

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA )  
 )  
COUNTY OF STOKES )  
 )

OFFICE OF THE COMMISSIONERS  
STOKES COUNTY GOVERNMENT  
DANBURY, NORTH CAROLINA  
DECEMBER 22, 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, December 22, 2014, at 6:00 pm with the following members present:

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

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

Chairman Ronda Jones called the meeting to order and welcomed those in attendance.

Commissioner Inman delivered the invocation.

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

Chairman Jones 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 Jones entertained a motion to approve or amend the December 22, 2014 Agenda.

Commissioner Inman moved to approve the December 22<sup>nd</sup> Agenda as presented.

Vice Chairman Walker seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

## COMMENTS

### Manager/Commissioners

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

County Manager Rick Morris commented:

- NC Forestry Control Burns
  - Forest Ranger Jonathan Young has notified the County of the following two Control Burns (provided the Board with maps of the designated areas)
    - Moores's Knob Burn Unit
      - Consists of approximately 200 acres on the south slope of Moore's Knob
      - Scheduled for January 2015 if weather permits
    - Flat Shoals Mountain Burn Unit
      - Consists of approximately 250 acres on the southwest end of the mountain along Young Road
      - Scheduled for February 2015 if weather permits
  - Objective of both burns is to reduce the dangerous levels of forest fuels that have accumulated on the forest floor with the many years of undisturbed activity in these sites
  - Also hope the burns will open up the forest floor allowing for more native plants to regenerate
  - Some of the species of trees found on the sites are fire adaptive species and require fire in order to thrive
  - Will probably do some of the reverse 911 system for folks in the areas to let them know ahead of time about the event; there has already been an article in the Stokes News regarding the upcoming events
- Fiscal Year 2013-14 Audit
  - The county's auditor has submitted the County's FY 2013-14 Audit to the Local Government Commission
  - Audit was held up due to information not being provided by NC Department of Health and Human Services that was needed for the completion of the county audit
  - For all practical purposes, the county's audit was done on schedule
- Upcoming Events
  - Tuesday, December 23, 2014 – Employee Christmas Luncheon
  - Tuesday, January 6, 2015 – Budget Guidance Work Session

Commissioner Booth commented:

- Glad to see everyone here tonight
- Would like to wish everyone a Merry Christmas

Vice Chairman Walker commented:

- Would like to welcome everyone and also wish everyone a Merry Christmas

Commissioner Inman commented:

- Would also like to wish everyone a Merry Christmas and Blessed Holiday Season
- Attended a CenterPoint meeting this past Thursday
  - Letter of Intent (LOI) for merger was submitted to Partners
  - Partners has accepted the LOI
  - Merger and negotiations are beginning
  - Will keep the Board posted

Commissioner Lankford commented:

- Ethics for Life – “Behold, a virgin shall be with child and shall bring forth a son and they shall call his name Immanuel” which translated means “God with Us” -” (Matthew)
- Wish everyone a Merry Christmas

Chairman Jones commented:

- Would like to welcome everyone and wish everyone a wonderful Christmas and a Happy New Year

### **PUBLIC COMMENTS**

The following spoke during Public Comments:

**Buddy Timm**

PO Box 573

Walnut Cove, NC 27052

Re: **A Marriage Resolution**

Mr. Timm read and provided the Board of Commissioners with the following:

“I am disappointed that the Marriage Resolution did not pass, that supported the lawsuit against the Federal Judge’s ruling our definition of marriage is unconstitutional.

The NC Family Policy Counsel mentioned: we must keep these issues alive, The Atheist, Communist, and moral-less Christians want those that stand for morals and truth to stay quiet, and let that which is not marriage be.

The horror of the perverted application of the Separation of Church and State slogan has degenerated America into a cesspool of immorality, violence, and liars from the highest offices; all of which is destructive to freedom and civilized society.

We must remember that in the last century the moral-less Communist, Atheist, and Socialist countries murdered more than 100 million of their own people. That is more people than those killed in all wars combined.

Besides, you took an oath to uphold the Constitution; not the Federal will, opinion or law on no-delegated powers, which are not theirs. Look in the Constitution; we did not delegate to the Federal Government any power over marriage. We did not delegate to the Federal Courts any legislative power, which they obviously used, when they ruled same sex unions are marriage.

December 22, 2014

Traditional marriage satisfies equality before the law, since all men and all women can marry any one of the opposite sex. Yet the Judge ruled, inequality, unconstitutional; therefore, the 14<sup>th</sup> Amendment, Section 5, requires: "The Congress shall have power to enforce, by appropriate legislation, the provisions of this article"; not the Judge, nor his arbitrary law. Same sex unions have been illegal since the beginning of recorded law.

We must govern our State on that which is true. Truth is exclusive by definition. That which is contradictory cannot be true, and that which is not equal, cannot truthfully be. The definition of words cannot have contradiction within themselves, nor openness for anyone's imagination to redefine. Either same-sex unions are "a crime against nature" and unlawful, or they are lawful, but not both. That which was called unlawful for thousands of years cannot be logically called lawful. Truth is the same yesterday, today, and forever; it does not change. One's opinion may change, but not truth. We do not want fraud – that which is not true – taught to our children. Therefore, please submit a Resolution to support the lawsuit to defend Traditional Marriage.

**Joan Slate**

1871 North Stokes School Road

Danbury, NC 27016

Re: **A Marriage Resolution**

Ms. Slate presented the following comments:

- Would first like to thank the Board of Commissioners for their service
- I am a resident and taxpayer of Stokes County
- I am here tonight to express my disappointment with the three commissioners who voted to table a resolution to support Speaker Thom Tillis and President Pro Tempore Phil Berger and their pursuit through our judicial system to take one judge's ruling to the next level
- For me, this is not about approval or disapproval of marriage between a man and a woman nor is this resolution addressing this fact
- In my personal life, I have a relative who contracted AIDS twenty years ago and has been hospitalized at John Hopkins many times and still fights for his life every day
- He gave into pressures at his workplace in what he felt was a climate of intimidation by a male superior
- He has asked for forgiveness from his church family and often speaks publicly about his transgression
- As a teacher, I encountered situations with students that I hoped and prayed would be sheltered from ridicule and teasing
- A kindergarten student in my PE Class would run up the sidewalk everyday as we lined up to go back to the classroom
- He wanted to be the first one at the dress-up center to pick out the dress he wanted to wear
- I hoped that he would not be teased or bullied
- I would actually hesitate at the door to look and see how he was being addressed by his fellow students
- I enjoy performances of male dancers in their profession
- Having visited New York City, I have seen their athletic ability and talent
- Some find this odd and uncomfortable and mock them
- My belief is that God will judge us for our sins and mistakes and has mercy for us

- It is not my place to judge or to ridicule
- I appreciate everyone for all their differences, their citizenship, and their contributions that they make
- To vote for tabling the resolution, tells me that you are for same sex marriage, this confuses me
- I am uncomfortable with this issue and believe that 77% of the voters in this County were not wrong
- I feel blessed that as citizens we can express our feelings
- Thank you for your attention tonight and your service to us

**Amos Elvis**

1250 Carson Watts Road

King, NC 27021

RE: **A Marriage Resolution**

Mr. Elvis presented the following comments:

- I am speaking tonight from the heart
- First of all, I am very saddened and appalled that 3/5 of this Board voted against this resolution
- I do not believe in gay marriage, it is wrong
- It is in the Bible, it is wrong
- 77% of the voters in this County voted for the Marriage Amendment; what 3/5 of this Board did to them was a slap in their face
- Someone has made a comment that only 36% of the people in this County go to church, that is not so; I want to see those figures
- From what I have seen, the roosters have shown their colors and the hen has laid the egg
- It is time for this Board to stand up for Stokes County and do what is right
- I think you have made a very unwise choice voting like you did
- That is all I have to say

**Gregory Hairston**

1070 Brookridge Drive

Walnut Cove, NC 27052

Re: **Parks**

Mr. Hairston presented the following comments:

- I am here tonight again on behalf of the parks in Stokes County
- I thank you for the gesture in the FY 2014-15 budget - providing \$2,000 for each county owned park for improvements
- But when I came to you, I told you that our park was in dire need of help
- Evidently, you did not understand when I came because the expenses and the upkeep goes on
- We are running out of places to get funds

- Since this is a county park, I think the park should be of more interest towards this government because it is county property on lease to volunteers to keep up for the citizens of Stokes County
- I come to you again knowing that there are many decisions to be made in the budget process
- Again, I come to you and appeal to you to include the parks in this upcoming county budget in some form or manner for the operational expenses that they have incurred and continue to incur for the operation of the parks in this county
- This is a government function
- It is the government's role to meet the needs and the desires of the people within the county
- To me, the \$2,000 was just a gesture
- Strong consideration must be made and I appeal to you tonight on behalf of the county parks that you provide a wholesome environment for our children and our families so that they can grow up in an environment that is pleasing and acceptable
- So as you go through your budget process, please, please, include the parks in this upcoming county budget

Chairman Jones thanked those who spoke during Public Comments.

## CONSENT AGENDA

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

Consent Agenda:

### Minutes

- Minutes of December 8, 2014, -- Regular Meeting
- Minutes of December 9, 2014 -- Budget Guidance Work Session

### Sheriff's Department, Emergency Communications, Emergency Medical Services, Social Services, Senior Services, and Contingency - Budget Amendment #31

Finance Director Julia Edwards submitted Budget Amendment #31.

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>Sheriff's Department</b>				
100.4310.000	Salaries & Wages	\$1,610,221.00	\$7,588.00	\$1,617,809.00
<b>Emergency Communications</b>				
100.4325.000	Salaries & Wages	\$378,903.00	\$1,956.00	\$380,859.00
<b>Emergency Medical Services</b>				
100.4370.000	Salaries & Wages	\$1,160,032.00	\$3,586.00	\$1,163,618.00
<b>Social Services</b>				
100.5310.000	Salaries & Wages	\$1,780,550.00	\$11,698.00	\$1,792,248.00

<b>Senior Services</b>				
100.5860.030	Salaries&Wages-Perm. P/Time	\$29,325.00	\$599.00	\$29,924.00
<b>Contingency</b>				
100.9910.100	Leave Contingency	<u>\$100,000.00</u>	<u>\$(22,793.00)</u>	<u>\$77,207.00</u>
	<b>Total</b>	<b>\$5,059,031.00</b>	<b>\$2,634.00</b>	<b>\$5,061,665.00</b>

This budget amendment is justified as follows:

To transfer funds from Leave Contingency for employees that have resigned, retired, or dismissed and to appropriate funds from DSS-Federal reimbursement for the paying of Compensatory Time in the Social Services Department due to the NCFAST project. Vacation paid = \$14,852; Holiday paid = \$1,354; Compensatory Time = \$6,587; NCFAST Compensatory Time = \$2,634.

This will result in a **net increase of \$(2,634.00)** 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>
100.3301.202	DSS- Federal	<u>\$2,087,396.00</u>	<u>\$2,634.00</u>	<u>\$2,090,030.00</u>
	<b>Totals</b>	<b>\$2,087,396.00</b>	<b>\$2,634.00</b>	<b>\$2,090,030.00</b>

#### **Governing Body - Budget Amendment #32**

Finance Director Julia Edwards submitted Budget Amendment #32.

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>Governing Body</b>				
100.4110.130	Unemployment Insurance	\$00.00	\$16,277.00	\$16,277.00
<b>Contingency</b>				
100.9910.00	Contingency	<u>\$105,768.00</u>	<u>\$(16,277.00)</u>	<u>\$89,491.00</u>
	<b>Totals</b>	<b>\$105,768.00</b>	<b>\$00.00</b>	<b>\$105,768.00</b>

This budget amendment is justified as follows:

To transfer funds from Contingency for an invoice received from NC Department of Commerce for unemployment paid for Stokes County.

This will result in a **net increase of \$00.00** 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.

### **Superior Court - Budget Amendment #33**

Finance Director Julia Edwards submitted Budget Amendment #33.

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>Public Buildings</b>			
100.4160.511	Equipment Non-Capitalized	\$00.00	\$1,200.00	\$1,200.00
	<b>Contingency</b>			
100.9910.00	Contingency	<u>\$89,491.00</u>	<u>\$(1,200.00)</u>	<u>\$88,291.00</u>
	<b>Totals</b>	<b>\$89,491.00</b>	<b>\$00.00</b>	<b>\$89,491.00</b>

This budget amendment is justified as follows:

To transfer funds from Contingency for a computer to operate the jury selection software.

This will result in a **net increase of \$00.00** 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.

### **Tax Administration Report – November 2014**

#### **Refund more than \$100 – Real and Personal Property**

Tax Administrator Jake Oakley presented the following Refund more than \$100 – Real and Personal Property (November 2014) at the December 8<sup>th</sup> meeting for the Board's review and consideration at the December 22<sup>nd</sup> meeting:

#### **Refund more than \$100 - Real/Personal Property**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Bill No</b>	<b>Amount</b>	<b>Reason</b>
<b>Piedmont Container Repair</b>	22773343	<u>\$121.19</u>	Vehicle Sold
<b>Total</b>		<b>\$121.19</b>	

### **Proposed Settlement – Outstanding Water Availability Fees – Danbury Water Fund**

County Manager Rick Morris presented the following proposed Agreement, prepared by



Attorney Nicholas Overby, Browder/Overby, P.A., at the December 8<sup>th</sup> meeting for review and consideration at the December 22<sup>nd</sup>:

**Proposed Agreement:**

**AGREEMENT AND RELEASE**

This Agreement and Release is made and entered into this \_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 20\_\_\_\_, upon the authorization of the Stokes County Board of Commissioners, by and between Stokes County ("the County") and the Elizabeth Smith (Trust) ("the Trust") regarding payment of existing and past due water access fees at 107 Courthouse Circle, Danbury, North Carolina and the waiver and release of claims on existing and past due water access fees at 109 Courthouse Circle, Danbury, North Carolina.

**WITNESSETH**

WHEREAS, the Trust, owns the property located at 107 Courthouse Circle; and,

WHEREAS, the Trust, prior to the County's management of the Danbury Water Fund, requested and had installed a second "tap" for separate water service to the second floor of the building at 107 Courthouse Circle; and,

WHEREAS, the County assumed management and control of the Danbury Water Fund in 2008 and, since that time, if not before, both "taps" at this property have been in a state of "deactivation"; and,

WHEREAS, the Trust pursuant to N.C. Gen. Stat 153A-284, is currently being billed separate water access fees on both the 107 Courthouse Circle address "tap" and the 109 Courthouse Circle address "tap"; and,

WHEREAS, said fees have gone unpaid accruing a balance of \$2,789.00 on Meter ID/Account Nbr. 0032 (107 Courthouse Circle) and a balance of \$2,752.00 on Meter ID/Account Nbr. 0033 (109 Courthouse Circle); and,

WHEREAS, the County and the Trust wish to resolve the issue of these past due fees and have agreed upon a settlement which will result in full payment of the fees on the "tap" at 107 Courthouse Circle Danbury, North Carolina (Meter ID/Account Nbr. 0032) and a removal/deletion of the "tap" at 109 Courthouse Circle, Danbury, North Carolina (Meter ID/Account Nbr. 0033).

NOW, THEREFORE, IT IS RESOLVED that, in consideration of the receipt of \$2,789.00 from the Trust and the mutual releases and promises herein contained and for other good and sufficient consideration the receipt of which is hereby acknowledged, the parties covenant and agree as follows:

- I. The Trust hereby pays the amount of \$2,789.00 to the County, representing full payment of the fees owed by the Trust for the "tap" at 107 Courthouse Circle, Danbury, North Carolina (Meter ID/Account Nbr. 0032).
- II. The Trust further agrees to stay current on payment of the water access fees associated with the "tap" at 107 Courthouse Circle, Danbury, North Carolina (Meter ID/Account Nbr. 0032), from this point forward until such time as it no longer owns said property.
- III. The County agrees to remove/delete the "tap" at 109 Courthouse Circle Danbury, North Carolina (Meter ID/Account Nbr. 0033).
- IV. The County releases the Trust of any and all liability and claims for moneys currently owed as a result of water access fees charged to the Trust for the "tap" at 109 Courthouse Circle, Danbury, North Carolina (Meter ID/Account Nbr. 0033).

- V. Any future re-activation of the "tap" known and referred to as "Meter ID/Account Nbr. 0033" at the building located on this property will require that the "tap" be repurchased and that all applicable fees associated with a new "tap" will be required prior to re-activation.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the parties have executed this Agreement and Release as of the day and year written above and have set forth their signatures and seals with the intention of executing this document under seal.

**ELIZABETH SMITH (TRUST)**

By: \_\_\_\_\_ (SEAL)  
R. Michael Bruce, Trustee

**STOKES COUNTY**

By: \_\_\_\_\_ (SEAL)  
Richard D. Morris, County Manager

**Proposed Resolution – Transfer of Surplus Property – Danbury Vol. Fire Dept. & Rescue Squad, Inc.**

County Manager Rick Morris presented the following proposed Resolution for the Transfer of Surplus Property to Danbury Vol. Fire Department & Rescue Squad, Inc. at the December 8<sup>th</sup> for review and consideration at the December 22<sup>nd</sup>:

**Resolution authorizing sale of personal property worth less than \$30,000.00  
(G.S. 153A-176; 160A-267, 160A-279)**

**WHEREAS**, The County of Stokes owns a 2005 Ford Crown Vic that has become surplus; and

**WHEREAS**, North Carolina General Statute 160A-279 authorizes the County to appropriate funds to any public or private entity which carries out a public purpose, the County may, in lieu of or in addition to the appropriation of funds, convey by private sale to such entity any real or personal property which it owns.

**WHEREAS**, Procedural provisions of North Carolina 160A-267 Private Sale shall apply;

**WHEREAS**, the Board of Commissioners are convened in a regular meeting;

**THEREFORE, THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS OF STOKES COUNTY RESOLVES THAT:**

1. The Board of Commissioners authorizes the Support Services Supervisor to sell with or without compensation the following vehicle to:

Danbury Volunteer Fire Department & Rescue Squad Inc.  
2005 Ford Crown Vic Serial Number 2FAHP71W25X149454

2. The Support Services Supervisor shall publish a notice summarizing this Resolution and transfer of ownership of said vehicle shall not be executed pursuant to this resolution until at least ten (10) days after the date notice was published.

Adopted the \_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_ 2014.

December 22, 2014

Ronda Jones - Chairman

Jimmy Walker – Vice Chairman

J. Leon Inman - Commissioner

Ernest Lankford - Commissioner  
test

James D. Booth – Commissioner

Darlene M. Bullins  
Clerk to the Board

**Special Meeting – Jail Expansion – Tuesday, January 20, 2015**

Chairman Ronda Jones submitted the date of Tuesday, January 20, 2015 at 10:00 am for a Special Meeting to discuss possible jail expansion for the Board's consideration at the December 22<sup>nd</sup> meeting.

Vice Chairman Walker moved to approve the Consent Agenda as presented. Commissioner Inman seconded the motion.

Vice Chairman Walker confirmed the following with Finance Director Julia Edwards regarding Budget Amendments #31 and #32:

- Budget Amendment #31
  - The amount of \$22,703.00 is being transferred from the Leave Contingency for payoffs of vacation, holiday, and compensatory time paid to employees who retired, resigned or were dismissed.
  - The amount of \$2,634.00 is for compensatory time paid to employees working overtime on NCFAST Conversion
- Budget Amendment #32
  - The amount of \$16,276.87 had not been budgeted in Fiscal Year 2014-15 due to the County now pays a set amount for each employee for unemployment insurance
  - The amount invoiced was actually for previous fiscal years (detailed report was provided with the invoice for the county's review)
  - The Finance Director had been told at a workshop there would not be any need to budget funds for this fiscal year (F/Y 2014-15)

County Manager Morris responded:

- Will try to see if there will be an invoice in FY 2015-16 for any unemployment compensation and budget for it appropriately

The motion carried unanimously.

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

### **Animal Control Advisory Council Update:**

County Manager Rick Morris noted that Dr. Debbie Cowan, Animal Control Advisory Council Chairman, had requested time on the Agenda to provide an Animal Control Advisory Council Update.

Dr. Cowan discussed the following:

- Would like to breakdown tonight's update in what we have accomplished and what we hope to accomplish in the future
- Want to let the Board of Commissioners (BOCC) know how much the Animal Control Advisory Council appreciates the support from the Board of Commissioners and the time spent by the County Manager and the Clerk to help the Council
- What has been accomplished:
  - BOCC approved an increase in fines for noncompliance with the rabies vaccine law which was well needed
  - BOCC approved a privilege license fee for breeders of five or more dogs which is great and will bring in additional revenue
  - BOCC approved increasing the fines for the nuisance ordinance noncompliance
    - The whole idea of the fines, especially with the nuisance laws, is that most of the time it is the same people who just don't care what their pet is doing
    - These ordinances are put in place to help the neighbors and the pet who could possibly get shot
    - Hopefully the increase in the fines will make people realize that they need to keep their dogs from going over to the neighbors and terrorizing other animals
  - BOCC approved an increase in shelter adoptions which includes a voucher to help spay and neuter; these vouchers are starting to be used which is a very positive step for the animals in our shelter
  - BOCC approved getting better training for the Animal Control Officers (ACOs) who really need additional training
    - Most ACOs don't receive a lot of training
    - ACOs must deal with animals and the people
    - The more training an ACO receives, the better they can perform their job
  - Appreciate the BOCC's approval for the implementation (hopefully in January 2015) of a new mobile computer program which is to help the ACOs keep better track of who they have seen, what was said and to help the Advisory Council better help the ACOs to get things done

- What the Animal Control Advisory Council would like to accomplish:
  - Once the new mobile computer program is up and running, the Council would like to schedule a couple of meetings with the magistrates to help the ACOs better write up their reports for possible court issues
    - This will help the ACO be better prepared for court cases
    - This will help animals who are taken to the shelter and never picked up
    - Fines will provide additional revenue for the County
    - In general, the new computer program will help the ACOs do what they should be doing – animal control, not animal pickup, not animal killing, not animal adoption
- Problems at the Animal Shelter
  - For the past four to five years, we have been putting band aids on issues such as painting, outside runs, etc. which kept the state inspector from failing the shelter each time
  - In December, the state did their inspection of the County's Animal Shelter and it failed
  - I am sorry to say this, but it is time, that the State did not pass the facility
  - One of the problems why the inspection failed this time was due to not having enough staff at the shelter
  - Understand there are other issues the county must look at, understand taxes and where the funds must go
  - We are running a shelter that we should just stop, not saying that we should not do animal control, saying that we should stop dealing with animals that we can't take care of properly
  - Not being able to care for the animals properly makes our county and our ACOs look bad
  - There are things that we can do until we can rectify the problem to handle some of these issues
  - Animal bites must be handled by ACOs, there is no option there
  - Animals running loose, there are things that can be done, there are ordinances in place that things can be done without having to pick up the animals, so let the ACOs do their job by writing these noncompliance fines which will help the animal issues without having to carry the animals to the shelter where we don't have the manpower to keep them up correctly
  - State cited that the shelter is not being cleaned properly
  - You may or may not know that we are not actually euthanizing the animals properly due to the lack of manpower
  - I am not asking for the BOCC to hire more people, understand the limits
  - The Advisory Council would like for the BOCC to consider when an animal has to be picked up, the animal is farmed out to Surry or Rockingham Counties which prevents issues at our shelter – cleaning, bad press, sending out sick animals, etc.
  - The current shelter is obsolete for housing animals, it is a good office for the ACOs; it is a deplorable place to put animals
  - Friends of Stokes Shelter is working as hard as they can to get a new facility, the problem is finding suitable land for the new facility

- County Manager Morris has worked extremely hard with the Council to find a suitable place, but there are environmental issues
- Once the facility is up and running, then we can deal with animal handling issues
- Right now, the Advisory Council would like for the BOCC to consider shipping any animals that have to be picked up to another shelter
- A dog bite, the shelter staff can properly handle
- The shelter can handle a few animals, they can't handle the amount of animals that are currently coming into the shelter because people are too irresponsible to spay and neuter; the ACOs are getting a lot of flak from the citizens that the ACOs just don't care which is not true
- The ACOs do really care about the animals
- The shelter needs at least a staff of five; understand that funds are just not available for additional staff
- The Advisory Council would be glad to help in any way with arranging for animals to be farmed out
- The Advisory Council would like to possibly schedule a joint meeting with the BOCC to discuss some of the current issues
- Until other arrangements can be made, we need to do some things different with the euthanasia; the correct protocol has been approved but it can't be done with the current staff
  - It takes two people to euthanize an animal correctly and that is when the animal is cooperating
  - One person can't do it
  - Would like for the BOCC to definitely look at this issue immediately
  - Advisory Council would be willing to help, if possible, in any way
- The Advisory Council wants to continue to help the animals, the county, and the citizens of Stokes County
- Appreciate being allowed to speak at the night's meeting

Chairman Jones opened the floor for any questions or comments.

Vice Chairman Walker commented:

- Appreciate the work being done by the Advisory Council
- Would like to process the information provided tonight
- Understand there has been a sizable donation to the Shelter, not sure how that fits into the current situation
- Confirmed with Dr. Cowan that if animals were farmed out to other counties, the euthanasia would be handled by that county
- Would like to have more information on the cost of farming out these animals
- Would like to have the information provided tonight in writing along with the recommendations from the Advisory Council in order to see where we can best go from here
- Lot of the information provided tonight is new and would like to have time to review the information to be able to make the best decision possible

- Would definitely like a written report regarding the information presented by Dr. Cowan tonight

Dr. Cowan responded that she would be happy to have a report prepared for the BOCC.

Commissioner Booth commented:

- Like Vice Chairman Walker, would like to have a written report
- Would like for the County Manager to review the information to see where the County stands

County Manager Morris responded:

- The County has not received a copy of the inspection report from the State

Vice Chairman Walker responded:

- Reiterated that he would like a report with tonight's information from Dr. Cowan

Commissioner Booth responded:

- Have no issues with a report from Dr. Cowan, but would like for the manager to review the report and provide his findings to the BOCC

Chairman Jones commented:

- Would like to thank the Advisory Council for being proactive and realistic
- Glad to hear there may be some solutions for some of the issues

Dr. Cowan responded:

- Advisory Council will be glad to help in any way possible
- Will be glad to do some of the leg work in obtaining the information needed for the BOCC to make a decision on which way to go from here regarding the farming out of animals to other shelters
- Feel in the long run, it will actually save the County money for a while

Chairman Jones expressed the Board's appreciation for the update.

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

### **NCFast Update**

County Manager Rick Morris presented the following NCFast Update from Social

Services Director Stacey Elmes:

### **Stokes County Department of Social Services**

Medicaid/Food & Nutrition/Work First Applications:

YEAR	Number of Applications Taken
2013-2014	6998
2012-2013	7247
2011-2012	7540
2010-2011	6700
2009-2010	6355
2008-2009	6262
2007-2008	5555

Medicaid/Food & Nutrition/Work First Caseloads:

YEAR	Number of Open Cases
2013-2014	12,441
2012-2013	12,907
2011-2012	13,003
2010-2011	11,908
2009-2010	10,576
2008-2009	9,474
2007-2008	8,908

Income Maintenance Employee Requests:

YEAR	REQUESTED	APPROVED
2013-2014	n/a	n/a
2012-2013	n/a	n/a
2011-2012	n/a	n/a
2010-2011	1 Income Maintenance Caseworker	no
2009-2010	n/a	n/a
2008-2009	2 Income Maintenance Caseworkers	no
2007-2008	2 Income Maintenance Caseworkers	no

County Manager Morris noted the following:

- DSS Director Elmes will be happy to discuss the information provided regarding the statistical information provided
- At the last meeting, the BOCC requested that an update regarding morale be provided
  - Morale goes up and down depending on the number of caseworkers there are to do the workload
  - Turnover causes issues which seems to make morale go down – when a caseworker leaves, that work must continue and has to be distributed to other workers who are already overloaded with cases and the new NCFast issues
    - Takes at least 6-7 weeks, if the position has to be posted external



- When vacancies are filled and contract workers are available, morale seems to go up
- One of Director Elmes' recent reports to the BOCC noted that the State recommends 26 Income Maintenance Caseworkers for Stokes County; currently DSS has 17 caseworker positions
- Director Elmes feels there needs to be somewhere in between 17 and 26 positions
- Would like to provide the BOCC with an update of how the department is attacking the NCFAST issues
  - Have three contract positions (contracts terminate June 30, 2015) who do nothing but conversions
  - Don't expect the conversions to be done by June 30, 2015 and expect the contracts will have to be extended into the 2015-16 Fiscal Year to get the conversion completed
  - Counties are now receiving 75% reimbursement from the State for income maintenance caseworkers instead of 50%; the additional 25% is being used to pay for the contract workers and to pay for overtime for current full time staff
  - Income Maintenance Caseworkers are mandated to work at least 5 hours overtime each week
  - The additional 25% reimbursement will continue even after the conversion is completed
  - The most efficient and lowest cost would be to utilize the 25% additional state revenue and county funding to add additional government positions
  - Contract workers are hired, trained, and then usually leave when they can find a permanent full time job
  - There is a lot of time spent by other staff training contract workers
  - As the conversion is completed, will have to look at the number of income maintenance caseworkers the County needs to manage the caseloads
- Would like for the BOCC to review the information provided by Director Elmes regarding the number of applications taken, number of open cases, and the number of income maintenance caseworker requests that have not been approved
- Can see that there were seventeen caseworkers in 2007-08 when there were 8,908 open cases and still have seventeen caseworkers in 2013-14 when there is 12,441 open cases
- DSS Director Elmes will be happy to discuss the information at the next meeting

Chairman Jones opened the floor for discussion.

Commissioner Booth commented:

- Noted the additional 25% revenue from the state will generate approximately \$150,000 this fiscal year to help get the conversion completed
- Also noted the additional 25% revenue from the state will continue indefinitely
- Feel there will be additional revenue left after providing the funds for the three contract workers
- Fortunate to have the additional funding from the state to help with the NCFAST

County Manager Morris responded:

- Contract workers are only doing conversion work which does not help with the open cases currently being handled by each worker
- Additional revenue is also being used to pay overtime to current full time workers
- When the conversion is completed, will have to look to see how many positions are needed to manage the caseloads and how many positions can be afforded

Vice Chairman Walker commented:

- Very concerned about the morale, not only for DSS, but for all the departments
- Would like for morale issue to be updated at each meeting until there seems to be a handle on the situation
- Questioned Manager Morris, "What is the end game, as far as morale, at DSS?"

County Manager Morris responded:

- As far as income maintenance caseworkers, it is having enough people on staff to do the work
- It all comes back to turnover which goes beyond DSS

Vice Chairman Walker commented:

- Would like to further discuss turnover
- Realize that we are a small county, situated among larger counties and that our pay scale can't match other counties; however, we know that turnover is expensive
- We spend the resources to train employees and they go to another county once they are trained
- That is costing the Stokes County citizens
- Would like for the manager to take a look at the turnover rate and at least make a recommendation for a long term way to deal with this issue
- Keep hearing the same comments about turnover rates, employees being trained and leaving to go to work for another county

Commissioner Lankford commented:

- Understand that once NCFAS is completed, it is supposed to be a more efficient process than the current system
- In my opinion, if it is going to be more efficient, it will take less people than more people
- Will need to see the end results once NCFAS is completed before making any decisions about additional staff
- Should wait to see what the end results are before trying to decide what is needed now

County Manager Morris responded:

- Very good point made by Commissioner Lankford regarding the efficiency of the system
- Agree that once NCFAS is completed, that will be the time to analyze what is needed in the department

- Very concerned about the efficiency of NCFAST with all the issues with the implementation of the system

Commissioner Inman commented:

- Agree with Commissioner Lankford's comments about the efficiency
- According to the state, once the system is complete, it should be less man hours
- If this doesn't hold true, need to let the state (legislators) know that this system is not working
- County is incurring additional cost with the implementation of the new system
- Agree we need to give the system an opportunity before looking at hiring additional staff

Commissioner Booth commented:

- Would like to know how long the conversion implementation will take to complete with the NCFAST System
- Reiterated the additional staff revenue
- Hope the economy will improve which may decrease the number of individuals needing services
- Lot of questions to be answered before looking at adding additional staff

Vice Chairman Walker commented:

- Listen with interest with the other commissioners' comments
- Optimistic that the system will provide better efficiency
- Would still like for the manager to put some thought and consideration (long term) in what it is going to take regarding the turnover rate
- Even if the system is more efficient, we are still at a competitive disadvantage to the surrounding counties
- Could still have significant turnover issues
- The turnover rate is not new, have been hearing issues with other departments for many years
- May be getting close, even if we are financially challenged, to ask how long do we want this continuing pattern of turnover to keep repeating itself
- Would like for the manager to share his thoughts at a budget session or another meeting

Commissioner Booth commented:

- Want to make sure that everyone knows that Stokes County is not alone with the issues in NCFAST; all the counties across the State are having similar issues with the NCFAST implementation

Chairman Jones expressed appreciation to Manager Morris for the update.

### **Surplus Tax Foreclosed Property**

County Manager Rick Morris presented the following information regarding Surplus Tax

Foreclosed Property:

- Tax parcel #5987-00-27-0299 – Deed Book/Page 379/1686
- .56 acres located on Pilot Westfield Road in Stokes County
- Bid in the amount of \$2,197.61 was received from Mr. Marcus Flynt and presented to the Board at the November 10, 2014 meeting
- Upset bid process was followed and deadline to upset the bid was 5:00 pm on December 5, 2014
- No upset bids were received
- Total outstanding taxes and legal fees as of November 10, 2014 was \$2,197.61
- Board of Commissioners has the option of accepting or rejecting the offer from Marcus Flynt
- Tax Administrator Jake Oakley and Support Supervisor Danny Stovall recommend accepting Mr. Flynt's offer to purchase tax parcel #5987-00-27-0299 for his bid of \$2,197.61

Chairman Jones opened the floor for discussion.

The Board had no issues with the Agenda item.

Commissioner Booth suggested placing the item on the January 12<sup>th</sup> Action Agenda.

Chairman Jones, with full consensus of the Board, directed the Clerk to place the item on the January 12<sup>th</sup> Action Agenda.

**Appointments – Firemen's Relief Fund**

County Manager Rick Morris presented the following fire department recommendations for Appointments/re-appointments to the Fireman's Relief Board of Directors:

<b>2015 Fireman's Relief (County Commissioner Appointed)</b>	
<b>DEPARTMENT</b>	<b>Appt 1-1-15 Rotate off 1-1-17</b>
<b>Station 39 Danbury</b>	<b>Norman Scott</b>
<b>Station 41 Double Creek</b>	<b>Tom Tilley</b>
<b>Station 34 Francisco</b>	<b>Atherton Jessup</b>
<b>Station 36 Northeast Stokes</b>	<b>Gary Wilkins</b>
<b>Station 31 Pinnacle</b>	<b>Travis Sink</b>
<b>Station 38 Sauratown</b>	<b>Randall Smith</b>
<b>Station 40 South Stokes</b>	<b>Bobby Boles</b>
<b>Station 37 Stokes Rockingham</b>	<b>Susan Washburn</b>

<b>Station 35 Walnut Cove</b>	<b>James Teague</b>
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Chairman Jones opened the floor for nominations:

Commissioner Lankford nominated the following:

<b>2015 Fireman's Relief (County Commissioner Appointed)</b>	
<b>DEPARTMENT</b>	<b>Appt 1-1-15 Rotate off 1-1-17</b>
<b>Station 39 Danbury</b>	<b>Norman Scott</b>
<b>Station 41 Double Creek</b>	<b>Tom Tilley</b>
<b>Station 34 Francisco</b>	<b>Atherton Jessup</b>
<b>Station 36 Northeast Stokes</b>	<b>Gary Wilkins</b>
<b>Station 31 Pinnacle</b>	<b>Travis Sink</b>
<b>Station 38 Sauratown</b>	<b>Randall Smith</b>
<b>Station 40 South Stokes</b>	<b>Bobby Boles</b>
<b>Station 37 Stokes Rockingham</b>	<b>Susan Washburn</b>
<b>Station 35 Walnut Cove</b>	<b>James Teague</b>

Chairman Jones entertained a motion to close the nominations.

Commissioner Booth moved to close the nominations. Commissioner Inman seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

Chairman Jones, with full consensus of the Board, directed the Clerk to place the item on the January 12<sup>th</sup> Action Agenda.

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

##### **Proposed Contract – ROK Technologies, Inc. GIS/TAX Website**

Chairman Jones entertained a motion to approve the proposed contract with ROK Technologies Inc. for a new GIS/Tax Website which was presented at the December 8<sup>th</sup> meeting.

Vice Chairman Walker moved to approve the proposed contract with ROK Technologies Inc. for a new GIS/Tax Website. Commissioner Inman seconded the motion.

Commissioner Lankford commented:

- Confirmed with Manager Morris that the terms of the agreement (5.2 Term and Termination) automatically continue for additional 12 month periods unless terminated by either party with at least a 90 days written notice prior to the expiration of the term
- Confirmed with Manager Morris that either party may terminate the agreement (5.6 Termination for Cause) upon the material breach of the other party, if such breach remains uncured for 60 days following written notice to the breaching party
- Confirmed with Manager Morris that the provider warrants (6. Provider Warranties) that the deliverables and provider tools will conform to Client's applicable specifications when delivered and for a period of one year thereafter

Commissioner Booth commented:

- Noted the initial cost is \$5,000 with an annual cost thereafter of \$6,000 per year; an addition to the county's budget

The motion carried unanimously.

### **Proposed Cooperative Spay/Neuter Services Agreement**

County Manager Rick Morris noted that Candis Loy, who will be administering this program, was present for today's meeting if there were any questions.

Chairman Jones entertained a motion to approve the following proposed Cooperative Spay/Neuter Services Agreement which was presented at the December 8<sup>th</sup> meeting:

### **NORTH CAROLINA**

### **STOKES COUNTY**

#### **COOPERATIVE SPAY / NEUTER SERVICES AGREEMENT**

THIS AGREEMENT is between Stokes County, North Carolina (the "county"), party of the first part; and "Spay Stokes", a North Carolina Non-Profit organization (the "Provider"), party of the second part.

#### **WITNESSETH:**

For the purpose and subject to the terms and conditions hereinafter set forth, the County hereby contracts for the services of the Provider, and the Provider agrees to provide the services to the County in accordance with the terms of this Agreement. The purpose of this Cooperative Spay-Neuter Services Agreement is to allow the County to obtain spay-neuter funds from the State of North Carolina, through the ICARE program, and use those spay-neuter funds to engage the Provider as an independent contractor, to administer a program to provide qualified low income residents of the county with affordable spay-neuter services.

## **I. SERVICES TO BE PROVIDED**

The services to be performed by the Provider shall be as follows: (1) Administer a dog and cat spay/neuter financial assistance program for low income Stokes County residents; and (2) Provider will use funds paid pursuant to Section III of this Agreement to supplement Provider's existing low cost spay/neuter program. All funds payable to Provider pursuant to Section III of this Agreement must be used for the benefit of applicants residing in Stokes County.

Provider shall partner with licensed veterinarians to deliver the spay/neuter surgeries. It is understood that Provider will have the sole responsibility for location, contracting and other wise providing spay/ neuter options through veterinarians and veterinary clinics. The County shall not be required to enter into any agreements with veterinarians or veterinary clinics for the provision of spay/neuter services contemplated by this Agreement. Provider hereby represents and warrants to the County that all veterinarians performing services for clients as contemplated by this Agreement have in force veterinary medical malpractice insurance of commercially reasonable policy limits which will cover acts of veterinary medical malpractice in such amounts as to provide adequate coverage prior to allowing any such veterinarian to perform services for clients as contemplated by this Agreement. Provider shall retain evidence of such insurance for each veterinarian who performs services contemplated by this Agreement and such evidence of insurance shall be provided to the County upon request. The Provider agrees to defend, indemnify, and hold harmless the County from all loss, liability, and claims or expense (including reasonable attorney's fees) arising from the services required or contemplated herein (including the provision of animal medical services by Provider's contractors, assignees, employees and agents).

## **II. TERM**

The services of the Provider shall begin on the 1st of January, 2015, and shall be provided until December 31, 2015.

## **III. PAYMENT**

A county eligible for reimbursement of spaying and neutering costs from the North Carolina Spay / Neuter Account shall apply to the Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services by the last day of January, April, July and October of each year to receive a distribution from the Account for that quarter. The application shall be submitted in the form required by the Department and shall include an itemized listing of the costs for which reimbursement is sought. The provider shall fill out the reimbursement form and submit to the county for processing and mailing to the Department.

Provider shall then submit an invoice to the County for services provided on a quarterly basis. Payment to the Provider will be made with the funds received from the State Spay / Neuter Fund. The invoice shall contain Provider's name and federal tax identification number and shall be signed and dated by an officer of Provider. Invoices should be sent to:

Stokes County, P.O. Box 20, Danbury, North Carolina 27016

Payments made to Provider only for "Qualified Residents"

For purposes of this Agreement, a "Qualified Resident" is a person whose annual household income is under three hundred percent (300%) of the federal poverty level guidelines published by the United States Department of Health and Human Services or an individual who qualifies for one or more of the programs of public assistance administered by the Department of Social Services. It is understood that for each spay / neuter surgery performed pursuant to the Agreement, Provider

shall receive and review all submitted applications. Qualified applicants will have an appointment for services scheduled by the Provider. All qualifying documents and applications will be kept in a locked filing cabinet under the possession of Spay Stokes. All information will be kept in strictest of confidence. All appointments scheduled will be with veterinarians who have: (1) existing contracts with Provider; and (2) that have given Provider the insurance information required herein. Provider will pay the veterinarian the cost of the surgery directly, and County shall have no liability or other obligation whatsoever to any veterinarian or veterinarian clinic for payment of costs associated with surgery or other procedures performed by veterinarians for Qualified Residents whether or not the County is obligated to reimburse Provider for these same services. If ever audited and found wanting, Spay Stokes will be responsible for reimbursing the County. In the event the County is not reimbursed 100% for surgeries in any quarter, the County will seek reimbursement from Spay Stokes for the difference.

#### **IV. RELATIONSHIP OF PARTIES**

Provider is an independent contractor of the County. Provider represents that it has or will secure, at its own expense, all personnel required in performing the services under this Agreement. Such personnel shall not be employees of or have any contractual relationship with the County. All personnel engaged in work under this Agreement shall be fully qualified and shall be authorized or permitted under state and local law to perform such services. It is further agreed that the Provider will obey all State and Federal statutes, rules and regulations that are applicable to provisions of the services called herein. Neither Provider nor any employee of the Provider shall be deemed an officer, employee or agent of the County.

Provider shall keep records in a manner consistent with the requirements of the NC ICARE program and provide these records to the County as needed.

#### **V. TERMINATION**

Provider may terminate this Agreement upon thirty (30) days written notice to the County, and the County may terminate this agreement upon thirty (30) days written notice to the Provider.

#### **VI. INDEMNIFICATION**

Provider agrees to defend, indemnify, and hold harmless the County, for all loss, liability, claims or expense (including reasonable attorney's fees) arising from bodily injury, including death, to any person or persons or property damage caused in whole or in part by the negligence or misconduct of the Provider, except to the extent same are caused by the negligence or willful misconduct of the County.

It is the intent of this section to require the Provider to indemnify the County to the extent permitted under North Carolina law.

#### **VII. NON-ASSIGNMENT**

Provider shall not assign all or any portion of this Agreement, including rights to payments, to any other party without the prior written consent of the County.

#### **VIII. ENTIRE AGREEMENT**

The parties have read this Agreement and agree to be bound by all its terms, and further agree that it constitutes the complete and exclusive statement of the Agreement between the parties unless



and until modified in writing and signed by the parties. Modifications may be evidenced by tele-facsimile signatures.

#### **IX. GOVERNING LAW**

Both parties agree that the laws of the State of North Carolina shall govern this Agreement.

Stokes County, North Carolina  
By: \_\_\_\_\_  
Chair, Board of County Commissioners

Spay Stokes  
By: \_\_\_\_\_  
President

Commissioner Booth moved to approved the proposed Cooperative Spay/Neuter Services Agreement. Commissioner Inman seconded the motion.

Chairman Jones opened the floor for any questions.

Commissioner Booth commented:

- Confirmed with Manager Morris that this will be funded with state funds with no cost to the county
- Confirmed with Manager Morris that the proposed agreement includes a 30 days written notice for termination by either parties if needed

County Manager Morris responded:

- Proposed Agreement includes language in the event the County is not reimbursed 100% for services in any quarter from the State, the County will seek reimbursement from Spay Stokes for the difference
- Zero risk for the County

Vice Chairman Walker commented:

- Questioned Ms. Loy how this agreement will make things better in the County or improve things in the County?

Ms. Loy responded:

- The program offers financial assistance to Stokes County citizens who can't afford to spay/neuter their pets
- Have already processed and approved this year 45 applications
- The Animal Shelter can't offer this type of program
- Most animals that come from the shelter are not spayed or neutered
- Animal Shelter staff is passing along the information about the program to citizens who adopted pets
- We offer transports every month from King to Kernersville which is good for elderly citizens who do not want to drive to Kernersville
- We can offer citizens a much lower cost (have an arrangement with a facility in Kernersville) which actually was reduced this past May
- We basically raise the funds to pay for the program

- Will not cost the county any money
- We have funds available if the county does not receive 100% reimbursement from the State
- With more animals being spayed/neutered, there are a lot less animals going into the Animal Shelter
- Since the cost was lowered in May, we have had 15 animals per month to transport along with scheduling of 15 to 20 appointments for citizens to take their pets to Kernersville

Vice Chairman Walker confirmed with Ms. Loy that the program encourages citizens to spay/neuter their pets.

Commissioner Inman commented:

- Appreciate the hard work being done by dedicated individuals like Ms. Loy to provide this type of program
- This is a real key to controlling unwanted pets in Stokes County
- Great program

Commissioner Booth commented:

- Great program which provides financial aid and transportation that can be utilized by our citizens

Ms. Loy responded:

- This program also helps to identify pets that do not have current rabies vaccinations
- The procedure can't be performed unless the animal is up to date on the rabies vaccination

The motion carried unanimously.

#### **Health Department – Staffing Issues – Health Education Specialist**

Chairman Jones entertained a motion to approve the request for a hiring range of \$29,000 to \$33,000 for the vacant Health Education Specialist in the Health Department which was presented at the December 8<sup>th</sup> meeting.

Vice Chairman Walker moved to approve the request for a hiring range of \$29,000 to \$33,000 for the vacant Health Education Specialist in the Health Department. Commissioner Inman seconded the motion.

Vice Chairman Walker commented:

- My motion was based on my understanding to have a person in this position this hiring range was necessary to fill the position which is needed for a variety of reasons

Chairman Jones opened the floor for discussion, questions, or comments.

Commissioner Lankford commented:

- There has already been a lot of discussion on this item
- Questioned administrative staff if additional steps for experience would be added to the \$33,000 which could make the salary considerably more than \$33,000?

Personnel Officer Darlene Bullins responded:

- Experience has already been calculated for the individuals who have applied and been interviewed for the position with no one going over \$29,000
- The individual's starting salary would be between the requested hiring range of \$29,000 and \$33,000 with no additional steps added for experience
- The request is to allow the Health Director to go between \$29,000 and \$33,000 in order to fill the position

Commissioner Lankford continued:

- My recommendation before and remains to go up to \$30,000
- Have issues with the request going up to \$33,000
- Can't support the request

County Manager Morris noted:

- The three that were qualified for the position have already turned down amounts from \$26,000 to \$29,000

Commissioner Booth commented:

- Information was provided to the Board from eight counties (some like sized and some being surrounding counties)
- If you add all the starting salaries for this position, you get an average of \$29,400 for a hiring salary
- The request is up to \$33,000
- County's starting salary for this position is \$26,000
- We know the starting salary will be \$33,000 if the request is approved which will be a 17% increase if the starting salary is \$30,000 and about a 25% increase if the starting salary is \$33,000
- This is not the only position that is vacant in the County
- Understand there is other funding besides County, but if the position was 100% County funded, would that make a difference?
- We have other positions in the County that are 100% County funded
- I am with Commissioner Lankford and will approve up to \$30,000 as suggested by Commissioner Lankford

- With the current salary compensation plan, if the starting salary is \$30,000 and a person is qualified with experience, they will be making more than \$30,000
- If we start at \$30,000, we will be \$600 above the average of the other eight counties

Vice Chairman Walker commented:

- Try to remind myself often not to try to micromanage our directors and county manager
- Confirmed with Manager Morris that both he and the Health Director both have stated to fill this position, it would take somewhere between \$29,000 and \$33,000 which is being requested
- Have confidence in what the manager and director have stated about filling the position
- I am not going to second guess their recommendation, I am going to support their recommendation and request

Commissioner Inman commented:

- Confirmed with administrative staff the starting salary for this position would be between \$29,000 and \$33,000 with no additional steps added for experience and education

Vice Chairman Walker commented:

- Confirmed with administrative staff that this type of action has been approved for other positions particularly in the Health Department
- Confirmed with administrative staff that if the individual's experience and education had placed them about \$29,000 on the county's salary compensation plan, we would not be having this discussion

County Manager Morris reiterated:

- The request allows the Health Director to start an individual who does not qualify above \$29,000, between \$29,000 and \$33,000 which is consistent with other hiring ranges approved by the Board

Commissioner Booth commented:

- I understand what Vice Chairman Walker is talking about micromanaging to a certain extent
- I am not into micromanaging, but the Health Department is not the only department in the County
- I could see this happening in every department
- Feel a 17% increase on a starting salary is big to me which will be above the average of the eight counties

Commissioner Inman commented:

- Confirmed with Manager Morris that each applicant that has been interviewed have already turned down the amount on the salary compensation plan where they qualified which was below \$30,000

County Manager Morris responded:

- There is a specific scope of work that goes with this position which was provided to the Board at a previous meeting
- The position does 2/3 of the benchmarks that are associated with the accreditation
- If we do \$30,000 and can't fill the position, my question would be "How long are we going to leave the position vacant with these tasks not being done?"
- Eventually it will impact the accreditation, probably very quick
- May find someone for \$30,000, but "how long do we wait?"

Vice Chairman Walker responded:

- Confirmed with Manager Morris that there have been 8 hires in this position during the last ten (10) years
- If you have had 8 hires in the past 10 years, there is a problem which could be the salary

Commissioner Lankford responded:

- Could be other things beside salary

Vice Chairman Walker commented:

- Understand it is a very important position that has a bearing on the accreditation

Commissioner Booth commented:

- Reiterated that going up \$30,000 puts the County above the average of the eight counties compared too

Commissioner Inman commented:

- Confirmed with Manager Morris that the position has been vacant since September
- Understand this is a very important position regarding the accreditation
- Would compromise and possibly leave the position open another 30 days; if position is not filled, then make a decision

Vice Chairman Walker commented:

- Ready to vote

Commissioner Booth commented:

- During the past 10 years, one individual held the position 4 different times
- Would approve increasing the starting salary up to \$30,000

Chairman Jones commented:

- Do not want to spend a dime more than we have to, but this an important position
- Is it worth discussing again over \$4,000 within possibly a few months
- Here is an opportunity to close the hiring gap for this particular position which is hard to fill due to the demand of the particular field
- Not a good place to be

Commissioner Lankford commented:

- Like Commissioner Booth stated, there are other departments who have hiring issues
- What if all those departments starting coming for higher hiring ranges, where is the money coming from?
- I am looking at the big picture, don't think everyone is together on the big picture

Vice Chairman Walker commented:

- Sounds like we are not going to be together on this particular issue and that is why there are five members on this Board
- Confirmed with Manager Morris the County's share is 17% which is relatively a small amount
- County Manager is on board, I trust his judgment
- Health Director is on board, I trust his judgment
- Health Director has stated that this is what he needs

Commissioner Inman commented:

- All employees are underpaid compared to adjoining counties, but you always have certain positions that are hard to fill
- Are we just going to leave those positions vacant?
- This particular position impacts accreditation which is extremely significant to draw down state funding
- Understand every dollar is significant
- Don't know that there are other positions that have vacancies that can't be filled; if so, that would put it in a little different range
- I have offered an alternative with no takers

Chairman Jones commented:

- Confirmed with Manager Morris that he provided information at the last meeting that this position also has a financial impact on the county's revenues (grants) which will be more than \$6,000 that is being discussed
- Impacting revenue is my big picture
- I don't think it is healthy to postpone this decision if revenues can be impacted

Vice Chairman Walker commented:

- The County's share of the \$4,000 is \$684

Commissioner Booth commented:

- Have heard Vice Chairman Walker stated many, many times when this has come up with other departments "How is this going to impact other departments?"
- Questioned Vice Chairman Walker why he had changed his position?

Vice Chairman Walker responded:

- In all positions of the County, there is only one Health Education Specialist
- There is no other position that is comparable in any other department

- If another department had a critical position vacant that has an impact on the operation of the department and 83% was funded from other revenue sources, I would certainly give them the same consideration
- Hard to respond to the manager and/or the department head, and try to explain why we are not willing to work with them while understanding the department desperately needs the critical position

Commissioner Booth responded:

- Believe the manager has mentioned several times about keeping trained EMS and E911 personnel due to the county low pay scale
- This is not an isolated case
- We did increase part time emergency services personnel \$2 per hour, which is still lower than other surrounding counties
- This is not an isolated problem
- I am looking long term
- We are getting ready for one of the toughest budgets during my past four years
- Believe that \$684 mentioned by Vice Chairman Walker is very significant, multiply that by approximately 300 county employees, that makes it significant

Chairman Jones commented:

- It is not insignificant, but it is insignificant in the big scheme of things
- We have a pay gap
- Perhaps this is an opportunity to fix one little portion of that pay gap
- It is a risk either way to go

Commissioner Lankford commented:

- Questioned if all options have been looked at? Possibly sharing the position, looking for other candidates?

County Manager Morris responded:

- Can possibly get someone at a lower rate, but once we trained the individual, they will be gone

Commissioner Lankford commented:

- Always have that risk

Chairman Jones called the question.

The motion carried (3-2) with Commissioner Booth and Commissioner Lankford voting against the motion.

### **Appointments – Economic Development Commission**

Chairman Jones noted the following were nominated at the December 8<sup>th</sup> meeting to serve

on the Economic Development Commission:

- Two citizen appointments: Jane Priddy-Charleville and Durward Dunlap
- One Commissioner appointment: Commissioner Leon Inman

Chairman Jones opened the floor for any further nominations.

There were no further nominations.

Chairman Jones entertained a motion to close the nominations.

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

Chairman Jones polled the Board:

Commissioner Booth: Jane Priddy-Charleville, Durward Dunlap, and Commissioner Leon Inman

Vice Chairman Walker: Jane Priddy-Charleville, Durward Dunlap, and Commissioner Leon Inman

Chairman Jones: Jane Priddy-Charleville, Durward Dunlap, and Commissioner Leon Inman

Commissioner Inman: Jane Priddy-Charleville, Durward Dunlap, and Commissioner Leon Inman

Commissioner Lankford: Jane Priddy-Charleville, Durward Dunlap, and Commissioner Leon Inman

Chairman Jones, with full consensus of the Board, noted the following were re-appointed to serve on the Economic Development Commission:

- Jane Priddy-Charleville, Durward Dunlap, and Commissioner Leon Inman

### **Adjournment**

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

Commissioner Lankford moved to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Booth seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

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

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**Ronda Jones**  
**Chairman**