MINUTES – JUNE 1, 2020

The Caswell County Board of Commissioners met in regular session at 9:00 a.m. on Monday, June 1, 2020. The meeting was held electronically using Zoom Webinar software. Members present: Rick McVey, Chairman, David J. Owen, Vice Chairman, Sterling Carter, William E. Carter, Nathaniel Hall, Jeremiah Jefferies and Steve Oestreicher. Also present: Bryan Miller, County Manager, Brian Ferrell, County Attorney, and Debra Ferrell representing The Caswell Messenger. Paula P. Seamster, Clerk to the Board, recorded the minutes.

WELCOME

MOMENT OF SILENT PRAYER

Chairman McVey opened the meeting with a moment of Silent Prayer.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Board of Commissioners and all the guests in the attendance recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

(Commissioner W. Carter attended the meeting but was not able to be heard so all the votes during this meeting will not include Commissioner W. Carter as voting.)

PUBLIC COMMENTS

The Clerk to the Board read the public comments received via email.

“Rev. Bryon Shoffner, 150 Shoffners Loop Burlington NC. I would like to thank God and you all for this opportunity to speak this morning. I need to ask you all a couple of questions: 1) Do the Black Lives on Hughes Mill RD matter or do the black asphalt on the road have a stronger precedent? 2) Do the Black Lives on Hughes Mill Rd who worked hard for what they must do to create a legacy for the next generation matter or does the next paved highway legacy mean more? 3) Do fresh air, clean drinking water, peace of mind, home ownership matter to the Black Lives on Hughes Mill RD, yes it does and we ask for you all to continue to say no to the proposed Asphalt company so all Lives in the Anderson Community can live. 4) Let us the citizens on Hughes Mill RD enjoy the first three things God created: Air, Water and Sunshine in peace without a pollutant industry jeopardizing our lively hood.”

“Scott Oakley, 1425 Baynes Road, Burlington NC. In your April 6, 2000 letter to NC Department of Environmental Quality you stated “The Caswell County Board of County Commissioners issued A One Year Moratorium on Polluting Industry Development within Caswell County, North Carolina on 6 January 2020 in response to our resident’s fervent desire to prevent ongoing incursions of such polluting industries. This Moratorium gives us one year to develop and implement means to regulate future industrial development while preserving the rural, agricultural Environment of our County.” My request to the Board of Commissioners is to also write a letter to Carolina Sunrock to inform them that the one-year Moratorium applies to the “proposed” Anderson Asphalt/Concrete facility and Prospect Hill Quarry and Distribution Site. As I am sure you are aware, spokesmen for Carolina Sunrock made numerous public statements in the days leading up to and following the April 6 Moratorium in essence saying the Moratorium did not apply to their projects in Caswell County because they had vested rights. This is going to come to a head and the longer it is delayed the more complex this becomes. On a different topic related to Environmental Assessments and Environmental Impact Statements for the proposed facilities, Mr. Matthew Hoagland also received a letter from Morningstar Law Group dated April 2, 2020. In the letter Morningstar states “after and EA and EIS are prepared and submitted to the County, the County may hold a public hearing about them, but otherwise has no authority to take any action the basis of either an EA or an EIS. In short, the entire process is an ill-defined administrative formality.” My interpretation of the letter is that they recommend the County accept what was submitted to NCDEQ as a fulfillment of the EIS requirement. The County certainly does have the authority to take action per N.C. Gen. Stat. 153A-123(d) which states is gives the County the authority to “seek any appropriate equitable relieve that it deems necessary to ensure the health, safety and welfare of the citizens or the natural resources of the county”. The Lawyers’ Committee for Civil Rights under Law sent a letter to Mr. Bryan Miller on April 22, 2020 documenting this fact. Thus the County has authority to take action. In summary, you did the right thing by passing the Moratorium and please act immediately to extend the Moratorium which is justified by delays to the Planning Board activities related to COVID-19. It is my belief that the moratorium does apply, and this should be communicated to Carolina Sunrock. Furthermore, the County does have the authority to take action by 1) requiring detailed EIS’s for these facilities; 2) holding public hearing about the EIS; 3) Not issuing a FONSI which prevents the facilities to be permitted and built. This is in-line with the authority you are given to “ensure the health, safety and welfare of the citizens or the natural resources of the county”. The vagueness of Chapter 14 of the Code of Caswell should be used to the County’s advantage. On a different topic, I see much of the agenda today if related to COVID-19. Thank you for your efforts and the efforts of all the leaders in the County to manage the COVID-19 situation.”

RECOGNITIONS

Commissioner D. Owen stated “Mr. Chairman I have one and if the Board would allow me I would like to make a statement first and then do the recognition after and I am sure that though this is my personal statement I am sure that most on this Board if not all would agree with what I am about to say. I was greatly saddened and heartbroken and enraged liked millions of other Americans over the violent unnecessary death of George Floyd at the hands of those who were sworn to protect us. I felt like immediately after that event that Americans were so outraged we were on the cusp of possibly seeing some real change take place in America in relation to systemic racism. I hope and pray that the events of violence and destruction following his death will not hinder our determination as a nation to move forward and make sure all Americans regardless of color of their skin are seen as those made in the image of God, worthy of all respect and dignity, worthy of being heard, worthy of being a part of the solution. Being white I cannot understand the degree of systemic racism that my brothers and sisters of color have experienced or may be still experiencing, that the sound of their voice, the color of their skin, or even their name hinders them from being able to obtain that which our constitution guarantees all people. I make that statement because I want our citizens to know and I want to recognize that about 8 months ago our County Government became a process and they were taking the first steps towards addressing racial and equity. We have a committee team of 7 employees and 3 community members who attended and are attending a national training series hosted by the Government Alliance on Race and Equity. Caswell County is the only rural county in North Carolina to ever attend this training. The training takes place over a 10 month period with once a month sessions. Additionally the Caswell team of GARE has been meeting once or twice a month to discuss what they have learned and begin developing tools that they will use to evaluate new and existing policies to minimize racial inequity. I just wanted to recognize that team and the work that they have been doing. This involves community members as well as Caswell County Government and I hope that soon we will be through with this COVID-19 so a least it will relax enough for that process to continue as it’s a step that we need to make as far as local government to make sure that all of our policies and our strategies are in line with eliminating racism inequity. Thank you.”

Commissioner S. Carter stated “Mr. Chairman I have one also, I’d just like to recognize all the graduates of Bartlett Yancey High School this year, the Class of 2020. They’ve gone through a lot. They’ve had a very interesting year and will have a very interesting year upcoming, their different career path choices and education choices ad I would just like this Board to join me in honoring and recognizing them for their achievement of getting their high school education degree.”

Commissioner Oestreicher stated “I’d like to recognize Commissioner Owen for a very eloquent statement that he just made and I’d just like to state very clearly that I fully support all of the points and opinions he expressed in that statement very much.”

ACTION ITEMS

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Commissioner S. Carter moved, seconded by Commissioner Owen to approve the agenda. After a roll call vote, the motion carried unanimously. (Commissioners S. Carter, Jefferies, McVey, Oestreicher, and Owen voted in favor.)

APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA

Commissioner Owen moved, seconded by Commissioner S. Carter to approve the consent agenda. After a roll call vote, the motion carried unanimously. (Commissioners S. Carter, Hall, Jefferies, McVey, Oestreicher, and Owen voted in favor.)

The following item was included on the Consent Agenda:

A. Approval of Minutes of May 18, 2020 Regular Meeting

PROJECT CEAD INTERLOCAL AGREEMENT

Mr. Miller stated that CEAD is the future of Piedmont Community College’s Agribusiness and Technology program and the interlocal agreement transfers approximately 75.8 acres from Caswell County to Piedmont Community College. He added that this property acts as a match for the $1.4 million NC Connect Bond Fund that the college needs to start to draw down the funds to begin the process. Mr. Miller stated that Dr. Pamela Senegal, President of Piedmont Community College is in the meeting today. He added that the interlocal agreement has been reviewed by both the County attorney and by PCC’s attorney and both are agreeable with the terms and conditions in the interlocal agreement.

Dr. Pamela Senegal stated that the college is over the moon that it is this close to moving the project forward. She added that hopefully within the next 2 weeks to make announcement about another funding source for this project. Dr. Senegal stated that she thinks the timing is even better knowing that many of the community have been impacted by virus and this project will serve as an economic boost for the region. She added that she would be happy to answer any questions the Board may have.

Chairman McVey asked if anyone had any questions.

Commissioner S. Carter asked “I have one Mr. Chairman, curiosity, I don’t know if this standard with similar agreements but the reversion by 2023, is that a standard timeline for projects like this or is that special to this?” Mr. Miller responded that it is special to this but there are reversion clauses in contract agreements like this. He added that the date 2023 just sets out a deadline so if there is no action the county can retake the property. Commissioner S. Carter continued “Action of?” Mr. Miller responded that it would be action of beginning the project. Commissioner S. Carter asked “So we are not really setting ourselves up for doing that because we are expecting…” Mr. Miller responded that yes he is expecting the project to be well on the way by 2023. Dr. Senegal responded that this was exactly right. Commissioner S. Carter continued “I was just curious.” Dr. Senegal stated that they have no intentions of just sitting on this project once the agreement is in place because the college wants to see this project happen. Commissioner S. Carter continued “Absolutely.”

Commissioner Owen moved, seconded by Commissioner S. Carter to approve the Project CEAD Interlocal Agreement. After a roll call vote, the motion carried unanimously. (Commissioners S. Carter, Hall, Jefferies, McVey, Oestreicher, and Owen voted in favor.)

Dr. Senegal thanked the Board.

PROJECT CEAD ENVIRONMENTAL PHASE 1 MINI BROOKS EXEMPTION

Mr. Miller stated that the Mini Brooks Act is an act that requires counties in North Carolina to send out Request for Qualifications (RFQ) instead of Request for Proposals (RFP) where price is considered and RFQs are for qualifications rather than price. He stated that the Mini Brooks Act has a clause in it where local governments can exempt themselves from projects where the professional services are less than $50,000. Mr. Miller stated that Project CEAD required an environmental phase 1 plus an EDA assessment and this is expected to come in at less than $10,000 so he asked the Board to exempt this Phase 1 environmental phase and EDA assessment from the Mini Brooks Act.

Commissioner S. Carter asked “You know me, historical and archaeological study is that exempt also?” Mr. Miller responded no and added that the county still has to go through the process and the assessment as well as phase 1 environmental completed. He added that this will allow the county to contract with a service provider directly rather than having to go through a RFQ process and consider qualifications.

Commissioner Oestreicher moved, seconded by Commissioner Hall to approve the Mini Brooks exemption for the Phase 1 Environmental and EDA assessment. After a roll call vote, the motion carried unanimously. (Commissioners S. Carter, Hall, Jefferies, McVey, Oestreicher, and Owen voted in favor.)

SPENDING PLAN – COVID-19

Mr. Miller informed the Board that included in the agenda packet is a printout of the COVID-19 Spending Plan for the CARES Act and the total amount proposed in the plan is $617,775 which is Caswell County’s allocation. He added that the Plan has to be presented to the State by June 1st and the money has to be expended by December 30th. Mr. Miller stated that this plan has been reviewed by the Emergency Management Director Barry Lynch and Health Director Jennifer Eastwood. He asked the Board to approve the Spending Plan.

Commissioner Hall stated he had submitted some items for discussion but after reviewing the agenda packet he believed that Items 17 and 18 could be discussed at this time to see if there are any comments from the county manager. Chairman McVey responded that this would be fine.

Commissioner Jefferies stated that the Department of Social Services has people that go out into the field just like EMS and he thought these individuals should be added to this plan as well. He asked if the people that are handing out food to the children should be included in this as well. Mr. Miller responded that part of the guidance provided by the State when speaking of hazard pay or incentive pay; the State indicates that it is an allowable expense if the employee is substantially dedicated to mitigating or responding to COVID-19 or public health employees, or public safety employees. He added that DSS is not included in either of these groups so they would not be covered by the CARES Act money. Mr. Miller stated that DSS and other County departments are not eligible to be covered by the CARES Act money. He added that as far as the school lunch program those individuals are being paid time and half for doing this currently so they are already receiving an incentive for handing out meals. Mr. Miller stated that the County does not oversee or fund the school lunch program but this would not be eligible for the CARES Act money either.

Commissioner Owen stated that he had a conversation with Bryan and he had looked at the legislation; all of the money will be reimbursed through the CARES Act. He added that the Board could take a chance and add these employees in and hope the money would be reimbursed but if it is not reimbursed it would have to come out of county funds to pay these employees. Commissioner Owen stated that he did not know how many employees Ms. Moorefield is talking about at DSS but this is the only option. Commissioner Jefferies responded that he wanted everyone to be treated the same way and since the DSS workers were going out in the field and taking the same chance of getting the virus.

Mr. Miller stated that he thought the State provided the guidance they provided is because for both the EMS and Health Department workers are going to see people who are suspected of being positive for COVID-19 and he thought this was the reason the State made the distinction. Commissioner Jefferies responded okay.

Chairman McVey asked Commissioner Hall to discuss his items.

Commissioner Hall stated that he had included a few items on the agenda for discussion but specifically Items 17 and 18 and added that it might be appropriate for the county manager to respond to these as it relates to the COVID-19 Spending Plan. Mr. Miller stated that Item 17. Decontamination Site for Ambulances, CATS vans, Sheriff’s cars, etc. currently the ambulances are being treated on a daily basis using a variety of products and this has been the practice in the past as well on a daily basis. Commissioner Hall stated that there may come a time when the ambulances have to be decontaminated after every use because if someone is positive for COVID-19 the ambulance cannot wait until the end of the day to be decontaminated. Mr. Miller responded that this is correct and is being done now.

Commissioner Owen asked if the ambulances were being decontaminated after each use.

Mr. Miller stated that the Emergency Service Director is presented at the Emergency Operations Center and asked him to come to the front of the room to explain this. Mr. Miller stated that the CATS vans and vehicles are being decontaminated after every trip, all hard surfaces are being wiped down by the same chemicals EMS is using.

Mr. Barry Lynch, Emergency Services Director, stated that every morning every ambulance is sprayed with a hydrostatic sprayer/fogger inside the cab of the truck and the back of the truck. He added that after every call the stretcher and hard surfaces in the back are wiped down with wipes. Mr. Lynch stated that if they have a confirmed COVID patient or someone that has potential symptoms then the truck is taken out of service until it is decontaminated. He added that EMS on several occasions has treated and fogged the CATS vans.

Commissioner Hall stated that this answered part of his question. He wanted to make sure that it is understood the difference between cleaning and decontamination. Mr. Miller responded that Commissioner Hall was correct in addressing these items with the Spending Plan. He added that 5 additional decontamination units have been ordered that are portable and can be used throughout the county.

Mr. Miller stated Item 18. Supplemental Air Purification Systems for Health Department, Courtroom, DSS, Jail, etc. and added that this is something that he had the Maintenance Director to start checking on early in the COVID-19 process. He stated they were looking into air filters and purification systems for the air ducts and currently the only thing that is available to sanitize the air is ultra violet light however the amount of UV light that would be needed to kill COVID-19 is too much and there are no air filters available now to filter to the air. Mr. Miller stated that the Maintenance Director is staying abreast with all the industry news and he provided Mr. Miller with some links that he was happy to share with the Board. He added that the Maintenance Director has followed up with his suppliers and they have told him that the products just are not available. Mr. Miller stated that this is one of the reasons that he thought it was so important that all citizens continue with the 3 W: wear a mask, wash hands, and wait 6 feet apart and these are the most important things that can be done right now.

Mr. Miller asked Commissioner Hall if he wanted to talk about Items 16 and 19. Commissioner Hall responded that these could be discussed if they were related to the spending plan but he did not have a preference. Mr. Miller stated Item 16. Maintenance 2nd Shift to Clean and Decontaminate Health Department, Courtroom, DSS, Library, etc., this money is one time shot in the arm for county governments to address issues with COVID-19 and is not reoccurring so the county has chosen to not include reoccurring expenses for additional positions. Commissioner Hall responded that his point for putting this on the agenda was because at some point especially in the Health Department, DSS, and Courtroom the county may need to consider a second shift and cut back on first shift because decontamination cannot happen with employees in the building. Mr. Miller stated that this could be looked into. He added that he had asked the Maintenance Director to formulate a daily, weekly and monthly cleaning plan because certain departments have requested certain cleaning plans so the county is trying to follow those directives.

Commissioner S. Carter stated “Mr. Chairman I have one more comment in relation to this spending plan, why could we not allocate some funds to do multiple deep cleanings of let’s say for instance the Health Department because that’s the most critical I would think. We’ve talked in the past about contracting out for a cleaning service for like medical grade cleaning that our maintenance staff is incapable of doing. That’s what concerns me when we have a chance to have funds like this, could we not take advantage of that for the next 2 to 3 years maybe depending on how much they contract services per cleaning.” Mr. Miller responded that the funding has to be spent by December 30th of this year and if all of the money is not spent it is reverted back to the State. Commissioner S. Carter stated “Got it.” Mr. Miller added that there is nothing to say that this could be done one time. Commissioner S. Carter continued “Or more than once.” Mr. Miller responded that the categories in the spending plan are not set in stone; it is just the county’s plan moving forward. He added that the plan could be refined and amended and he expected for some of this to occur. Mr. Miller stated that this is the plan that has to be sent to the State by today.

Commissioner Hall stated regarding Commissioner S. Carter’s comments he was not personally in support of contracting this cleaning and decontamination out. He added that this is the time to get the proper training to clean and decontaminate locally. Commissioner Hall stated that when a service is contracted out certain credentials are purchased but when the contract ends those credentials are lost. He stated that staff needed to be trained property cleaning and decontamination processes because he thought that COVID-19 would be around for a while so the county needed to think ahead.

Commissioner Owen stated that in the proposal under Public Health Expenses there is a phrase ‘expenses for disinfection of public areas and other facilities’ and added that it says nursing facilities and this should include the county’s areas as well. He stated that this should allow for the county to do the cleaning or to have a second shift.

Mr. Miller reiterated that there are 5 portable devices included in the plan to go around to areas that are high touch areas and have rooms decontaminated. He added that the Emergency Director Mr. Lynch has done this several times for several different facilities already.

Commissioner Owen asked Mr. Lynch how quickly after fogging could a person go back into that area. Mr. Lynch responded immediately.

Chairman McVey stated that Commissioner S. Carter had a few questions.

Commissioner S. Carter stated “I am going to add to that now. To respond to Mr. Hall I am in full favor of having a full time position at the Health Department, I’ve said that years ago, I was just going along with where we were in our last discussion about contracting out. I understand that these are not reoccurring funds but it is what it is but I am just hoping that we can do something with that. The fogging Mr. Lynch, is that equal to medical grade cleaning of a facility? If you went into a hospital and they said we want this thing deep cleaned that fogging would suffice?” Mr. Lynch responded “Yes it would.” Commissioner S. Carter continued “Completely?” Mr. Lynch responded “Yes.” Commissioner S. Carter stated “Well that’s great that we have those. Maybe we can get more than just 5 then. But I’m hoping that we can take advantage of deep cleaning our facilities and our buildings with this in some manner and do it more than once I would hope especially with the whole second wave potentially coming in the future. And then just a general question, these phrases in this where did this come from?” Mr. Miller responded “The State.” Commissioner S. Carter asked “So you can select what you wanted to include?” Mr. Miller responded “This is the template that the State sent out for the plan.” Commissioner S. Carter continued “Right. It can be tweaked at any time you said?” Mr. Miller responded “Well not tweaked; it can be amended.” Commissioner S. Carter continued “Sure.” Mr. Miller responded “The amounts can be amended.” Commissioner S. Carter continued “To say what it is actually going for.” Mr. Miller responded “But your expenses have to relate to one of these categories.” Commissioner S. Carter asked “So did they regulate how much had to be in each category?” Mr. Miller responded “No.” Commissioner S. Carter continued “Okay; y’all decided.” Mr. Miller responded “That’s right” Commissioner S. Carter continued “Okay.” Mr. Miller responded “And that can be amended as we go through it.” Commissioner S. Carter continued “Okay. And the last question, the payroll, I know we’ve already done some of that deciding what’s the remainder here?” Mr. Miller responded “So there’s specific payroll amounts that can be included for EMS employees that are substantially dedicated, for Health Department employees that are substantially dedicated, so for those salaries we can use this to supplant for those salaries but just for specific units of salary.” Commissioner S. Carter continued “But didn’t we already allocate some portion of that already and decided what we were doing with it? I was just wondering what the remainder of it is?” Mr. Miller responded “Well that’s what it is so for instance EMS when this began put together a unit which was one person in a car that could respond to COVID-19 calls and assess the situation before the rest of the team got there and became contaminated so that portion of the salary, that overtime portion for that one individual would be considered an allowable expense because it was directly related to COVID-19 expenses. And that totals what Mr. Lynch $40,000 to date?” Mr. Lynch stated “Roughly.” Mr. Miller continued “Okay.”

Commissioner Oestreicher stated that he had one observation and one question. He stated that the COVID-19 contamination on surfaces is now much lower than originally thought and the virus does not live forever on a surface but has a shelf life so he questions the need for random or periodic cleanings. Commissioner Oestreicher then asked if the fogger devices were being purchased or rented because he thought the purchase of these devices would make more sense than renting them. He added that buying these devices would be a good use for this money because there are other viruses out there and they are saying the second wave may occur next year and it would be good to have these devices on hand for this pandemic and other flu seasons, etc. Chairman McVey responded that it is his understanding that these devices are being purchased. Mr. Miller added that the money allocated in the spending plan is for purchase of these devices. Commissioner Oestreicher stated that this was good news and recommending that the county get more of those devices.

Chairman McVey asked if there were any more question.

Commissioner S. Carter stated “Just a follow up on that topic. When I mean multiple cleanings Commissioner Oestreicher, we’ve only done one deep clean of the Health Department in the last…when was the last time we did it?” Mr. Miller responded “Year and a half ago.” Commissioner S. Carter continued “Okay, that’s not good and we’ve had that conversation before in the past that a health department needs to be cleaned more often than a year and a half ago when it comes to medical grade cleaning so I’m talking about that more so than the decontamination aspect of it and likewise that is why I asked Mr. Lynch if the foggers sufficed for deep cleaning and they do so great we have those, we are going to purchase those and we are going to use them in the future so that is just how I was trying to tie all of that together but we do need to think about other than COVID-19 having a facility like that the public comes in on a daily basis needs to be cleaned semi-frequently as a medical facility.” Mr. Miller responded “And it is cleaned on a daily basis, it’s cleaned.” Commissioner S. Carter continued “Not that way.” Mr. Miller responded “I don’t want to put the perception out the public that our health department is not being cleaned…” Commissioner S. Carter continued “Right.” Mr. Miller continued “Because it is. It is cleaned on a daily basis and I think our cleaning crews do a good job of cleaning. You do have a point on medical grade deep cleaning but the health department is cleaned on a daily basis.”

Commissioner Owen stated that he would hope that if the health department deems this necessary they would put this in their budget every year and then the Board can make that decision. He asked the county manager if this spending plan was discussed with the municipalities. Mr. Miller responded that the county has had some conversations with the municipalities about the money. He added that one of the requirements for a municipality to participate in the distribution is the counties are held responsible for the municipalities participation so the county still has to oversee all the spending to make sure they are allowable expenses. Mr. Miller stated that given the fact of what is included in the spending plans: personal protective equipment, health department services, EMS department services, and the other allowable services in the plan and the reason the municipalities are not included in the plan is the county provides those service for the municipalities. He added that the county provided the Town of Yanceyville hand sanitizer and will continued to do that as well as for the Town of Milton if requested. Mr. Miller stated that seeing how the County is responsible for the ultimate spending, the plan, and the reimbursement to the State if something goes wrong, it is his thought the county oversight from the health director and emergency management director to oversee the spending and let the finance department cut the checks. Commissioner Owen stated that he agreed 100% but he wanted to make sure that there were conversations with the municipalities and they understand what the county is doing.

Commissioner S. Carter asked “Are they not receiving federal dollars separately as political subdivisions? Like Wake County for example, the county is getting all of this and they are having to work with all of their towns?” Mr. Miller responded “I think each county is unique in how they go about doing this.” Commissioner S. Carter continued “Right.” Mr. Miller responded “Some counties are sharing. You know if a county is getting $5 million it may be hard for the county to spend that money.” Commissioner S. Carter responded “Right.” Mr. Miller responded “Where is wouldn’t be hard for a large municipality located in that county to spend that money at all so it may make in certain instances it would probably make more sense for the municipalities to spend the money rather than the county. In our situation it is probably not.”

Commissioner Hall stated that one of the other things that occurred in the CARES Act money was exceptions were made for large municipalities such as those in Wake and Mecklenburg Counties so the municipalities are getting money directly from the federal government.

Commissioner S. Carter moved, seconded by Commissioner Jefferies to approve the Spending Plan for COVID-19. After a roll call vote, the motion carried unanimously. (Commissioners S. Carter, Hall, Jefferies, McVey, Oestreicher, and Owen voted in favor.)

HAZARD INCENTIVE PAY FOR HEALTH DEPARTMENT AND EMS DEPARTMENT

Mr. Miller stated that this item was submitted to the Board at it last meeting and is being resubmitted today. He stated that this would allow the health department employees and the EMS employees to receive hazard incentive pay through the CARES Act money as authorized in the legislation. Mr. Miller stated that he explained at the last meeting that was being done in other institutions in the county such as the school system is paying those giving out lunches time and half. He added that other medical facilities in the county have received bonuses for working through COVID-19. Mr. Miller stated that this pay does include the school nurses because the school nurses are under the County’s supervision during COVID-19. He stated that the total amount of this hazard incentive pay is $67,500 to be given to EMS employees and health department employees which includes the 4 school nurses.

Commissioner S. Carter asked “Just a clarification this is back to my earlier question, that number right there comes out of the $160,000?” Mr. Miller responded “That is correct.” Commissioner S. Carter continued “Gotcha.”

Commissioner Hall asked if the first responders especially the first responders of the volunteer fire departments were going to get any of this money. Mr. Miller responded that these individuals could not get any hazard incentive pay. Commissioner Hall asked if anything could be done for the first responders. Mr. Miller responded that this is not an eligible expense with the CARES Act money the county will receive.

Commissioner S. Carter asked “Because they are not employees?” Mr. Miller responded that they are not employees and guidelines were set out early in the process that first responders of the fire departments were not to respond to COVID-19 incidents; only EMS responds to those.

Commissioner Hall stated that in his community first responders responded to anything and everything and they don’t know who has COVID-19. He added that he did not know how anyone would know in advance if a household has been impacted or affected by COVID-19. Chairman McVey responded that 911 does a screening when a call comes in and if there is a chance of the virus being at the residence or wherever the first responders are not paged out. Commissioner Hall stated okay.

Commissioner S. Carter moved, seconded by Commissioner Owen to approve the hazard incentive pay for the health department employees and EMS employees. After a roll call vote, the motion carried unanimously. (Commissioners S. Carter, Hall, Jefferies, McVey, Oestreicher, and Owen voted in favor.)

RESOLUTION FOR COVID-19

Mr. Miller stated that the Board directed him to work with the health director to put together a resolution for COVID-19 to include recommendations that all residents wear face masks and the resolution is included in the agenda packet today.

Commissioner S. Carter stated “Mr. Chairman just a recommendation that the resolution be titled. I don’t know if you just want to call it COVID-19 Response Resolution or something to that affect.” Mr. Miller responded “We can certainly do that.” Commissioner S. Carter continued “Does that sound alright?” Chairman McVey responded “That is fine with me. Is that okay with everybody?” Commissioner S. Carter stated “I think it followed our directive very well, you know, compared to the letter we received from the Health Department. This just sums it all up.” Commissioner McVey responded “Well it’s recommending that you wear one, it is not saying…” Commissioner S. Carter continued “Right, right but I am just saying the language it’s to the point.”

Chairman McVey asked if there were any more questions.

Commissioner Owen stated that he really wished it had been included in the resolution that just wearing a face mask or covering is not sufficient but that the mask or covering should fit properly and worn correctly. He stated that he was good with the resolution and he understood that other things would be address in the education of this virus but the combination of wearing some type of face covering, spacing of 6 feet apart and washing of hands are just as important in that process. Commissioner Owen stated that he did not have a problem with passing the resolution but he wanted to make sure that in the educational part that these other things are emphasized as well.

Commissioner S. Carter stated “Mr. Chairman I don’t think it would be a problem for us to add a sentence at the end of this, we can go ahead and do that.” Commissioner Owen stated “If we can go ahead and do it and pass it today I am fine with it. I don’t want to delay it any further.” Commissioner S. Carter continued “Like whereas in addition to face coverings, social distancing, and washing of hands is also highly recommended by the County as it has been in the past, yada, yada.” Mr. Miller responded “We can certainly do that.” Commissioner Owen stated “If that would be agreeable to the rest of the Board members.” Commissioner S. Carter responded “Yeah, you might want to do that.”

Commissioner Oestreicher stated “I couldn’t possibly endorse anymore than what Commissioner Owen just said. That has been an issue for me on this whole thing is that wearing a face mask with it down below your nose or above your mouth is it’s reckless, it’s almost worse than not wearing it and I think it’s extremely important that that be added to this resolution along with the hand washing and the social distancing. You know, not’s just focus on face masks. So if we could add those items in here I think it would become a much more effective resolution.” Chairman McVey responded “Alright.”

Commissioner Owen moved, seconded by Commissioner S. Carter to approve the resolution for COVID-19 as amended.

Commissioner Oestreicher asked if the Board could take 3 minutes to add those things to the resolution. Chairman McVey responded that Mr. Miller is already added those things to the resolution. Commissioner Oestreicher stated that he would like to hear what the resolution would sound like with them added. Mr. Miller responded that he was writing notes on what was needed to be added to the resolution.

Mr. Miller stated “Now, therefore be it resolved that the Caswell County Board of Commissioners hereby recommends that all residents and persons working or doing business in Caswell County wear face coverings properly (that cover the nose and mouth) as well as wait 6 feet apart and wash your hands thoroughly for 20 seconds with soap and water after contact with other individuals as recommended by Governor Cooper in Executive Order 141.” Commissioner Oestreicher responded “Thank you very much and I am sorry to be picky about it.”

After a roll call vote on the motion, the motion carried unanimously. (Commissioners S. Carter, Hall, Jefferies, McVey, Oestreicher, and Owen voted in favor.)

**COVID-19 Response resolution**

**WHEREAS,** the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommend the use of simple cloth face coverings to slow the spread of the COVID-19 coronavirus and to help prevent people who may unknowingly have the virus from transmitting it to others; and

**WHEREAS,** the North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services “recommends that all North Carolinians wear cloth face coverings when outside of the home to help slow the spread of COVID-19;” and

**WHEREAS,** Governor Roy Cooper has issued the following instructions in executive order 141 regarding COVID-19: “people in North Carolina are encouraged to use a cloth face covering to reduce the spread of COVID-19, but some populations may experience increased anxiety and fear of bias and being profiled if wearing face coverings in public spaces;” and

**WHEREAS,** COVID-19 remains a health hazard to residents of Caswell County and a significant threat to vulnerable populations; and

**WHEREAS,** wearing a face covering is an important act we can do in an effort to protect others from an infection that we may not even know we have.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that the Caswell County Board of County Commissioners hereby recommends that all residents and persons working or doing business in Caswell County wear face coverings properly (that cover the nose and mouth) as well as wait 6 feet apart and wash your hands thoroughly for 20 seconds with soap and water after contact with other individuals as recommended by Governor Cooper in Executive Order 141.

This the 1st day of June, 2020.

S/Rick McVey\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Rick McVey, Chairman

Caswell County Board of Commissioners

Attest:

S/Paula P. Seamster\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Paula P. Seamster

Clerk to the Board

RESOLUTION HONORING THE LIFE AND SERVICE OF

MS. HARRIET DUFF BRANDON

Commissioner S. Carter stated “If you all will allow me I would like to read the resolution:

**A RESOLUTION**

**HONORING THE LIFE AND SERVICE OF**

**HARRIET DUFF BRANDON**

**WHEREAS,** Harriet Duff Brandon was born on February 27th, 1935 in Winchester, Virginia to the late Harold and Mabel Duff, and passed away on May 6th, 2020; and

**WHEREAS,** Harriet was the devoted wife of the late Dudley Brandon for 30 years, and the loving mother of Jim Moorefield, Duff Brandon, and Smith Brandon; and

**WHEREAS,** Harriet devoted her professional career to education, teaching elementary school and as a Home Economics and Family Living teacher; and

**WHEREAS,** Harriet gave her heart and soul to the Town of Milton and the surrounding community by preserving its history, serving its people, and fostering its growth; and

**WHEREAS,** Harriet was described as a pillar of the Milton Presbyterian Church, where she served as organist, Sunday School teacher and provided many beautiful floral arrangements for its sanctuary over the years; and

**WHEREAS,** Harriet gave service to the Historic Thomas Day House/Union Tavern for many years, where she served as a Board Member, Past President and was presently serving as Vice President; and

WHEREAS, Harriet gave many years of service as a Town Commissioner and from 2011 until 2015, served one term as Mayor of Milton. Through her passionate and selfless service, Harriet willingly gave of her time, resources, guidance, wisdom, and knowledge to serving the town that she loved so dearly.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED,** that wethe Caswell County Board of County Commissioners do hereby honor the life and service of Harriet Duff Brandon and as representatives of the citizens of Caswell County, offer our affectionate support and sincere condolences to her family at this time.

Adopted, this the first day of June, 2020.”

S/Rick McVey \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ S/David Owen\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Rick McVey, Chairman David Owen, Vice-Chairman

S/Jeremiah Jefferies \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ S/Nathaniel Hall \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Jeremiah Jefferies Nathaniel Hall

S/William Carter\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ S/Sterling Carter\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

William Carter Sterling Carter

S/Steve Oestreicher\_\_\_

Steve Oestreicher

Commissioner S. Carter moved, seconded by Commissioner Owen to approve the resolution honoring the life and service of Harriet Duff Brandon. After a roll call vote, the motion carried unanimously. (Commissioners S. Carter, Hall, Jefferies, McVey, Oestreicher, and Owen voted in favor.)

Commissioner S. Carter asked “Mr. Chairman, Ms. Seamster do we have that available or do we need to come up there to sign it or?” Mr. Miller responded “I have it.” Commissioner S. Carter continued “You have it. I guess we will get the names when we can?” Mr. Miller responded “Yes.”

RECESS

The Board took a brief recess.

COVID-19 UPDATE

Mr. Miller stated that based on the amount of testing that has occurred the county expects the positive numbers to increase over the next week. He added that the county is continuing to work with the Public Awareness Campaign as well as with being able to provide certain safety items to low income and historically marginalized populations. Mr. Miller stated that Caswell County has some great partners but specifically the Caswell Family Medical Center, the Health Department, Caswell County Local Government, Community Foundation, Danville Regional Foundation, Danville, VA, and Pittsylvania County, VA. He extended his gratitude to all of these organizations for their continued work.

Commissioner Owen stated that all the offenders have been tested at the correctional facility but he wanted to know if all the employees had been tested. Mr. Miller responded that he did not know but the employees had the option to be tested. Commissioner Owen stated that 420 offenders in the correctional facility were tested and 21 positive but he did not know if all the results were back. He added that of the 39 citizens of Caswell that have tested positive 15 have recovered and that is good to know. Commissioner Owen stated that he would like to know how many of those that were exposed at work were outside the county and outside of the correctional facility so the county will know where the infections are. He added that he is only aware of 2 community spreads according to the data by the Health Department.

BUDGET PRESENTATION FOR FY 2020-2021

Mr. Miller stated “Commissioners, In compliance with NCGS 159-8 through NCGS 159-13 and in accordance with the Local Government Budget and Fiscal Control Act (LGBFCA) the Fiscal Year 2020-2021 budget and Budget Message are presented this evening. (The Budget is being delivered to the Board today during the meeting.) A copy of the budget and budget message will be filed in the office of the clerk to the board, where it will remain for public inspection until the governing board adopts the budget ordinance. The clerk will publish a statement that the proposed budget has been submitted to the governing board and is available for public inspection. The clerk will also make a copy of the proposed budget available to all news media in the county. The Caswell County Board of Commissioners will hold a Public Hearing concerning the budget during the second regularly scheduled meeting in June (June 15, 2020). This interim period affords citizens time to review the proposed budget and voice their opinions or objections to governing board members. During the public hearing any person who wishes to be heard on the budget will be allowed time to speak. In the interim, the board will hold a series of budget review meetings and briefings on each of the major budget categories at which time changes may be made to the budget and departments will be given the opportunity to speak about their needs and programming. These meetings will extend until the adoption of the budget if needed. Adoption of the Fiscal Year 2020-2021 budget ordinance is anticipated no later than June 30, 2020 but may occur earlier in the process if deemed appropriate by the Board. Therefore, I respectfully submit the Fiscal Year 2020-2021 budget that is balanced and in conformance with North Carolina law. The budget is in compliance with state statutes, Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP), and in compliance with the direction given by the Board of Commissioners. The following pages are an overview of the Fiscal Year 2020-2021 budget and an overview of the process and issues that drove the development of the Fiscal Year 2020-2021 budget including a discussion of revenues and expenditures. An adopted budget is a legal document that serves many purposes; it embodies the priorities, goals and objectives of government. It defines not only financial aspects of government, but government organization and operations as well. This budget contains information that gives citizens insight into government activities.

**IMPACT OF COVID‐19 ON THE RECOMMENDED BUDGET**

The COVID‐19 virus continues to have a significant impact on North Carolina as well as County government. As of May 31st, North Carolina has 28,589 cases, 649 people currently hospitalized, and 886 deaths. This virus has altered the way we interact with each other and required that we physically distance ourselves from family, friends, coworkers, and the public. Our County government has implemented solutions to protect its employees and citizens, including allowing eligible employees to work from home or in other county facilities with more space, regular cleaning and disinfecting, requiring appointments if services are needed to allow screening of those seeking appointments, and providing personal protective equipment (PPE) for employees. Specifically related to the FY 2020-2021 Recommended Budget, COVID‐19 has had two major impacts. The first of these is revenue uncertainty. COVID‐19 and the response from State and Federal leaders is unprecedented. This means the County has no history on how things like sales tax collection, the property tax collection percentage, EMS fees, and building permit revenue will be affected. The second impact is the reallocation of staff time away from budget development to COVID‐19 protective measures and education. To ensure the County was aggressive and timely in its response to this disease, key staff in many departments were forced to put their normal duties aside and focus on protecting and informing citizens and employees. I am very proud of the excellent work from staff, and believe this quick action may have slowed the spread of COVID‐19 and allowed the County to continue effectively serving citizens with essential services. However, this along with implementation training for new finance and tax software have both not allowed our employees the usual amount of time to work through the budget process. Because of these two major impacts, the recommendations on the following pages are based on the best information we have at the present time. Our goal was to be conservative on revenue projections. Even with this, I fully expect for the upcoming fiscal year to require more budget amendments and discussion than in past years. We will continue to work closely as a team to stay on top of economic trends in the coming year, and will make recommendations to the Board of Commissioners as they are prudent.

**REVENUE**

Revenues come with varying degrees of strings attached. Some revenues are restricted in that they can only be used to offset the costs of specific programs or services. Major unrestricted revenues are, therefore, extremely important because they yield the most flexibility and discretion in strategic allocation.

**Ad Valorem**

The total recommended General Fund budget is $22,244,356. Property tax revenue is the primary source of governmental fund revenue, providing 49% of the General Fund revenue.

**Sales Tax**

A portion of the sales tax revenue is restricted by general statute specifically for school capital needs and is recorded directly into a reserve fund designated for the approved purposes. The remaining amount of sales tax revenue is unrestricted intergovernmental revenue and represents a significant source of discretionary funding. The local portion of the sales tax is 2.75 cents and the State sales tax rate is 4.5 cents for a total of 7.25 cents pending no other sales tax changes by the General Assembly. Revenue expected from sales tax is $3,772,316 which is a 13.5% reduction from the previous year. Sales tax revenues are one of the most unpredictable revenue sources in the “new COVID-19 economy”. The most recent guidance shows predictions of between 5% and 20% reductions in sales tax revenue.

**Other key revenue changes**

1) We anticipate an overall reduction in general fund revenue of $1,146,210.

2) $1,927,018 of **Fund Balance** is included in the FY 2020 - 2021 recommended budget. This represents a 1.6% increase from the prior year. Through strong, sound financial management by the Board of Commissioners and the implementation of a spending freeze, hiring freeze, and travel restriction, we anticipate not spending the fund balance appropriation of $1,894,828 for fiscal year 2019-2020. This appropriation will leave a projected fund balance of 21%.

**EXPENDITURES**

Expenditures remain consistent with previous years. Small adjustments have been made in some departments while larger adjustments have been made in departments that are taking on new responsibilities and new roles as Caswell County Local Government moves forward with implementing the directives of the Board of Commissioners. Changes in department level expenses and requests for consideration will be covered in depth in the budget meetings that begin today.

**Conclusion**

The outlook for FY 2020-2021 is uncertain and we should proceed with much attentiveness. We have many new and exciting projects occurring. Therefore, it is imperative that we continue to identify changes in both revenues and expenditures.

I would like to thank the Board of Commissioners for providing valuable direction to the staff to assist in the development of this recommended budget. I also commend the Department Leaders and their staff for their diligent work on the Fiscal Year 2020-2021 budget and truly appreciate their willingness to sacrifice when reducing expenses. This has been an unprecedented budget preparation process. I am sure the presented budget will undergo many changes before adoption and I look forward to working with the Board to develop a final budget for FY 2020-2021 that will meet the service needs and expectations of everyone we serve. Respectfully submitted, Bryan S. Miller, County Manager, Caswell County, NC.”

Commissioner Oestreicher stated that Mr. Miller gave a pretty good summary but he did not see an overview included in the proposed budget and wanted to know if it was forthcoming. Mr. Miller responded that the summary was not included in the budget book. Commissioner Oestreicher asked if the Board could see the summary this afternoon. Mr. Miller responded that it would not be delivered to the Commissioners’ houses today but it would be received soon. Commissioner Oestreicher asked if there would be something similar to the overview to look at this afternoon. Mr. Miller responded that he could email the summary to the Commissioners. Commissioner Oestreicher asked if there was an overview so the Board could get the big picture so the Board can drill down once it goes through the budget. Mr. Miller responded that an overview will be given in the Budget Work Session presentation today. Commissioner Oestreicher stated thank you.

FY 2020-2021 BUDGET MEETINGS CALENDAR

Mr. Miller stated that a Doodle Poll was sent out to all the Commissioners and he knew a few Commissioners responded. He asked Ms. Seamster for the results of the Doodle Poll. Ms. Seamster responded that she had heard from 3 Commissioners and after today Budget Meeting the next meeting will be Monday, June 8, 2020.

Commissioner Oestreicher stated that he regretted to say that he has not seen the poll and asked if it was sent to his personal email. Ms. Seamster responded that it was sent to Commissioner Oestreicher’ s personal email. Commissioner Oestreicher asked what date the poll was sent out. Ms. Seamster responded that it was sent either May 18th or 19th. Commissioner Oestreicher stated that he is pretty good at responding to emails. Ms. Seamster responded that she had 3 emails for Commissioner Oestreicher and was told to send it to [oestreicher@embarqmail.com](mailto:oestreicher@embarqmail.com).

Chairman McVey asked what time of day was the one for June 8th. Ms. Seamster responded that the internet is too slow to pull of the poll but what was sent out was for every day at 9:00 a.m. and 1:00 p.m.

Commissioner Oestreicher stated that he did receive the Doodle Poll but unfortunately it was on the 18th which was 3 days after his surgery and 2 days after he got home. Ms. Seamster responded that he could still respond to the Doodle Poll.

Mr. Miller asked the Commissioners if they had not responded to the Doodle Poll to respond before the Budget Work Session at 1:00 p.m. today or reach out to Ms. Seamster if dates that are good.

Commissioner Oestreicher stated that he apologized for not responding.

SHARED SPACE IN NEW TECHNOLOGY CENTER

Commissioner Hall asked if the county needed to reconsider the architecture of the Co-Square space with the COVID-19 in affect. Mr. Miller responded that the county has a memorandum of understanding with HQ of Raleigh and they are helping the county with design and implementation, documents, etc. He stated that the economic developer has reached out to HQ of Raleigh and talked to them about how they are handling COVID-19 at their facility. Mr. Miller stated that HQ of Raleigh is adjusting their operations as needed, the communal eating opportunities are not allowed and only water and coffee are being provided. He added that everyone is being asked to bring their own eating and drinking utensils. Mr. Miller stated that phone booths and offices are available to members and the desks in the offices are being spread as far apart as possible as well as in the common spaces. He added that they are increasing the frequency of their regular cleanings and their focus is on communal and high touch areas such as door handles, phones, elevator buttons, light switches and photo copier. Mr. Miller stated they are providing anti-bacterial gel in every room as well as sanitizing wipes so individuals can use to disinfect their workspace and computers. He stated that the county may limit the hours of operation to provide more time for deep cleanings. Mr. Miller stated that he thought the county had some pretty good guidelines. He stated that restructuring the architecture defeats the purpose but he would be happy to do whatever the Board suggests. Commissioner Hall stated that this answered his question for now.

Commissioner S. Carter asked “With that subject I was just curious, when is the completion date anticipated with COVID?” Mr. Miller responded “The completion date was the end of May but COVID-19 has delayed the receipt of materials for 3 or 4 weeks so we are projecting at this point in time, with no other delays, the end of June.” Commissioner S. Carter continued “So we are planning to do some sort of soft opening or virtual opening?” Mr. Miller responded “We are. We don’t know what the opening will look like at this point in time but we will have some kind of opening.”

COUNTY MANAGER’S UPDATES

Emergency Declaration

Mr. Miller stated that he had one update and he wanted to know how the Board viewed the Emergency Declaration. He stated that very little has changed but the one change that the State has made is they have increased gathering size for outside from 10 to 25 people but inside still remains at 10 people and this would be on the recommendation that he would make at this time to change. Mr. Miller stated that one of the dilemmas is the court system has reopened and in many cases it would involve having more than 10 people inside a courtroom at any given time but the problem is this is not consistent with the governor’s orders. He recommended amending the emergency declaration to meet the governor’s orders for up to 25 individuals outside and 10 or less inside.

Chairman McVey asked if anyone had any questions.

Commissioner S. Carter stated “I had another one unrelated to this one. Are we anticipating demolition of the high school soonish? I have heard people making comments.” Mr. Miller responded “Yeah, I believe it will start fairly soon. There are still some things…” Commissioner S. Carter continued “This summer?” Mr. Miller responded “some administrative things that we are working through, very soon though.”

Commissioner Owen asked the county manager to remind him about the numbers on the 10 and asked if the county’s declaration was consistent with the governor’s order. Mr. Miller responded the currently the county is not consistent with the governor’s order. He stated the county’s declaration has mass gatherings at 10 or less and the governor says 10 or less inside and 25 or less outside and his recommendation is for the Board to move the numbers to the same as the governor’s order.

Mr. Miller stated that his recommendation is to follow the guidance and direction given by the governor in his emergency declaration whether it is related to outdoor gatherings or restaurants.

Commissioner Owen moved to amend the Caswell County Emergency Declaration to follow the guidance and direction given by the Governor in the State’s Emergency Declaration.

Commissioner S. Carter asked “Question, with the restaurants they are saying 50% capacity, is that not the governor’s recommendation?” Mr. Miller responded “That is.” Commissioner S. Carter continued “How is that consistent with the 10 people inside?” Mr. Miller responded “It’s not.” Commissioner S. Carter continued “Okay.” Mr. Miller responded “But there’s an exception being made.” Commissioner S. Carter asked “Is that in the emergency declaration?” Mr. Miller responded “No, no, not currently. I think we would amend it to the governor’s recommendation.” Commissioner S. Carter continued “Right, but just so that it’s in there so there’s no confusion with a local in Caswell County saying this.” Mr. Miller responded “I will make sure the Emergency Management Director includes that.” Commissioner S. Carter stated “Alright, I second the motion.”

Commissioner Owen moved, seconded by Commissioner S. Carter to amend the Caswell County Emergency Declaration to follow the guidance and direction given by the Governor in the State’s Emergency Declaration. After a roll call vote, the motion carried unanimously. (Commissioners S. Carter, Hall, Jefferies, McVey, Oestreicher, and Owen voted in favor.)

COMMISSIONER COMMENTS

Commissioner Jefferies stated that he had a question for the county manager; he stated that he read in an email that legislation passed in the amount of $5.6 million to give each county $250,000 for the Department of Social Services and asked if the county manager had seen that. Mr. Miller responded that he had not seen that but he would check into it. Commissioner Jefferies asked the county manager to look into this. Mr. Miller responded that he would look into it and get back to Commissioner Jefferies.

Commissioner S. Carter stated “In the midst of all of this change with COVID guidelines and directions I’m still concerned with people following CDC guidelines. I think that everybody is very excited that its summer and doing things that they were wanting to do during the quarantine but I am hoping that we could still practice those guidelines to minimize how many people in Caswell County contract the virus.”

Commissioner Owen stated that with each motion each commissioner is recorded as voting and he asked the Board consider what the Handbook for County Commissioners says about approving minutes which is “The minutes of one meeting shall be approved at the next meeting. It is not necessary to vote to approve the minutes. The chair can simply call for corrections, if there are none, the minutes stand approved.” He asked for the Board to consider this moving forward and this will save the clerk a little time as well as save the Board a little time. Commissioner Owen stated that he is having a difficult time downloading all of the agenda and the supplemental information in one email and he asked the Board to consider getting the agenda and the supporting documents for the agenda in one email and then in another email other board minutes or informational items. He said this may make it easier to download the agenda on the iPads. Commissioner Oestreicher thanked Commissioner Owen for his comments. He added that he found an easy way to do this and he added that he opened a Gmail account and when he gets the Zoom notice he sends that to his Gmail account and he then can open the Zoom meeting on his laptop and also open the attachments in another window and have a split screen. Commissioner Oestreicher stated that this is extremely handy. He stated that he fully appreciated the point that Commissioner Owen made but suggested that Commissioner try this method and he volunteered to him with it.

Commissioner Oestreicher stated that there was a really good Permitted Uses Committee meeting last week. He added that there were valuable reference documents provided by the county manager and county planner as well as participation for the economic developer and Chairman. Commissioner Oestreicher stated that the meeting was about 1 ½ hours and a good perspective was developed and hope to make a proposal back to the Board. He thanked everyone for their excellent participation and positive attitude on this.

Commissioner Hall stated that at the last meeting he raised the issue of fishing from private property as well as launching boats from private property at Farmer Lake during COVID-19. He stated that this item is not on the agenda today and he wanted to know if there were any objections from any of the commissioners as far as moving forward with this issue. Chairman McVey responded that it was his understand that the Farmer Lake Board will be meeting in June to discuss this issue and get back to the Board on their recommendation. Commissioner Hall stated that Chairman McVey had an objection. Chairman McVey responded that the Farmer Lake Board will look into this and discuss it and they will come back to the Board with a recommendation. Commissioner Hall stated that he agreed but this issue was raised at the last meeting and added that the Farmer Lake Board has had ample time to meet. He asked that this item be put on the agenda for the next meeting. Chairman McVey responded okay and added that he knew that Mr. Watlington had had some health issues and this may have delayed things. He stated that this would be on the agenda.

Commissioner S. Carter stated “I was just going to say with that and the last time we decided to follow that protocol, the Lake Board comes first and then we talk about it but I don’t have a problem discussing it more in depth at the next meeting regardless if that is before or after the Lake Board that way they will have a substantive discussion either way. And then a quick question with the budget meeting later and I guess the future ones, are we getting the comprehensive financial report or the visuals today or future date?” Mr. Miller responded “No, you won’t receive those today. We’ll try to put those together over the coming weeks.” Commissioner S. Carter continued “Do we have a specific end goal in mind for today then? I lean more towards I like to see that kind of information before we start getting into any of the nitty-gritty” Mr. Miller responded “I think the goal for today is to familiarize yourself with the budget and just let us review it with you in general.” Commissioner S. Carter continued “I just hope we get that other report sooner than later when it comes to having an accurate visual of where we are at.”

ANNOUNCEMENTS AND UPCOMING EVENTS

1. District Coffee Talks – Thursday, June 4, 2020 – 10:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m. – Virtual.
2. 113th NCACC Annual Conference – August 13 – 15, 2020 – Virtual.

Commissioner S. Carter stated “Which is free and everyone can attend.”

CLOSED SESSION

Commissioner Owen moved, seconded by Commissioner S. Carter to go into closed session to preserve attorney/client privilege (NCGS 143-318.11(a)(3)). After a roll call vote, the motion carried unanimously. (Commissioners S. Carter, Hall, Jefferies, McVey, Oestreicher, and Owen voted in favor.)

REGULAR SESSION

Commissioner Owen moved, seconded by Commissioner S. Carter to go back into regular session. After a roll call vote, the motion carried unanimously. (Commissioners S. Carter, Hall, Jefferies, McVey, Oestreicher, and Owen voted in favor.)

ADJOURNMENT

At 11:45 a.m. Commissioner S. Carter moved, seconded by Commissioner Owen to adjourn. After a roll call vote, the motion carried unanimously. (Commissioners S. Carter, Hall, Jefferies, McVey, Oestreicher, and Owen voted in favor.)

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Paula P. Seamster Rick McVey

Clerk to the Board Chairman

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