noted there was no formula recommended or proposed on how to share the allocation with municipalities. Ms. Wehrenberg further noted that quarterly reporting will begin on October 1, 2020, which is probable to be extended by the State.

All county departments and City representatives were informed to submit their list of items purchased or anticipated to purchase as defined under the eligibility guidance provided by State. Funds may not be used for damages covered by insurance, payroll or benefits for employees not substantially dedicated to responding to or mitigating the COVID-19 health emergency, or to reimburse for revenue losses.

Mr. Young noted the pandemic has been a unique situation with much confusion and as the State will continue to provide further guidance with deadlines being extended. He noted the relief funding will be for general use for the county as a whole as compared to traditional FEMA grants that are reimbursed based on expense.

#### **APPLICATION FOR CARES ACT FUNDING FOR AN EDA ECONOMIC RESILIENCE AND RECOVERY ACT:**

Economic Development Director, Sherry Wilborn presented a request to apply for an EDA grant funding available under the CARES Act. Ms. Wilborn stated guidance from the State EDA representative was to apply for construction related projects within the range of \$500,000 to \$3M.

Ms. Wilborn told the group that the continued site development at the Person County Mega Park was voted unanimously by the Economic Development Commission to bring to the Board of Commissioners to consider a local match of the public grant funds to extend wastewater lines to the Mega Park. In order to complete the funding components of the wastewater construction of lines, the cost was estimated at \$5M. The following step would include a lift station construction at an estimated \$10M costs.

Ms. Wilborn requested Board consideration to apply for \$3M grant funding with a local match of \$2M for a total project of \$5M to construct the wastewater lines. She added that the Board of Commissioners would also have to call for a public hearing prior to final authorization for the application. Should the Board have consensus to move ahead with this grant application, a public hearing could be duly advertised and conducted at the Board's regular scheduled meeting on June 15, 2020.

Ms. Wilborn noted that other possible funding sources in addition to the EDA grant funding may include RIA's Industrial Development Fund, underutilized funds that were pledged to the waterline construction, revenue realized through business and residents served by the new waterline.

Commissioner Sims asked the County Manager, Heidi York where would the County fund the \$2M local match to which Ms. York stated the County Fund Balance.

Commissioner Puryear voiced concerns committing to \$2M during these uncertain and unprecedented times.

Chairman Jeffers said the Board appoints individuals to the Economic Development Commission that fully supported this request to the Board to assist in bringing jobs to the county. He added that using Fund Balance was an appropriate one-time use spending toward bring jobs to the community.

A **motion** was made by Commissioner Clayton and **failed 2-3** to approve the request to apply for \$3M EDA grant funding with a local match of \$2M for a total project of \$5M to construct the wastewater lines to the Mega Park, as well as, call for a public hearing on June 15, 2020. Commissioner Clayton and Chairman Jeffers voted in support of the motion; Vice Chairman Powell and Commissioners Puryear and Sims voted in opposition to the motion.

#### **CHAIRMAN'S REPORT:**

Chairman Jeffers asked the County Manager to follow up with the complaint he had spoken to her about in the Timberlake area.

Chairman Jeffers stated he spoke with a property owner located on Hwy 49 with a well water issue; to connect onto the City waterline, the waterline construction would cross two roads costing up to \$500,000. County Manager, Heidi York stated she had spoken to the City Manager about this issue and he offered to have an engineering proposal prepared to outline the estimated costs. Chairman Jeffers said the property owner was going to speak with the Home Owner's Association about their interest of connecting to the city waterline.

#### **MANAGER'S REPORT:**

County Manager, Heidi York reported the Board's first budget work session would be held on June 4, 2020 starting at 10:00am in the County Office Building Auditorium; she asked the commissioners to let her know of any questions she can prepare for the meeting.

### **COMMISSIONER REPORT/COMMENTS:**

Vice Chairman Powell asked the Board to send a letter of support to congressional representatives for House Bill 1122 for broadband expansion. The Board asked the County Manager to draft a letter of support for the Chairman's signature.

There were no reports or comments from Commissioners Clayton, Sims and Puryear.

### **CLOSED SESSION #1:**

A **motion** was made by Commissioner Sims and **carried 5-0** to enter into Closed Session at 7:43pm per General Statutes 143-318.11(7) to plan, conduct or hear reports concerning investigations of alleged criminal misconduct and 143-318.11(9) to discuss and take action regarding plans to protect public safety as it relates to existing or potential terrorist activity and to receive briefings by staff members, legal counsel, or law enforcement or emergency service officials concerning actions taken or to be taken to respond to such activity. Permitted to attend the Closed Session were: County Manager, Heidi York, Clerk to the Board, Brenda Reaves, County Attorney, Ron Aycock via telephone conference, Emergency Management Director, Douglas Young, Information Technology Director, Chris Puryear, Finance Director, Amy Wehrenberg and Taskforce Public Information Officer, LeighAnn Creson.

The Closed Session was called to Order at 7:45pm.

A **motion** was made by Commissioner Puryear and **carried 5-0** to return to open session at 8:42pm.

A **motion** was made by Commissioner Puryear and **carried 5-0** for the Board Chairman to declare a state of an emergency related to the Cyber Incident, appropriate \$100,000 from Fund Balance to support county operations related to the Cyber Incident, and eliminate the requirement for two signatures on checks to a single signature of the Finance Director on a temporary basis.

**RECESS:**

A **motion** was made by Commissioner Puryear and **carried 5-0** to recess the meeting at 8:44pm until 10:00am on June 4, 2020 in the County Office Building Auditorium.

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Brenda B. Reaves  
Clerk to the Board

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B. Ray Jeffers  
Chairman

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