

Caswell County Planning Board Special Meeting
January 17, 2023

Members Present:

Russell Johnston, Scott Oakley, Steven Harris, Michael Poteat, Antonio Foster, Jason Daniel, Ron Richmond, Stephen Thompson, Commissioner Tim Yarbrough (ex-officio)

Also present: County Manager Bryan Miller, Planning Director Matthew Hoagland

Members Absent: none

Called to Order

Chairman Johnston called the meeting to order at 1:52 p.m.

Public Comments

There were no public comments.

Election of Officers

Mr. Harris nominated Russell Johnston to be chairman, seconded by Jason Daniel. Vote to confirm Johnston as chair was unanimous. Mr. Foster nominated Scott Oakley to be vice chair. Mr. Harris then nominated Micheal Poteat for vice chair. Votes in favor of Oakley included Mr. Foster and Mr. Oakley. Votes in favor of Mr. Poteat included Mr. Harris, Mr. Poteat, Mr. Daniel, Mr. Richmond, and Mr. Thompson. Mr. Johnston will serve as chairman and Mr. Poteat will serve as vice chair for calendar year 2023.

Oaths of Office

Clerk to the Board of Commissioners administered the Oath of Office to Russell Johnston and Ron Richmond in accordance with NC General Statute 160D-309 and the Caswell County Planning Board Bylaws.

Approval of September 27, 2022 Meeting Minutes

Mr. Johnston asked if all members had reviewed the previous minutes. Mr. Foster made a motion to approve the minutes, seconded by Mr. Oakley. Motion was approved unanimously.

Planning Department Updates

A) Broadband

Mr. Hoagland introduced County Manager Bryan Miller who gave an update on the Rural Digital Opportunity Fund and Charter Spectrum's buildout of several areas within the county. So far, Spectrum has activated about 1,100 addresses and will continue working in a clockwise manner throughout the county. He knows they have just started working in the central part of the county and south around Oakview Loop Road. Mr. Miller also updated the board of Zytel's winning of the state's G.R.E.A.T. grant dollars for areas more or less north of Yanceyville. Zytel leases "dark fiber" and plans to build out to about 2,000 addresses within the county. He talked further about the state's "CAB" program which gives the county the authority to target some remaining unserved areas of the county. Mr. Miller also talked about a "last mile" initiative that would help connect houses that are more than

1,500 feet from existing connections for example, but he admitted that the program is a little complicated. Mr. Miller further explained that he had been in direct contact with Spectrum about covering a gap along Cherry Grove Road that would include an additional 190 or so homes as well as another 10 or so homes along Graves Road and he's very hopeful for those connections.

B) Cell towers

Mr. Hoagland said he had heard back from Doug Barker of HK Consulting but that was around October or November. Though he had hoped the west Caswell and Prospect Hill towers would be turned on by now they still are not. Also, the Mise Road tower will now be an AT&T tower and not Verizon as originally planned. It seems that they switch in carriers has caused some delay. Mr. Hoagland also said the Stephentown Road tower has received FAA approval and is waiting for final approval from Verizon. He also informed the board that the recently approved tower along David Sartin Road has been changed from a self-supporting tower to a guyed tower which means it will have to come back before the Planning Board for public hearing and approval. That may be on the February agenda.

Mr. Hoagland also informed the board that there will be a solar farm development on the February agenda which requires a public hearing no later than 5:30 p.m. Additionally, there could be the continuation of the appeals and possibly two major subdivisions on the agenda which could make for a rather lengthy meeting.

Mr. Johnston also welcomed Commissioner Tim Yarbrough to the Planning Board as the ex-officio liaison from the county commissioners.

Other Business

Mr. Oakley brought up the issue of Comprehensive Plan review to the board. He said he would like to have Matthew present information like roles and responsibilities, the Comprehensive Plan, annual updates and those types of things. He would like to know about proceeding to get a meeting scheduled with the commissioners.

Mr. Hoagland said that he had recently discussed that with the county manager but there was no clear guidance from the commissioners on when they would like to have such a meeting. He also mentioned that with the unfortunate passing of Commissioner Hall that some agenda items with the commissioners may be delayed. He mentioned that he could follow up again about having a meeting date set.

Mr. Johnston took a moment to recognize Commissioner Hall's service to the county and that their prayers are with the family.

Adjournment

Mr. Harris made a motion to adjourn. The vote was unanimous.