

PERSON COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
MEMBERS PRESENT

JUNE 6, 2022
OTHERS PRESENT

Gordon Powell
C. Derrick Sims
Kyle W. Puryear
Charlie Palmer
Patricia Gentry

Heidi York, County Manager
Brenda B. Reaves, Clerk to the Board
S. Ellis Hankins, County Attorney

The Board of Commissioners for the County of Person, North Carolina, met in regular session on Monday, June 6, 2022 at 7:00pm in the Person County Office Building Auditorium located at 304 S. Morgan Street, Roxboro, NC.

Chairman Powell called the meeting to order and offered an invocation remembering the many young men and women that died on this date in history, June 6, 1944. Commissioner Palmer led the group in the Pledge of Allegiance.

DISCUSSION/ADJUSTMENT/APPROVAL OF AGENDA:

A **motion** was made by Commissioner Puryear and **carried 5-0** to approve the agenda.

PUBLIC HEARING:

FY2022-2023 RECOMMENDED BUDGET:

A **motion** was made by Vice Chairman Sims and **carried 5-0** to open the duly advertised public hearing for the FY2022-2023 Recommended Budget.

Speaking in favor of the FY2022-2023 Recommended Budget were the following:

Mr. Jason Fletcher of 685 Clay Long Road, Hurdle Mills addressed the Board in his role as Fire Chief for the Timberlake Volunteer Fire Department as well as on behalf of the Fire Chief's Association to state his support of the fire district tax increase as recommended in the FY2022-2023 Recommended Budget.

Ms. Grayson Brann of 1254 Helena Moriah Road, Timberlake, a full-time college student and sibling to a handicap family member, requested the Board to make the Kirby Theatre handicap accessible.

Mr. Jimmy Clayton of 717 Berman Clayton Road, Timberlake spoke in favor of funding for the overdue handicap accessibility improvements at the Kirby Theatre. Mr. Clayton also stated support of the Volunteer Fire Departments and he also requested Board consideration to increase the hours or getting some assistance for the Veterans' Affairs Officer noting there was only one individual working 2.5 days per week.

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Speaking in opposition to the FY2022-2023 Recommended Budget were the following:

Ms. Cynthia Lynch of 395 Union Grove Church Road, Hurdle Mills stated the Recommended Budget was a reflection of the Board's priorities and plans for the future and posed questions about where are the plans to replace the revenue that may be lost with the potential closure of the power plants. Ms. Lynch noted the budget reflected the County's Fund Balance decreasing instead of increasing with the projected loss of revenues. She stated the budget showed expenditures increasing, particularly in EMS, PATS, Dept. of Social Services and in the County Attorney budget line.

A **motion** was made by Vice Chairman Sims and **carried 5-0** to close the public hearing for the FY2022-2023 Recommended Budget.

INFORMAL COMMENTS:

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

Ms. Zakiya James of 165 Fork Junction Road, Timberlake and a member of the County's Planning Board addressed the Board about the Planning Board's May 12, 2022 meeting at which time Commissioner Palmer disrupted the meeting in session with unacceptable behavior as well as allowing his dog to remain in the meeting room when asked repeatedly to remove the animal due to a staff member's allergy. Ms. James read excerpts from the Board's Code of Ethics and, ultimately she asked Commissioner Palmer to step down from his commissioner seat.

DISCUSSION/ADJUSTMENT/APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA:

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

- A. Approval of Minutes of April 18, 2022,
- B. Approval of Minutes of May 2, 2022,
- C. Approval of Minutes of May 3, 2022,
- D. Budget Amendment #20,
- E. Home and Community Care Block Grant for Older Adults Agreement for the Provision of County-Based Aging Services with the Kerr Tar Council of Governments,
- F. Home and Community Care Block Grant Funding 2022-2023, and
- G. Health Department Family Planning Program Fee Request

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UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

COMMISSIONER REPRESENTATIVE FOR BOTH THE UDO COMMITTEE AND JUVENILE CRIME PREVENTION COUNCIL:

Chairman Powell opened the floor for nominations from commissioners to serve on the UDO Committee.

Vice Chairman Sims self-nominated to serve on the UDO Committee. There were no further nominations. By acclamation, Vice Chairman Sims was appointed to serve on the UDO Committee unanimously.

Chairman Powell opened the floor for nominations from commissioners to serve as the commissioner representative on the Juvenile Crime Prevention Council (JCPC) noting Commissioner Palmer was assigned to this committee but he had requested to be replaced.

There were no volunteers to serve and therefore, Chairman Powell self-nominated to serve on the JCPC. By acclamation, Chairman Powell was assigned to serve as the commissioner representative on the JCPC unanimously.

NEW BUSINESS:

AGREEMENT FOR INTERIM COUNTY MANAGER SERVICES:

Chairman Powell presented an agreement for Interim County Manager Services for consideration for approval with Mr. Ralph Clark. The agreement outlines Mr. Clark to serve as a temporary part-time employee and will perform all duties and responsibilities in accordance with NC General Statute 153A-82 and other duties as assigned by the Board. Mr. Clark will work 30 hours per week and attend all official meetings of the Board. Mr. Clark serves at the pleasure of the Board until a permanent County Manager is appointed or this agreement is terminated. He will begin working the week of June 20th alongside of the current County Manager.

A **motion** was made by Vice Chairman Sims and **carried 5-0** to approve the Agreement for Interim County Manager Services with Mr. Ralph Clark, as presented.

CHILD ADVOCACY CENTER FOR PERSON COUNTY:

Chairman Powell stated a need for a child advocacy center as a central location that provides a safe, child-focused environment where child protective services, the District Attorney's Office, law enforcement, medical and mental health professionals, Juvenile Justice, child advocates, and other relevant community resources may share information and develop a coordinated strategy that seeks justice while also meeting the unique needs of each child and their non-offending family members. Person County community members who have been interested in starting a child advocacy center in Roxboro reached out to CrossRoads of Alamance to take on the project to establish this valuable community resource. Chairman Powell said a County investment of a one-time expense of \$100,000.00 in this community resource would enable CrossRoads to begin the work of establishing the center by staffing a local center in Person County. The estimated budget is likely to be 75% salaries, 14% Facilities (rent, utilities, etc.), and 11% Supplies, Travel, and Equipment. Estimated start-up expenditures will involve annual salary for a full-time advocate, percentages of existing staff salaries for time spent in serving Person County children and their families, phone service, internet service, mileage, rent, and necessary recording equipment lease for preserving forensic interviews of victims of abuse to be made available for potential prosecution.

Chairman Powell introduced Ronnie Dunevant, Executive Director of Roots and Wings in the audience who told the Board he and others were available to answer question. Mr. Dunevant stated a location has been identified; the center in Roxboro would be opened as soon as a location can be secured and made ready. It is anticipated that the center would be approved as a provisional center within a short period of time, making other funds available from the State. Eventually the center would be an accredited stand-alone center fully operated and supported by the well-established foundation of CrossRoads.

A **motion** was made by Commissioner Gentry and **carried 5-0** to approve the request for a one-time expense of \$100,000 to establish a Child Advocacy Center in Person County.

County Manager, Heidi York identified the funding source for the one-time expense through the County's Undesignated Contingency noting this appropriation would be on the Board's next regular scheduled meeting included in the Budget Amendment for Board approval.

County Attorney, Ellis Hankins noted a simple agreement for an appropriation with a non-county entity was in order.

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT:

Chairman Powell reported he and others attended the 2022 RTRP State of the Region in Raleigh noting it was a good program and opportunity to network and engage in regional partnerships.

MANAGER'S REPORT:

County Manager, Heidi York reminded the Board of its first budget work session scheduled for Tuesday, June 7, 2022 at 2:00pm in the Boardroom 215 with another budget work session scheduled for Thursday, June 9, 2022 at 10:00am.

COMMISSIONER REPORT/COMMENTS:

Vice Chairman Sims thanked everyone for coming to the Board meeting, making comments as it shows they care; he said the commissioners care too.

Commissioner Palmer said he would like to address the comments made about the Planning Board meeting. He said he was called to the Planning Board meeting because it was being held in the commissioners' boardroom, which was inadequate for the number of people in attendance. Commissioner Palmer said the Fire Marshal evacuated the people to the hallway as only 53 could remain in the boardroom. The overcrowded hallway was loud and contentious. Commissioner Palmer said he was out walking his dog and that he did not bring his dog intentionally. He said he would not resign from his commissioner seat.

Commissioner Gentry commented that the PATS department was looking for drivers.

Commissioner Puryear also thanked the public for attending the Board meeting.

RECESS:

A **motion** was made by Vice Chairman Sims and **carried 5-0** to recess the meeting at 7:38pm until June 7, 2022 at 2:00pm in the Commissioners' Boardroom 215.

Brenda B. Reaves
Clerk to the Board

Gordon Powell
Chairman