

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA )  
 )  
COUNTY OF STOKES )  
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OFFICE OF THE COMMISSIONERS  
STOKES COUNTY GOVERNMENT  
DANBURY, NORTH CAROLINA  
OCTOBER 27, 2014

The Board of Commissioners of the County of Stokes, State of North Carolina, met for a regular session in the Commissioners' Chambers of the Ronald Wilson Reagan Memorial Building (Administration Building) located in Danbury, North Carolina on Monday, October 27, 2014, at 6:00 pm with the following members present:

Chairman James D. Booth  
Vice Chairman Ronda Jones  
Commissioner J. Leon Inman  
Commissioner Jimmy Walker  
Commissioner Ernest Lankford

County Personnel in Attendance:  
County Manager Richard D. Morris  
Clerk to the Board Darlene M. Bullins  
Finance Director Julia Edwards  
Health Director Scott Lenhart

Chairman James Booth called the meeting to order and welcomed those in attendance.

Commissioner Inman delivered the invocation.

#### **GENERAL GOVERNMENT-GOVERNING BODY-PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

Chairman Booth opened the meeting by inviting the citizens in attendance to join the Board in the Pledge of Allegiance.

#### **GENERAL GOVERNMENT – GOVERNING BODY – APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

Chairman Booth entertained a motion to approve or amend the October 27, 2014 Agenda.

Vice Chairman Jones moved to approve the October 27<sup>th</sup> Agenda as presented.

Commissioner Lankford seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

## **PUBLIC HEARING – Abandonment of Right-of-Way – Coon Joyce Road – SR#1916**

Chairman Booth opened the Public Hearing for the Abandonment of the Right-of-Way – Coon Joyce Road – SR#1916.

The following spoke during the Public Hearing:

### **McCray “Nubbin” Greene, Jr.**

3663 Flat Shoals Road  
Walnut Cove, NC 27052

Mr. Greene presented the following comments:

- In favor of the abandonment of the right-of-way for Coon Joyce Road
- Currently, the farm manager for David F. Couch who owns the land on both sides of the entire road
- Having a bad problem with littering, drugs, trespassing, poaching of deer, etc.
- Mr. Couch plans to install a nice gate with access for all utility companies
- It is a dead end road with no houses
- Constantly picking up trash daily
- In the Spring, a building on the road was torn down and a stolen wallet from Rockingham County was found in the attic
- With the closing and abandonment of right-of-way, anyone caught on the property without permission can be prosecuted
- Mr. Couch would appreciate the Board’s approval regarding the right-of-way abandonment

Chairman Booth expressed the Board’s appreciation for the public comments.

## **COMMENTS**

### **Manager/Commissioners**

Chairman Booth opened the floor for comments from the County Manager and the Board of Commissioners.

County Manager Rick Morris commented:

- Tree Trimming – Duke Energy
  - As directed by the Board at the last meeting, contacted Mr. Jimmy Flythe and expressed the Board’s concerns regarding the tree trimming
  - Mr. Flythe provided the Board with copies of “Vegetation Management – Keeping the lights on” which provided information regarding tree trimming and the different methods along with frequently asked questions
- Meeting at Stokes Rockingham Fire Department – Proposed Pine Hall Medical Center – Petree Project
  - Held a meeting last week in the Pine Hall community regarding the Petree Project

- Had approximately 40 attend the meeting
- Architect Perry Peterson, Pioneer Hospital CEO Pam Tillman, and Danny Stovall also attended the meeting
- Provided the group with an overall presentation of the project and the status
- Feel the meeting went very well and was very well received
- Received a lot of questions
- Community is very excited about the project
- The Petree agreement expired the first of October
- Mr. Petree has requested a four-month extension
- County Attorney Browder is in the process of preparing a four-month extension for Mr. Petree and Chairman Booth to sign
- Working with Environmental Health Supervisor Easter regarding the final sewer evaluation
- CEO Tillman, Pioneer Community Hospital of Stokes, has the proposed agreement for operation of the facility which was prepared by county staff for Pioneer's review and comments
- Once the sewer and the agreement with Pioneer are complete, the next step will be to transfer the land and funding from Mr. Petree to the County

Chairman Booth requested Manager Morris provide a brief overview of the project for those in attendance tonight.

County Manager Morris responded:

- Mr. Ron Petree, former resident of Stokes County (Pine Hall area), has donated \$1.25 million and 33 acres of land in the Pine Hall community to Stokes County
- The funding will be used to build a medical center with an adjoining community/meeting room that can be used by the community
- Will take about a year to complete the project
- This will provide needed services in an underserved area
- Mr. Petree may also be open to doing other things on the property once this project is completed

Commissioner Lankford commented:

- Ethics for Life – “Thoughts of the righteous are right; but the counsels of the wicked are deceit ” (Proverbs)
- Attended a Piedmont Triad Regional Council meeting last week
  - Grady Hunter Award was presented to a member from Alamance County
- Attended a YVEDDI meeting
  - Approved the NCDOT Transportation Plan that was recently approved by the County
- Attended a transportation meeting
  - It appears that Stokes County will be getting six new bridges

Commissioner Inman commented:

- Great to have the West Stokes State Champions at tonight's meeting

- As a former educator and golf coach, understand the dedication and hard work each of these athletes has given to become state champions
- Stokes County has always had a great reputation of outstanding sportsmanship in its student athletes
- Statistics will show that if a student is involved in athletics, they are far less likely to drop out of school, get involved in drugs or be in trouble with the law
- Would like to congratulate each member of the team along with the coaches

Vice Chairman Jones commented:

- Great to see everyone at tonight's meeting
- Very pleased to have West Stokes at tonight's meeting
  - Have so much talent here in Stokes County
  - Appreciate what you have brought back to Stokes County – State Championship
  - So pleased that so many of you are moving forward with your life in such a positive manner
- Attended Howard Coble's retirement two weeks ago
- Enjoyed the candidate's forum sponsored by the Chamber of Commerce last week and look forward to the one tomorrow at South Stokes High School (thanks to Nick Elmes for putting it together)
- Looking forward to attending the NC Rural Assembly Day in Raleigh this week
- "Back in the Day Festival" will be held in Walnut Cove this Saturday from 10:00 am to 4:00 pm
  - Stokes Future will be there

Commissioner Walker commented:

- Would like to add my welcome to those in attendance tonight
- Always good to have folks in our audience for whatever reason you have to be here
- Appreciate those folks coming out to participate in the government process, seems to work better
- Very encouraging to hear the update regarding the Petree Project – (Mr. Petree is giving back something to his native county)
  - Think it is remarkable for someone who lives a distance away, has apparently achieved success in life and still remembers his roots and wants to do something for the people back home
- Asked the members of the West Stokes State Championship Team what they could attribute their successful season to?
  - Got some good answers – team spirit, teamwork, friends, leadership
  - My suggestion is that they remember those things down the road
  - Very good to have each member here tonight
  - Congratulations on your success to become a state champion
  - To be good at something takes a lot of work and a lot of focus
  - Very proud of all of you
- Tree Trimming
  - Can usually tell where they have been

- Have had many conversations with Jimmy Flythe about tree trimming
- Seems too fair toward the direction of the power company and too little regard to the landowner and homeowner
- Wish there could be a happy medium
- Hope for the sake of Danbury and the citizens here that they will ease up some
- Very upsetting to ride down the road and see what has been done to some of the trees; see what was a beautiful tree and is left in some mangled position like the V shape trimming
- Hope they will be a little easier on Danbury
- Appreciate Manager Morris for following up on the issue
- If the same message is sent enough times from enough different sources, maybe eventually it will be heard
- YVEDDI - Update
  - Attended the meeting mentioned by Commissioner Lankford
  - Would like to thank Commissioner Lankford who is a very productive member on the board
  - YVEDDI, like some other organizations, has had some challenging times; things have not been as smooth as they could have been for a period of time
  - My assessment is that things are very stable now
  - Staff is doing their jobs and doing them well
  - Not receiving any negative feedback to amount to about anything
  - Would say at this point, a success story

Chairman Booth commented:

- Would like to add to Commissioner Walker's YVEDDI update:
  - Commissioner Walker serves as the Chairman of the Board of Directors along with Commissioner Lankford serving as a member
  - YVEDDI is fortunate to have two positive members on their board
- Would also like to extend congratulations to the West Stokes State Champions
- Very blessed for Mr. Petree's generous donation to provide a medical facility in the Pine Hall area (a very needed facility for that area of the county)

Commissioner Lankford:

- Would like to also congratulate the West Stokes State Champions
- Would have done it with my earlier comments, but thought congratulations were going to be done during the presentation of the Resolution later in tonight's meeting
- Appreciate the job you did
- Very happy you are in Stokes County and brought back a state championship which means a lot to Stokes County and to this Board

## **PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Chairman Booth opened the floor for Public Comments.

Chairman Booth noted the following:

- Board of Commissioners will hear public comments, but will not respond to public comments
- Each speaker has three minutes

The following spoke during Public Comments:

**Mr. Buddy Timm**

PO Box 573

Walnut Cove, NC 27052

Re: **Marriage**

Mr. Timm read and provided the Board a copy of the following: "The Need for a Marriage Declaration"

- "A passive people invite despotism; meaning, a political system where absolute power is held over them. That is incompatible with America's Declaration of – our Creator endowing people with life and Natural Rights.

We cannot sit idly by and expect someone else will respond to the morales, lawless Federal Judge's ruling, that same-sex couples constitute marriage. Morales, because morals deal with what is Right and Wrong which do not change, that is Righteousness, which is confluent with Justice. Lawless, because within the Constitution we never delegated to the Federal Government a power over Marriage; and same-sex behavior has been defined in Law, for centuries as "a crime against Nature. Without a historical law defining same-sex unions as marriage, the Judge made up a law, from his own imagination, or political agenda. Therefore, the Judge violated The Rule of Law; and Lied to us about Marriage, making the unlawful, lawful, which cannot be truth, since truth does not change; it is the same yesterday, today, and forever. Violating commonsense, and the stability of truth, the Federal Judge forced the Marriage Certificates to be changed from: Husband and Wife, to: Applicant 1 and Applicant 2.

When people talk about the Federal Judge's ruling over the people's vote for Traditional Marriage, they are outraged and cannot understand it. A judge over ruling the virtuous will of the people, violates the very foundation of our Republic.

We must remember that all Federal law making powers were delegated to Congress; and listed in Article 1, Section 8. There are no Constitutional law making powers granted to the Federal Judges; nor to the Regulatory Agencies; nor to the President through Executive Orders, which are to expedite or explain existing law; or else our Congressional Representatives are meaningless. That is why the President's enacting of his Dream Act for illegals still needs to be rescinded for its unconstitutionality; and his Executive Order to grant Amnesty needs to be addressed and rebuked, as a lawless abuse of power.

The Stokes County Declaration on Marriage may not be all that you want to say, nor the way you want to say it; that is fine; but something needs to be done outside of the legal battle. That is why a Declaration on Marriage is necessary to let our children, other counties, and State know: Here We Stand on Marriage.

We are tired of Federal lies, lawlessness, and immorality.

**Mr. Ramona Timm**

PO Box 573

Walnut Cove, NC 27052

Re: **Marriage**

Ms. Timm read and provided the Board a copy of the following: "Forcing the Showdown" from Lt. Governor Dan Forest's blog

- "If you have been paying attention to the media, you have been told numerous times from opponents of North Carolina's Marriage Amendment that the fight is over and that they have won. That is not the case. The following is a realistic scenario that could lead to a constitutional showdown between the state and federal systems as to which court, outside the Supreme Court of the United States, has the legal authority to rule on North Carolina's marriage amendment.

Last week, the Administrative Office of the Courts directed magistrates that they could not refuse to perform a same-sex marriage, no matter what the reason, including their personal moral and religious objections. This directive informed them that failure to comply could result in removal from office and criminal penalties. In response, our state needs but one magistrate to legally challenge the edict sent from the Administrative Office of the Courts on two grounds.

The first ground is that the memorandum directs him to violate his religious conscience, thereby violating his right to religious freedom preserved by the North Carolina and United States Constitutions. In particular, the North Carolina Constitution provides that "all persons have a natural and inalienable right to worship Almighty God according to the dictates of their own consciences, and no human authority shall, in any case whatever, control or interfere with the rights of conscience."

The second ground is to assert that the memo directs him to contravene the North Carolina Constitution by performing a ceremony that is not recognized by law, and is in fact, prohibited by the marriage amendment. You may wonder how that is possible after Judge Cogburn's ruling purporting to strike down our amendment. This is one of the beauties of federalism. As succinctly stated by North Carolina's Supreme Court in the case of *State v. McDowell*: "A state court should exercise and apply its own independent judgment, treating, of course, decisions of the United States Supreme Court as binding and according to decisions of lower federal courts such persuasiveness as these decisions might reasonably command." North Carolina case law is clear. Decisions of the Fourth Circuit and federal district courts, while persuasive, are not binding on state courts.

Should this case reach the Supreme Court of North Carolina, a vote by our honorable justices exercising their own independent judgment to uphold the amendment overwhelmingly approved by the people would set up the very real possibility that the

United States Supreme Court would hear arguments, having a split on the issue between a state court and the Fourth Circuit.

The constitutional showdown is a very real possibility. Supporters of marriage should not lose heart. The voice of the people will be heard.

- Appreciate the opportunity to speak tonight

**Rev. Gregory Hairston**

1070 Brookridge Drive  
Walnut Cove, NC 27052  
RE: **Marriage**

Rev. Hairston presented the following comments:

- Here tonight on behalf of Stokes County citizens
- Feel the people have spoken in regards to the thing about marriage
- The people of the state spoke that marriage is between a man and a woman
- Being a man of the cloth, I feel that God has already mandated what it is
- I think we are all proud to be citizens of Stokes County for we stand for which is morally right
- Applaud you for holding to the fact that you open with prayer and that you remember who is all in charge
- We are here to hope that you issue a statement or declaration in regard to marriage of how we stand and what we believe in this county
- We need to make a stand for God
- We can't allow wrong to be right and right to be wrong
- God has given us the essence of life, it is he who created us and made us
- If we don't stand for that which is right, what kind of message are we sending to the generation behind us?
- Our constitution was based upon freedom of religion
- Now if you speak the truth, you are the enemy
- Hope that you men and women of our county will do something as a statement in regards to marriage and our stand on God's word

Chairman Booth expressed appreciation to those who spoke during Public Comments.

**CONSENT AGENDA**

Chairman Booth entertained a motion to approve or amend the following items on the

Consent Agenda:

**Minutes**

- Minutes of October 7, 2014 – Planning Meeting
- Minutes of October 13, 2014 – Regular Meeting



### **Special Appropriations Department - Budget Amendment #19**

Finance Director Julia Edwards submitted Budget Amendment #19.

To amend the General Fund, the expenditures are to be changed as follows:

<b>Account Number</b>	<b>Account Description</b>	<b>Current Budgeted Amount</b>	<b>Increase (Decrease)</b>	<b>As Amended</b>
<b>Special Appropriations</b>				
100.4520.490	YVEDDI	<u>\$182,585.00</u>	<u>\$(23,035.00)</u>	<u>\$159,550.00</u>
	<b>Totals</b>	<b>\$182,585.00</b>	<b>\$(23,035.00)</b>	<b>\$159,590.00</b>

This budget amendment is justified as follows:

To correct funding from NC Department of Transportation for Elderly and Disabled, WorkFirst, and Rural General Public Transportation Funding.

This will result in a **net decrease of (\$23,035.00)** in the expenditures and other financial use to the County's annual budget. To provide the additional revenue for the above, the following revenues will increase. These revenues have already been received or are verified they will be received this fiscal year.

<b>Account Number</b>	<b>Account Description</b>	<b>Budgeted Amount</b>	<b>Increase (Decrease)</b>	<b>As Amended</b>
100.3301.263	RCP Transportation	\$143,993.00	\$(23,646.00)	\$120,347.00
100.3301.367	NC DOT WorkFirst	<u>\$13,252.00</u>	<u>\$611.00</u>	<u>\$13,863.00</u>
	<b>Totals</b>	<b>\$157,245.00</b>	<b>\$(23,035.00)</b>	<b>\$134,210.00</b>

### **Finance Department - Budget Amendment #20**

Finance Director Julia Edwards submitted Budget Amendment #20.

To amend the General Fund, the expenditures are to be changed as follows:

<b>Account Number</b>	<b>Account Description</b>	<b>Current Budgeted Amount</b>	<b>Increase (Decrease)</b>	<b>As Amended</b>
<b>Finance</b>				
100.4130.510	Equipment	\$00.00	\$37,000.00	\$37,000.00
<b>Contingency</b>				
100.9910.000	Contingency	<u>\$128,850.00</u>	<u>\$(11,700.00)</u>	<u>\$117,150.00</u>
	<b>Totals</b>	<b>\$128,850.00</b>	<b>\$25,300.00</b>	<b>\$154,150.00</b>

**Capital Reserve Fund**

201.4130.000	Finance	\$25,300.00	\$(25,300.00)	\$00.00
201.3981.000	Transfer to General Fund	<u>\$00.00</u>	<u>\$25,300.00</u>	<u>\$25,300.00</u>
<b>Totals</b>		<b>\$25,300.00</b>	<b>\$00.00</b>	<b>\$25,300.00</b>

This budget amendment is justified as follows:

To transfer funds for the purchase of the Finance server and mandatory upgrade to the operating system for the financial software.

This will result in a **net increase of \$25,300.00** in the expenditures and other financial use to the County's annual budget. To provide the additional revenue for the above, the following revenues will increase. These revenues have already been received or are verified they will be received this fiscal year.

<b>Account Number</b>	<b>Account Description</b>	<b>Budgeted Amount</b>	<b>Increase (Decrease)</b>	<b>As Amended</b>
	Transfer from Capital Reserve			
100.3982.960	Fund	<u>\$118,500.00</u>	<u>\$25,300.00</u>	<u>\$143,800.00</u>
<b>Totals</b>		<b>\$118,500.00</b>	<b>\$25,300.00</b>	<b>\$143,800.00</b>

**Sheriff's Department - Budget Amendment #21**

Finance Director Julia Edwards submitted Budget Amendment #21.

To amend the General Fund, the expenditures are to be changed as follows:

<b>Account Number</b>	<b>Account Description</b>	<b>Current Budgeted Amount</b>	<b>Increase (Decrease)</b>	<b>As Amended</b>
	<b>Sheriff's Department</b>			
100.4310.351	Maintenance & Repairs-Auto	<u>\$102,209.00</u>	<u>\$885.00</u>	<u>\$103,094.00</u>
<b>Totals</b>		<b>\$102,209.00</b>	<b>\$885.00</b>	<b>\$103,094.00</b>

This budget amendment is justified as follows:

To appropriate insurance funds from a claim.

This will result in a **net increase of \$885.00** in the expenditures and other financial use to the County's annual budget. To provide the additional revenue for the above, the following revenues will increase. These revenues have already been received or are verified they will be received this fiscal year.

<b>Account Number</b>	<b>Account Description</b>	<b>Budgeted Amount</b>	<b>Increase (Decrease)</b>	<b>As Amended</b>
100.3839.850	Insurance Claims	<u>\$17,820.00</u>	<u>\$885.00</u>	<u>\$18,705.00</u>
<b>Totals</b>		<b>\$17,820.00</b>	<b>\$885.00</b>	<b>\$18,705.00</b>

### **E911 Fund - Budget Amendment #22**

Finance Director Julia Edwards submitted Budget Amendment #22.

To amend the General Fund, the expenditures are to be changed as follows:

Account Number	Account Description	Current Budgeted Amount	Increase (Decrease)	As Amended
<b>E911 Fund</b>				
200.4325.510	Equipment	<u>\$58,134.00</u>	<u>\$(15,584.00)</u>	<u>\$42,550.00</u>
	<b>Totals</b>	<b>\$58,134.00</b>	<b>\$(15,584.00)</b>	<b>\$42,550.00</b>
<b>Emergency Communications</b>				
100.4325.510	Equipment	\$00.00	\$9,734.00	\$9,734.00
	<b>Contingency</b>			
100.9910.000	Contingency	<u>\$00.00</u>	<u>\$(9,734.00)</u>	<u>\$(9,734.00)</u>
	<b>Totals</b>	<b>\$00.00</b>	<b>\$00.00</b>	<b>\$00.00</b>

This budget amendment is justified as follows:

To reduce appropriation from Fund Balance in the E911 Fund and transfer funds from Contingency for the paging software for E911 Communications Department. A reduction in the cost due to a new quote for the software was received. Also, the licenses for the software are not eligible to be paid for from the E911 Funds per the list of qualified expenditures.

This will result in a **net decrease of (\$15,584.00)** in the expenditures and other financial use to the County's annual budget. To provide the additional revenue for the above, the following revenues will increase. These revenues have already been received or are verified they will be received this fiscal year.

Account Number	Account Description	Budgeted Amount	Increase (Decrease)	As Amended
200.3991.000	Fund Balance	<u>\$17,057.00</u>	<u>\$(15,584.00)</u>	<u>\$1,473.00</u>
	<b>Totals</b>	<b>\$17,057.00</b>	<b>\$(15,584.00)</b>	<b>\$1,473.00</b>

### **Tax Administration Report – September 2014**

#### **Real and Personal Releases more than \$100**

Tax Administrator Jake Oakley presented the following Real and Personal Releases more than \$100 (September 2014) at the October 13<sup>th</sup> meeting with a request for approval at the October 27<sup>th</sup> meeting:

**Releases more than  
\$100 - Real/Personal  
Property**

Name	Bill No	Amount	Reason
John Wayne Fulks	14A697301490574	\$ 176.25	BD appr -Late Eld Application
Faye R. Porter	14A693302654178	<u>\$ 327.83</u>	BD appr-Late Eld Application
Total		<b>\$ 504.08</b>	

**Real and Personal Refunds more than \$100**

Tax Administrator Jake Oakley presented the following Real and Personal Refunds more than \$100 (September 2014) at the October 13<sup>th</sup> meeting with a request for approval at the October 27<sup>th</sup> meeting:

**Refunds more than  
\$100 - Real/Personal  
Property**

Name	Bill No	Amount	Reason
Timothy Lankford	14A690304545264	\$ 242.87	late elderly -approved by BOCC
Tammy Burnette	19019854	<u>\$ 396.39</u>	sold vehicle
Total		<b>\$ 639.26</b>	

**Late Applications for Elderly Exemptions**

Tax Administrator Jake Oakley presented the following Late Applications for Elderly Exemption for 2014 (September 2014) at the October 13<sup>th</sup> meeting with a request for approval at the October 27<sup>th</sup> meeting:

**Taxpayer: Betty L. Holt**

- Parcel Number: 6021-00-54-1096
- One acre of land and a dwelling located at 1111 Creasey Road, Lawsonville, NC
- Assigned Tax Value of \$84,300
- Review of the application and accompanying documents indicate that she qualifies for the exemption

**Taxpayer: Mary Isabelle Boyles**

- Parcel Number: 5993-04-51-2842
- One acre of land and a dwelling located at 409 Goff Road, King, NC
- Assigned Tax Value of \$209,100
- Review of the application and accompanying documents indicate that she qualifies for the exemption

### **Late Applications for Disabled Veteran Exclusion for 2014**

Tax Administrator Jake Oakley presented the following Late Applications for Disabled Veteran Exclusion for 2014 (September 2014) at the October 13<sup>th</sup> meeting with a request for approval at the October 27<sup>th</sup> meeting:

**Taxpayer: Phillip L. Smitherman**

- Parcel Number: 5992-19-60-7761
- One acre of land and a dwelling located at 103 Allen Street, King, NC
- Assigned Tax Value of \$134,400
- Review of the application and accompanying documents indicate that he qualifies for the exclusion

**Taxpayer: Linda Sue Williams**

- Parcel Number: 6011-00-31-1421
- One acre of land and a dwelling located at 1150 Timber Ridge Road, Westfield, NC
- Assigned Tax Value of \$57,300
- Review of the application and accompanying documents indicate that she qualifies for the exclusion

### **Special Meeting – CenterPoint Human Services – November 12, 2014**

Clerk to the Board Darlene Bullins submitted the date of Wednesday, November 12, 2014 at 10:00 am for a Special Meeting with representatives from CenterPoint Human Services in the 3<sup>rd</sup> floor conference room of the Ronald W. Reagan Memorial Building to discuss “the new direction of mental health in North Carolina” for consideration and approval at the October 27<sup>th</sup> meeting.

### **Board of Commissioners – Organizational Meeting – December 1, 2014**

Clerk to the Board Darlene Bullins submitted the date of Monday, December 1, 2014 at 10:30 am for an Organizational Meeting in the Commissioners’ Chambers of the Ronald W. Reagan Memorial Building for consideration and approval at the October 27<sup>th</sup> meeting.

### **State Employees’ Credit Union – ATM Lease**

Clerk to the Board Darlene Bullins presented a request from the State Employees’ Credit Union to renew their 8<sup>th</sup> one-year renewal option for the ATM located in the upper parking lot of the Government Center Complex which was presented at the October 13<sup>th</sup> meeting with a request

for approval at the October 27<sup>th</sup> meeting.

Vice Chairman Jones requested the following correction to the October 13<sup>th</sup> minutes:

- Vice Chairman Jones commented – page #4
  - Change neutral and **bias** as we can . . . to neutral and **unbiased** as we can . . .

Commissioner Inman moved to approve the Consent Agenda as amended. Vice Chairman Jones seconded the motion carried unanimously.

## **GENERAL GOVERNMENT – GOVERNING BODY – INFORMATION AGENDA**

### **Presentation to West Stokes Lady Wildcats Soccer Team – 2A State Champions**

The Board of Commissioners presented the following Resolution to each member of the West Stokes Lady Wildcats Soccer Team, Coach Chris Manley and Staff, and Principal Kevin Spainhour, in recognition of their 2A State Championship:

#### **RESOLUTION HONORING**

#### **WEST STOKES HIGH SCHOOL**

#### **LADY WILDCATS SOCCER TEAM**

**WHEREAS**, the West Stokes High School Athletic Department is providing an equal opportunity for all students to participate in the sports program, with great emphasis being placed upon physical fitness, sportsmanship, and character; and

**WHEREAS**, the West Stokes High School Lady Wildcats Soccer Team and Coach Chris Manley have obtained a high level of achievement through hard work and dedication; and

**WHEREAS**, the 2014 **West Stokes High School Lady Wildcats Soccer Team** completed the Season with a 25-2-1 record and ended the season as the **North Carolina High School Athletic Association 2-A Soccer Team Champions**, with members and coaching staff:

#### **Team Members:**

**Hannah Bunn, Madisen Collins, MacKenzie Edwards, Jordon Grubbs, Taylor Hopper, Alex Jellison, Mara Loonen, Jordan Moore, Liz Nail, Lupe Ramirez, Sarah Robinson, Anna Russell, Morgan Snow, Katie Thompson, Anyssa Van Meter, and Tori Van Meter**

#### **Coaching Staff:**

**Coach Chris Manley, Manager Will Moore, and Manager Trent Washer**

**WHEREAS**, the success of this team has brought honor to West Stokes High School and Stokes County.

**NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, that a copy of this Resolution will be presented to Principal Kevin Spainhour, County Athletic Director Annette Johnson, and Coach Chris Manley and each member of the West Stokes Lady Wildcats Soccer Team as an expression of the Board's appreciation for their hard work and dedication.

Adopted this 13<sup>th</sup> day of **October 2014**.

James D. Booth - Chairman

Ronda Jones -- Vice Chairman

J. Leon Inman - Commissioner

Jimmy Walker - Commissioner

Ernest Lankford -- Commissioner

Attest:

Darlene M. Bullins -- Clerk to the Board

Coach Chris Manley commented:

- On behalf of Principal Kevin Spainhour, who was unable to attend, staff and students of West Stokes High School, would like to thank the Board of County Commissioners for the recognition to the Lady Wildcats Soccer Team
- To win a state championship, it takes a lot of talent, hard work, and a few breaks along the way
- We were truly blessed
- Just want to say this is a great group of students who have a lot of character and are a true pleasure to coach
- All the seniors on the team last year are at college and were unable to attend tonight's recognition
- Just want to express our appreciation for the Resolution adopted by the Board of Commissioners

The Board presented a copy of the Resolution to each member of team who was present along with the coaching staff. The Board presented a copy of the Resolution to Coach Manley for West Stokes High School.

Chairman Booth again expressed the Board appreciation to the players for their attendance tonight and for bringing back a state championship to Stokes County.

### **NC FAST Update**

County Manager Rick Morris presented the following NC FAST Update from Social Services Director Stacey Elmes:

Hard Launch for Stokes County was October 20, 2014. All applications for Medicaid, Work First, and Food and Nutrition Services must be taken in NC Fast. All reviews must also be completed in NC Fast. Applications have increased and now with NC Fast being completely live, reviews and pending applications must be converted from the EIS legacy system to NC Fast prior to processing the review/application which can take up to 2 ½ hours per case. As cases come up for review over the next year, this additional workload will extend as the full conversion from EIS to NC Fast is completed. This will be a one-time effort (for 12 months) but will require a significant amount of staff time to complete the conversion process.

CMS allowed for 75% reimbursement (rather than 50%) for work completed in EIS during the months of July, August, and September which we should know this week how much extra reimbursement we will receive. I would like to propose that with the extra reimbursement that we allow our workers to work paid over time until the money is depleted to work on conversions. Right now, we are struggling but processing applications and reviews timely. With hard launch and conversions, we will not complete tasks timely. We have discussed the possibility of hiring a temporary staff or two, but feel that using current staff who know what they are doing to get the job done is the more appropriate response to this situation.

**Workload Concerns:**

- For Family & Children's Medicaid and Adult Medicaid, we currently have 2 past due reviews, 87 that are incomplete for October, 547 that are due for November, and 763 that are due for December.
- Clean up reports from the state are large as well as workers having to complete changes on individual cases.
- Special Assistance and CAP (Community Alternatives Program) cases will convert mid-December and will have to be converted from EIS.
- MQB-E cases will have to be converted in January from EIS.
- The Federal Market place opens November 15, 2014 through February 15, 2015. The state will drop applications to counties to process.
- We have found reviews that were not on NC Fast reports but on Data Warehouse reports that are causing additional work to be completed.

Once a year has gone by (November 1, 2014 – October 31, 2015), the expectation is that all Medicaid reviews will be completed and will have been converted from EIS to NC Fast and work will resume as usual, just like it did with the Food and Nutrition program.

As you can see in the charts below that the programs have grown, and staff size has stayed the same for a number of years. We have reached the point where the programs and workload have outgrown our staff.

<b>Medicaid (WFFA, Family &amp; Children, Adult)</b>						
	<u>2008</u>	<u>2009</u>	<u>2010</u>	<u>2011</u>	<u>2012</u>	<u>2013</u>
Caseload Size	6842	7093	7335	7572	7859	7868
Staff	12	12	12	12	12	12

  

<b>Food and Nutrition Services</b>						
	<u>2008</u>	<u>2009</u>	<u>2010</u>	<u>2011</u>	<u>2012</u>	<u>2013</u>
Caseload Size	3987	4848	5728	6846	7068	6872
Staff	5	5	5	5	5	5

If you have any questions, please let me know.

County Manager Rick Morris commented:

- Bottom line – the conversion will be going on for approximately one year
- During that one-year period, it will be a little unpredictable to know how much resources, if any, will be needed



- I have requested that Director Elmes start addressing this in the metrics chart if paid overtime does not address the issue

Chairman Booth opened the floor for discussion.

Commissioner Walker confirmed with Manager Morris that he and Director Elmes feel the department is currently where they need to be with things looking promising for the immediate future.

Manager Morris responded:

- This is kind of a heads up now that everything has to be put in NCFAST along with the conversion during the next year
- There could be some bumps in the road along the way
- DSS Director Elmes will be keeping the Board updated
- Could have to have some additional resources like the Board approved last budget year for additional staff to help with the conversion

Chairman Booth noted that all counties are using overtime to implement NCFAST.

Chairman Booth expressed appreciation to Manager Morris for the update.

## **GENERAL GOVERNMENT – GOVERNING BODY – DISCUSSION AGENDA**

### **Health Department – Staffing Issues**

County Manager Rick Morris noted the following regarding the Health Department –

Staffing Issues on tonight's Discussion Agenda:

- Health Director Lenhart will be going out on an extended leave starting around the middle of November
- Director Lenhart will be out approximately 6 weeks or longer
- Will be the "Acting Health Director" per the Board's approval in an earlier meeting once Director Lenhart leaves
- County has run into an issue regarding the lack of nurses to execute the mission of the Health Department
- Information provided by Director Lenhart is a fairly major structural change regarding the pay for register nurses (PHN – Public Health Nurse)
- If we have no nurses, can't provide the services
- Recommendations are designed to bring the department up to a level where we can maintain a staff needed to do the mission which produces the revenue allocated in the Fiscal Year 2014-15 budget
- Do not want a repeat of Home Health which is a similar situation

- During the November and December, have a lot of things going on – Petree Project, Budget Guidance Work Sessions regarding the upcoming Fiscal Year 2015-16 along with the being the “acting health director” while Director Lenhart is on leave
- Have requested this item be moved to tonight’s Action Agenda in order to have Director Lenhart interview and hopefully get some employees on board before he goes
- Would request Director Lenhart provide the Board with an overview of the issues

Director Lenhart discussed the following information with the Board:

- Have had several nurses resign during the past months, some just after training was completed
- County must provide training if the nurse doesn’t qualify for a Public Health Nurse
- Longtime nursing supervisor, currently on contract, will be leaving Thursday, October 30<sup>th</sup> to take a state position
- This leaves me with basically two nurses, one who will be going out on family medical leave early January 2015 if not sooner
- Two nurses can’t handle all the programs and the clinic
- Actively recruiting nurses
- Takes about a year to fill a vacant nursing position due to the starting salaries
- Provided statistical information from surrounding counties regarding starting salaries for public health nurses which was compiled by the MAPS Group for the UNC School of Government along with current average salaries for similar positions also compiled by the MAPS Group
- Hard to recruit a nurse with surrounding counties having a much higher starting salary
- Graduate nurses can start in the \$50,000 range right out of school with no experience
- Public Health Nurses must have at least two years of nursing experience and one year in public health per the Office of State Personnel to qualify

Director Lenhart discussed the following with the Board:

The Health Department is currently facing serious personnel shortages that will significantly impact the capability of the department to conduct normal operations, execute its programs, and generate the revenue projected in the current year budget. The department’s personnel is continuing to leave the Health Department to pursue better opportunities with higher salaries. As of October 31, 2014, the Health Department will have the following critical shortages:

- PHN Supervisor I
- Public Health Nurse II (CC4C/PCM Lead Nurse)
- Public Health Nurse II (Child Health)
- Social Worker II
- Nutritionist II (WIC)
- Physician Extender (FNP or PA)
- Health Educator

The most pressing need is to address the shortage of Public Health Nurses (PHN II) (Registered Nurses). Starting on Nov 3<sup>rd</sup>, only two PHN II nurses will be available to staff the clinic. One of October 27, 2014

these two will be going on family medical leave for 6 to 12 weeks starting in January 2015 or sooner.

During this period of personnel shortages, the items listed below still must be completed:

- State of the County Health Report is due December 15, 2014
- Accreditation duties must be passed to a qualified individual and must be worked on weekly if not daily for next accreditation cycle.
  - Nursing Supervisor and Health Educator are the two individuals who worked on the first accreditation; both have resigned
- CCNC Case management nurse position must be filled. This position is a revenue generating position and can be filled by a non-medical staff member. If this position is not filled by December 1, 2014 our Community Health Grant payments will stop.
  - Very critical position
  - Revenue is used to fund the primary care clinic
  - Revenue went from \$125,000 last year to \$48,000 this year
  - Future reimbursement will be paid based on individuals enrolled into other programs (one of five categories – obesity, smoking, asthma, hypertension, and diabetes)
  - Each time an individual is enrolled into a program, the Health Department will receive \$50 along with clinical visits revenue
  - Can generate as much as the original grant revenue of \$125,000
  - Have to get the program running by December 1, 2014 as explained in item #4
- CC4C/PCM lead nurse must be filled.
- Susan G. Komen grant is due December 1, 2014
  - Provides funding for mammograms to those who can't afford the procedure
  - Provides funding for approximately 180 mammograms each year
  - Screens patients for breast cancer and refers to the appropriate facility
- Prenatal nurse must be available when currently qualified nurse departs on family medical leave
  - Program is going very well
  - Baptist Hospital staff is afraid there will not be a prenatal nurse to cover the program when the current nurse leaves for family medical leave
  - Will be combining the prenatal nurse position with the child health nurse position

**Recommendation:**

Request the Board of County Commissioners authorize the following immediate actions for the Health Department in order to maintain operations and prevent significant revenue losses:

**1. Increase Nurses Pay**

Starting pay for our nurses fully qualified as a PHN II with experience is Grade 72 Step 7A (\$38,597). We are losing nursing staff to surrounding counties and agencies for more money. I highly recommended that we move the starting salary from pay grade 72 Step 7A to Pay Grade 72 Step 15A for all nursing staff (PHN IIs) both currently employed and new employees. Current employees will be given one additional step for each year of continuous county service. As you will see on the enclosed attachments, we will move the bar closer to other counties starting/current

salaries. This change in starting pay could help retain and recruit better qualified individuals. **I recommend changing the starting salary to Grade 72 Step 15A \$45,258 to attract qualified individuals.**

## **2. Fill the Nursing Director Position**

This position has been vacant since March 2012 and has been filled by contract. This individual will be taking another position with the state as a state consultant. Currently, the starting salary for our Nursing Supervisor is Grade 74 Step 7A \$41,746. **I recommend changing the starting salary to 74 Step 18B (\$52,482) to attract qualified individuals.**

Until this position is filled, recommend we appoint an interim nursing director. We currently have one individual that can handle these duties and is willing to do the work. However, this is the nurse who will be going out on FMLA in January 2015. **For assuming this role as interim nursing director, I recommend a \$400 stipend per month should be paid until she departs on FMLA.** This individual will also handle mandated on call. During this period, we will continue to actively recruit a new nursing director at the recommended higher starting salary.

- Very hard position to recruit

## **3. Fill Other Vacant Nursing Positions**

Use a nurse recruiting agency to fill at least one to two of the open positions on a temporary basis to ensure continuation of clinic services and program services that are required by GS 130A. If we cannot fill these positions as a temporary stop gap, we will be forced to limit services and this will result in the loss of additional patients and revenue.

## **4. Fill Health Net Grant Position and CC4C Positions**

Not filling the Health Net/Grant position will have the following impacts:

- Loss of Grant funds \$48,900 (At this time this is a capitated amount; this is the maximum amount the Health Department can receive; however, the potential to draw more depends on other health departments throughout the state not meeting their goals.
- Loss of Revenue for not enrolling patients  
As of September 2014, the Health Department saw 2,658 patients which will result in \$132,900 in revenue (\$50 X 2658)  
Approximately half of the 2,658 patients which are 1,329 X \$50 will produce in another \$66,450 of future revenue.

The Health Director talked to Jim Graham of the North West Carolina Community Care Network on October 22, 2014 and he stated that this position can be filled by a non-medical staff member. I recommend that we reclassify our Medical Office Assistant (Grade 62) to Office Assistant IV (Grade 63). The reclassification will be a Grade 63 from a Grade 62. In addition, this position will be the primary individual responsible to learn and coordinate the Health Department's State Accreditation process.

**Cost of Reclassification = \$935 which will be paid by Health Net Grant – no county dollars**

#### **5. Fund CC4C Positions**

Have the network fund these two positions since their starting salary will be at \$48,000. We will not have to pay fringe or other benefits on these staff members which in the long run will save funding. These will be network employees at their expense but housed at our Health Department. No increase of revenue is associated with these positions only the funding is channeled through the network to us to meet the state requirements.

Total funds from Carolina Community Care Network are shown below:

- PCM = \$83,185.92
- CC4C = \$72,460.80

These positions will be housed at the health department. Health department staff (nursing supervisor) will have limited supervision duties. The remaining money will go for salaries for the CC4C full time position which is currently filled and for overhead expenses.

- Both positions are vacant
- Would recommend relinquishment of the two current vacant positions
- Nurses will be paid by Network; housed at Health Department
- Funding should be a “wash”

#### **Actions to be taken:**

- **Approve the starting salary for PHNIIs to Step 15A \$45,258 on current Grade 72**
- **Approve the starting salary for PHN Supervisor I to Step 18B (\$52,482) on current Grade 74**
- **Approve the additional steps for current PHNIIs effective November 8, 2014**
- **Reclassify the Medical Office Assistant position (Grade 62) to Office Assistant IV (Grade 63) – no county dollars**
- **Approve a stipend of \$400 for interim PHN Supervisor I per pay period for current employee**
- **Approve the relinquishment of two current (vacant) positions being funded by the Carolina Community Care Network (Social Worker II and PHN II)**

**There is lapsed salary funding available in the current budget to cover the requests for FY 2014-15**

Health Director Scott Lenhart

Health Director Lenhart continued:

- Last year, the Health Department saw 2,658 without insurance

- Health Department is eligible for state funding that is not used by other counties if patients are being seen
- Will work diligently to have positions filled if possible before going out on Family Medical Leave
- Currently have three applications for PHNII positions to review

Chairman Booth opened the floor for discussion.

Vice Chairman Jones commented:

- Been down this road several times
- It all boils down to the gap in pay with surrounding counties
- It seems to have pervaded throughout the county no matter what your job is
- I am gathering that if we don't do the recommendations, we are going to lose a lot of funding; more than the \$10,000 gap
- Questioned Director Lenhart if her understanding of the situation is correct?

Director Lenhart responded:

- The first program to go, if positions are not filled, will be the primary care clinic – Health Net Grant – that is a lot of funding
- Health Department is the safety net for approximately 6,000 individuals in Stokes County that does not have any insurance
- There are only going to be so many providers that will take a limited number of people who don't have insurance and can't pay
- It is all about making money for the private sector, if they can't make money, they close the doors
- If there is nowhere to go, where do they go? Public Health – that is what public health is for – we are the safety gap
- If the primary care clinic goes, the Health Department will be doing just true public health

Vice Chairman Jones continued:

- Very concerned by the chaos factor, each time we get someone, we are used as a training ground and then they are gone
- How much does it cost the County?

Director Lenhart responded:

- The nurse leaving on Thursday just returned from her two-week training in Raleigh
- It costs the County two weeks salary, hotel/meal reimbursement, and fuel expenses

Commissioner Inman commented:

- You have done an excellent job outlining the real situation; concerns me a great deal
- Stand to lose a lot in terms of grant funding, etc
- Have been trying to piece mill this salary during my years as a commissioner and was successful most of the time
- Have finally run that horse about as far as we can take it

- Increases in essential things such as fuel, groceries, health insurance, etc. continue
- There was a time that people were willing to stay in Stokes County to work to be near home
- It is obvious with an increase of \$10,000 in an adjoining county, they are going to drive to that county for the additional wages
- The training costs for the county is huge
- A fair salary is not always the same salary
- We are talking about individuals who are specialized in their trade, highly skilled; they have taken the necessary training to attain this
- Quite frankly, I can't blame them; they must think about their families and their livelihood
- Think we have a situation that is going to have to have some very serious consideration
- Going to be on board with Director Lenhart's recommendation

Commissioner Lankford commented:

- Confirmed with Director Lenhart that he is currently seeking nurses through a staffing agency that specializes in nurses, physicians, social workers, etc.
- Confirmed with Director Lenhart that North Carolina Health Alliance, a part of the North Carolina Public Health Association, does not have any nurses in our area to fill our gap at this time
- Confirmed with Director Lenhart that he is talking with other agencies whose hourly rate is between \$60.00 and \$75.00 an hour

Director Lenhart commented:

- Working with an agency that specializes in bringing foreign nationals that come to work in the United States; none have public health experience
- Problem will be finding nurses with public health experience
- It is not a field like emergency room, intensive care, coronary care, etc.
- Very expensive using outside agencies
- One nursing position could cost well over \$100,000 a year when using an outside agency

Commissioner Lankford continued:

- Confirmed with Director Lenhart that he has three applications that could possibly turn into a full time position that could start before leaving for Family Medical Leave
- Confirmed with Director Lenhart that one of the current employees will be going out on Family Medical Leave around January 2015 if not sooner
- Confirmed with Director Lenhart that the reclassification will solve the problem with the Health Net Grant Funding
- Like the recommendation presented by Director Lenhart; feel it has been well thought through
- Confirmed that lapsed salaries will cover the additional cost for Fiscal Year 2014-15
- Need public service in our Health Department
- Have a lot of individuals who need the services

- Can live with the recommendation

Director Lenhart commented:

- My goal, before leaving on Family Medical Leave, is to actively recruit for as many open positions as I can
- Have interviews already scheduled for the Health Education Specialist this week

Commissioner Walker commented:

- Seems over the years, there has been some variation of this conversation multiple times
- Stokes is a small, rural county lacking industry
- Don't have a lot of commercial businesses and have to run a tighter ship than some of the other surrounding counties like Davie, Yadkin, Surry, etc; they have a bigger budget and more revenue to work with
- Your department seems to be a little different with a lot of the funding coming from other sources outside the county, by that we don't have as many actual county dollars going into operating the Health Department
- Little too adverse to things being on the agenda and told that it has to be done now
- This was not the way our system was designed to work
- We changed it when I first became a commissioner to Information, Discussion, Action
- This give us time to think, ponder, and evaluate
- Feel like I am getting hit pretty often nowadays for various reasons that you have to do it now
- How would address that aspect of this "only finding out at this meeting and it must be done today versus the normal process"?

Director Lenhart responded:

- This is what happened during the three weeks that I was out with my wife's illness, this is what I came back to
- Was taken completely off guard with the last two resignations
- The stack of cards all fell at the same time
- Even if I had been here, it would have happened this way
- Two of the vacancies occurred during the last two weeks and one happened right before I left on Family Medical Leave with my wife
- If I can't fill some of the vacant nursing positions, I will only have one nurse when the other nurse goes out on Family Medical Leave
- Have no turnover problems with LPNs or administrative staff
- Going to be honest, don't get nurses with experience; nurses don't qualify for the positions and must be trained
- Some find out that public health is not for them
- They can make almost twice the pay at private facilities, can't blame them
- We are not getting qualified candidates other Health Departments are getting due to the starting pay
- Forsyth County had a similar situation a few years ago



- Forsyth County did a cost study and changed salaries for nurses in that region; they now have no problem recruiting nurses; PHNI, which is a lower grade than the PHNII positions in Stokes, start out around \$50,000
- The other key point is that I will be out on Family Medical Leave starting November 13<sup>th</sup> and would like get things worked out if possible before I leave

Commissioner Walker continued:

- Confirmed with Director Lenhart that the nurses are going to other facilities that pay better
- Confirmed with Director Lenhart that he had three nurses that had transferred to Rockingham County since he became Health Director
- Confirmed with Director Lenhart that nurses can either have a 2-year degree with two years nursing experience including one year in public health or then sent for training if no public health experience or a 4-year degree which includes a Public Health Nursing rotation and one year of public health experience
- Not quite comfortable with this much detail with the Health Department, was quite comfortable with a Health Board which could oversee the operation of the department with a much closer perceptiveness
- Feel like I am peddling hard to transition to the current format
- Normally, we would get a recommendation from the Board of Health for our consideration
- Not as comfortable yet as I could be
- Over the years, it has been suggested that maybe we consider being a Health Department for true public health services
- Are we fighting an uphill battle trying to continue to staff a primary care unit in our Health Department when we are facing the kind of competition that we are facing from surrounding counties and challenges that seem like they never end?
- We are going to up our salaries some, but you see what is still looming out there
- How would you answer someone today, if they asked you that question?
- What are your thoughts about having a true Public Health Department?

Director Lenhart responded:

- We are fighting an uphill battle
- True essential services provided by the Health Department excludes primary care
- Most health departments across North Carolina are having similar issues with the staffing of nurses
- There is no transition for a LPN to a PHNII Nurse without losing time or money
- When I first came here, primary care was something that I could cut if I had too (three years ago)
- One thing I have seen that is needed in rural Stokes County is primary care
- If we cut that service now, we will be doing a disservice to a lot of people in Stokes County
- When I came to the Health Department, there were 39 Health Departments that offered primary care, Stokes being one of them
- Today, there are over 60 health departments providing primary health care across North Carolina

- There are 85 health departments in NC
- When the governor did not accept the Medicaid funding, that put 6,000 to 7,000 people in Stokes County out of reach of health insurance
- We are in primary care for the long haul
- All health departments have issues with recruitment, no show rates, transportation, etc.
- We are not alone in the game
- We need primary health care in Stokes County
- It is an uphill battle, it is always going to be a fight
- Feel if we position ourselves and be more competitive, we can recruit younger people
- Younger people are our assets
- We need to invest the time and energy to bring them to Stokes County
- Stokes County is a great place to raise a family; still close enough to the city to go to the ballgames, movies, etc.
- When I try to recruit a Nutritionist with a master's degree and the starting salary is only \$31,000, that is an insult to that profession
- I was able to get a qualified Nutritionist II with the salary approval from the Board of Commissioners, but I could lose her at any time
- Have a great staff that are dedicated
- Most of the mid level providers come here to qualify for loan repayment; they can pay back their school loans if they work here for two years
- Feel we can recruit nurses with the recommendations
- Need to offer primary care services, if they are cut, will lose jobs, people and most of all, there will people who can't afford health care not being able to receive health care
- If we don't see them, they have to go to the emergency room
- No one who is seen for primary care never slides to a zero copayment

Commissioner Walker commented:

- Most everyone that comes to a clinic has chosen the option to come to the clinic to keep from going to an emergency room; they have chosen the most cost effective way of receiving health care over the most expensive way
- Instead of closing down options, I have been in favor consistently and steadfastly in keeping as many options, for example King Clinic, as well as the clinic in Danbury, for the very reasons you just mentioned
- It is so cost effective
- It also helps people receive the care they need, who otherwise may be extremely challenged in finding the care
- I don't know of many private practice physicians that welcome the disadvantaged
- I am in support of those who need the care and receive the care
- Do not limit the options, but find ways to provide the services where the people are

Director Lenhart responded:

- If we continue our existing services and include the primary care clinic, Baptist Hospital is looking at us for a training center for their rural health doctors which will help out

Commissioner Walker questioned if that would benefit the clinic in the southwest part of the County?

Director Lenhart responded:

- In the southwest part of the County, we don't qualify for a HRSA Site
- Can't put a HRSA provider at the clinic in the southwest part of the County
- The main thing that we have to look at to do services in the King Clinic, mentioned in the Accreditation Report, is to bring the facility up to current standards which will cost money
- In order to serve people there, we have to spend money

Commissioner Walker commented:

- That is true in many ways
- What is the impact of the county budget to bring things to where you think they need to be given the situation you are describing tonight? Total cost?

Director Lenhart responded:

- I have not figured that out yet
- It all depends on the starting salaries of the nurses that are hired according the county's current salary plan
- Could give a rough estimate, but it would only be an estimate
- This year, 36% of the Health Department's budget is county funding because of funding changes
- During the last two fiscal years, it was zero county funding
- Only exact figure is the reclassification which is an increase of \$935

Commissioner Walker continued:

- Let me rephrase the question
- With the additional revenue, will there be a cost for the recommendations for the County?

Director Lenhart responded:

- It is hard to answer that particular question since there are so many variables that could change the amount
- There is definitely enough lapsed salaries for this fiscal year
- I really would have to wait to see who is hired and at what salary
- There is state funding that also offsets the cost
- Looking at what I have now with lapsed salaries, grant revenue, and additional revenue, the answer would be no cost to the county, but it could be very close to be a "wash"

- Can guarantee, lapsed salaries will cover this fiscal year

Commissioner Walker continued:

- If approved, costs will go on for more than this year
- Wish we had that specific information
- If we had done it according to policy, we could possibly have received that information
- Sometimes, we have this discussion and Commissioner Lankford has raised this concern: "When we raise salaries in one department, other departments notice"
- Do you feel there will be a ripple effect in other departments such as DSS?
- Could there be comments such as "We are good, dedicated employees as well, what about us?"
- A lot of employees are working for very reasonable wages compared to what they could be making in other counties.
- Could there be a ripple effect if we did a pretty large scale salary adjustment for just one department?

Director Lenhart responded:

- There could be a ripple effect
- Feel it would be for the professional staff only because that is what I have seen in my department, can't speak for DSS
- I had to start someplace
- Nursing positions are critical for accreditation, revenue, keeping programs alive, and compliance with the state contract
- You could say the same scenario with the professional part time employees who received an increase in their hourly wage with the adoption of this year's fiscal budget
- Don't think it will be a ripple effect in my department
- Need to stay in competition with the surrounding counties
- Have even asked other health directors to provide applicants who they don't hire our job openings, hoping they may come here

Commissioner Walker continued:

- Sympathetic to your situation
- I am sorry that you are continually going through what it seems like you are having to go through to be adequately staffed
- It has to be an ongoing, tremendous challenge for you
- Sitting in my seat here, hearing request after request, you are almost at more meetings than you are not at

Director Lenhart responded:

- I have been up here most of the time for one profession – registered nurses

Commissioner Walker continued:

- That doesn't seem to be going away, my best guess is that when we adjust, we are only going to catch up for a brief time before things start moving away from us again

- Not sure what to do to solve the long term problems

Director Lenhart responded:

- I have some recommendations that I will be talking to the county manager next week during our scheduled budget discussions

Commissioner Walker continued:

- As far as Rick being the health director, I am not a big fan of county managers multi-tasking, but he seems to feel like he is in the right gear for it
- He seems to be coming in at a pretty challenging time
- We have had some interim health directors come in at different times
- He talks about how busy he is
- Are you comfortable with how things seem to be moving with the county manager in that position?

Director Lenhart responded:

- I will be more comfortable with Mr. Morris as the acting health director rather than an interim health director being brought in
- If some of these major issues are resolved, the Health Department can run itself with the current administrative staff for that short time line that I am out (probably 6 weeks)
- The State requires that a health department have a health director in case they need to talk to someone regarding issues
- Feel it would be a waste of county funding to hire an interim who would mostly likely just be sitting in the office
- More comfortable with Mr. Morris as the acting health director
- Mr. Morris often visits the department and has been down several times to become familiar with certain procedures, issues, etc.

Commissioner Walker responded:

- In several weeks, we will know if it was a good decision or not
- You mentioned foreign nationals, not overly excited that we are having to look in that direction

Director Lenhart responded:

- This company fully trains the individuals
- It is totally my decision, if I am not comfortable with them, I am not bringing them in
- This agency provided our physical therapist gap for Home Health until a part time physical therapist was hired
- I am fully comfortable working with this agency

Commissioner Walker responded:

- I am just wondering how comfortable our users, our citizens would be

Chairman Booth commented:

- Think most questions have been answered tonight
- Appreciate the detailed report regarding this critical issue

Chairman Booth questioned the desire of the Board regarding moving the item to tonight's

Action Agenda?

Commissioner Inman, Commissioner Lankford, and Vice Chairman Jones = yes  
Commissioner Walker = yes with reservations

Chairman Booth directed the Clerk to move the item to tonight's Action Agenda.

### **GENERAL GOVERNMENT – GOVERNING BODY – ACTION AGENDA**

#### **Proposed Order - NCDOT – Abandonment of Right-of-Way SR #1916 Coon Joyce Road**

Chairman Booth entertained a motion to approve the following proposed Order to abandon the Right-of-Way for SR#1916 Coon Joyce Road:

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA )  
COUNTY OF STOKES )

OFFICE OF THE COMMISSIONERS  
STOKES COUNTY GOVERNMENT  
DANBURY, NORTH CAROLINA

### **ORDER**

#### **CLOSING SR #1916 COON JOYCE ROAD**

The Stokes County Board of County Commissioners, after notice and public hearing pursuant to N.C.G.S. 153A-241, makes the following findings and conclusions:

1. The State of North Carolina abandoned the road outlined in purple on the attached map of SR#1916 Coon Joyce Road and will not maintain that road;
2. The requesting property owner is the sole property owner along the portion of the road to be closed;
3. Closing the public road is not contrary to the public interest and no individual owning property in the vicinity of the road would be deprived of reasonable means of ingress and egress to this property;
4. The Board of County Commissioners concludes that closing of the road pursuant to N.C.G.S. 153A-241 is in the best interests of the sole property owner and the citizens of the County of Stokes.

**IT IS THEREFORE ORDERED** by the Board of County Commissioners of the County of Stokes that since the State will not maintain the abandoned road of SR#1916 – Coon Joyce Road, the abandoned road of SR#1916 – Coon Joyce Road will be closed pursuant to N.C.G.S. 153A-241.

## **CERTIFICATE**

The foregoing **Order** was duly adopted by the Board of Commissioners of the County of Stokes at a meeting on the 27<sup>th</sup> day of **October, 2014**, and appears on the minutes of the said Commission. A certified copy of the order shall be filed in the office of the Register of Deeds of the County.

**WITNESS**, my hand and official seal this the 27<sup>th</sup> day of **October, 2014**.

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**James D. Booth - Chairman**

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**Ronda Jones - Vice Chairman**

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**J. Leon Inman - Commissioner**

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**Jimmy Walker - Commissioner**

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**Ernest Lankford - Commissioner**

**Attest:**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Darlene M. Bullins – Clerk to the Board**

Commissioner Inman stated that based on the fact that there was no opposition and upon hearing the statements from Mr. Greene, he moved to approve the proposed Order to Abandon the Right-of-Way for SR #1916 – Coon Joyce Road. Commissioner Lankford seconded the motion.

Commissioner Walker confirmed with Mr. Greene that there was one sole property owner on this road and will impact only Mr. Couch who is in favor of the abandonment.

The motion carried unanimously.

### **Closed Session Minutes Request**

County Manager Rick Morris presented the following additional information:

- This item was discussed by the Board with the County Attorney at the last meeting
- County Attorney Browder recommended a procedure for the Board to consider
- Think the Board was in consensus that the recommended procedure would be a good procedure to follow

- The Board also had discussion about developing a policy on the release of closed session minutes
- Prepared to develop a policy which would incorporate County Attorney Browder's recommendation if so desired by the Board
- Before the Board discusses a potential policy, would like to call a few items to your attention that need to be part of your discussion:
  - Need to know if future closed session minutes will be a summary or detailed minutes (statute will allow the minutes to be either one)
  - Need to know if the released closed session minutes will be posted on the county website like open session minutes
  - Need to know how often closed session minutes will be reviewed and released
  - Need to know if the Board wishes to follow County Attorney Browder's recommendation of releasing the minutes that have specifically been requested plus future minutes or go back a certain amount of time (will be a significant administrative burden to go back a certain amount of time) (can be done, but will require a good bit of review to make sure only parts that need to be released are released)
  - In your discussion, if you would address those things, it would help us to develop a draft policy for the next meeting
  - Please provide any other suggestions

Chairman Booth opened the floor for discussion.

Commissioner Inman commented:

- I think I had pretty much stated my comments when this was on the Discussion Agenda
- It is time to develop a policy
- On board with the Manager's recommendation to develop a policy

Commissioner Lankford commented:

- That is right along with the way I feel too
- We had the discussion with the county attorney regarding the legal aspects of it
- We now need a policy that will coincide with the legal aspects
- Would like to review the draft policy before taking any action

Vice Chairman Jones commented:

- Heard several decisions that need to be made

County Manager Morris responded:

- Basically, guidance

Vice Chairman Jones continued:

- Thinking about the amount of administrative time and cost to go back a certain amount of time
- Need to think about the time



- Think summary is good
- Feel like the manager is on the right track
- Look forward to seeing the policy to review

Commissioner Walker commented:

- Probably will be rare to find someone who believes more in transparent government than I do
- I think the citizen comfort level is always elevated when they can see the process, they can see  $(a + b = c)$  and how we act as a board
- I don't think there is that much to hide in closed sessions, a lot of it is based on interpretation anyway
- One person can look at it and say, this did not qualify for closed session, the next person can say that this did qualify for closed session, that is perspective
- I think what dictates policy to a great extent is the freedom of information act in the open meetings law
- I think whatever we do must comply with those two laws
- Beyond that, it is a procedural thing
- Schools that I have been to as mayor and Chairman of the Commissioners, seemed to recall a request would be honored in a reasonable time, that is obviously subject to interpretation, as well
- I think if it ever came before a judge, they would have their interpretation of what a reasonable time would be
- I think it is important that we comply with every aspect of what is necessary that we adhere to as a Board
- The only thing that is looming out there for me is the discussion I had with Attorney Browder at the last meeting regarding his recommendation (if all the commissioners agree with the recommendation of the county attorney)
- That still seems to me of reaching a consensus without a meeting; I am a little nervous with that
- If commissioners disagree and we go into closed session and hash it out among ourselves, that is fine, but if all don't do that, I need to be convinced that is not reaching consensus without a meeting per the county attorney's procedures
- I hope this all has been thoroughly researched
- Feel the county attorney and manager have done a good job on this, feel it has moved us a lot closer to where we need to be
- Still amazed over the years, we have gone this long without having to do what we are doing now
- Now that this time has arrived, we need to deal with it in whatever way is appropriate and adequate
- Will rely on the manager and the county attorney, schools that I have attended, wherever there is valid information, but most of all, I will rely on what is fair to the public and what it takes for them to believe that we are operating the way we should in an open, transparent manner, because that is what leads to quality government

Chairman Booth stated that he was hearing a consensus from the Board that the county manager along with the county attorney and any input from the Board develop a draft policy for the Board's review.

Chairman Booth directed the manager to develop a draft policy for the next meeting's Action Agenda for the Board's consideration.

Commissioner Lankford noted that he felt the draft policy needed to be on the Discussion Agenda for further review and discussion by the Board.

Vice Chairman Jones commented:

- Being a draft, it does need discussion
- Could be moved to the Action Agenda that day

Chairman Booth noted that discussion could be on the Action Agenda, too.

Commissioner Walker commented:

- I am hoping we can move away from putting something on the Discussion Agenda and moving it to Action Agenda that same day
- Our procedure was not designed to operate that way
- As mentioned by Chairman Booth, it can be placed on the Action Agenda, discussed and no action taken
- It can then be put back on the Action Agenda at another meeting
- We have at least complied with our procedure by doing it that way

Commissioner Lankford responded:

- The procedure is discussion, then action; that is what I am referring to – following the procedure
- We are talking about a draft procedure that none of us will see before it is delivered to us
- Need time to review

Commissioner Walker responded:

- Agree there needs time for review
- Can be put on Action Agenda, discussed, and then put back on the Action Agenda again if necessary

Chairman Booth responded:

- Will be glad to put on Action or Discussion, what is the desire of the Board?

Commissioner Lankford responded: I have made my preference known

Commissioner Inman responded: I am fine either way, it is going to get full discussion either way

Vice Chairman Jones responded: Fine either way

Commissioner Walker responded: Action Agenda

Chairman Booth directed the Clerk to place the item on the Action Agenda for the next meeting.

Chairman Booth directed Board members to provide Manager Morris suggestions/comments for development of the policy.

**Appointment – Walnut Cove Planning Board/Board of Adjustments – Alternate Member**

Chairman Booth opened the floor for nominations for the Walnut Cove Planning Board/Board of Adjustments – Alternate Member.

There were no nominations for Alternate Member.

Commissioner Lankford noted that he would have a nominee at the next meeting.

Chairman Booth confirmed the appointment had been advertised and placed on the County website.

Chairman Booth entertained a motion to close the nominations.

Vice Chairman Jones moved to close the nominations. Commissioner Walker seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

Chairman Booth, with full consensus of the Board, directed the Clerk to place the item on the Action Agenda for the next meeting.

**Appointment – CenterPoint Human Services – Board of Directors**

Chairman Booth noted that DSS Director Stacey Elmes was nominated at the last meeting to serve on the CenterPoint Human Services – Board of Directors.

Chairman Booth opened the floor for any other nominations.

There were no other nominations.

Chairman Booth entertained a motion to close the nominations.

Commissioner Walker moved to close the nominations. Vice Chairman Jones seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

Chairman Booth polled the Board:

Commissioner Lankford: Stacey Elmes  
Commissioner Inman: Stacey Elmes  
Chairman Booth: Stacey Elmes  
Vice Chairman Jones: Stacey Elmes  
Commissioner Walker: Stacey Elmes

Chairman Booth noted that DSS Director Elmes was unanimously appointed to serve on the CenterPoint Human Services –Board of Directors at the end of Jan Spencer’s term.

(December 31, 2014)

#### **Health Department – Staffing Issues**

Chairman Booth entertained a motion regarding the recommendations from Health Director Scott Lenhart submitted at tonight’s meeting.

Commissioner Lankford moved to approve the following recommendations submitted by Health Director Scott Lenhart:

- Approve the starting salary for PHNIIs to Step 15A \$45,258 on current Grade 72
- Approve the starting salary for PHN Supervisor I to Step 18B (\$52,482) on current Grade 74
- Approve the additional steps for current PHNIIs effective November 8, 2014
- Reclassify the Medical Office Assistant position (Grade 62) to Office Assistant IV (Grade 63) – no county dollars
- Approve a stipend of \$400 for interim PHN Supervisor I per pay period for current employee
- Approve the relinquishment of two current (vacant) positions being funded by the Carolina Community Care Network (Social Worker II and PHN II)

Vice Chairman Jones seconded the motion.

Commissioner Inman commented:

- Have heard from our Health Director and others for several minutes
- Have not heard the manager’s recommendation, would like to hear from the manager

County Manager Morris responded:

- Fully on board with all the recommendations

Commissioner Walker commented:

- Would like to thank Director Lenhart for being as generous with his information as he was, saw this on the Agenda, but had a little trouble fitting all the pieces together
- Realized changing salaries, particularly with this magnitude, could cause some other departments/positions to take notice
- I have support Director Lenhart all along, think you are trying to bring a good level of service to our county, to the people who need it
- I certainly don't want to turn my back (and never will) on the people who have the greatest need, but I am trusting you on this one and the manager that everything is accurate and the projections will be as close as we can make them at this time
- Will support it, but still feel like how we got here is a bit awkward and a bit rushed
- I know there is extraneous circumstances and I am going to support it on that basis

The motion carried unanimously.

### **CLOSED SESSION**

Chairman Booth entertained a motion to enter closed session for the following reasons:

- To discuss matters relating to the location or expansion of industries or other businesses in the County pursuant to G.S. 143-318.11(a)(4)

Commissioner Inman moved to enter closed session for the following:

- To discuss matters relating to the location or expansion of industries or other businesses in the County pursuant to G.S. 143-318.11(a)(4)

Vice Chairman Jones seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

The Board returned to the regular session of the October 27<sup>th</sup> meeting.

### **Adjournment**

There being no further business to come before the Board, Chairman Booth entertained a motion to adjourn the meeting.

Vice Chairman Jones moved to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Lankford seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

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**Darlene M. Bullins**  
**Clerk to the Board**

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**James D. Booth**  
**Chairman**