

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA)
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COUNTY OF STOKES)
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OFFICE OF THE COMMISSIONERS
STOKES COUNTY GOVERNMENT
DANBURY, NORTH CAROLINA
DECEMBER 5, 2016

The Board of Commissioners of the County of Stokes, State of North Carolina, met for an Organizational Meeting in the Commissioners' Chambers of the Ronald Wilson Reagan Memorial Building (Administrative Building) located in Danbury, North Carolina on Monday, December 5, 2016 at 10:30 am with the following members present:

Commissioner James D. Booth
Commissioner Ronda Jones
Commissioner Ernest Lankford
Commissioner Ronnie Mendenhall
Commissioner Jimmy Walker

County Personnel in Attendance:
County Manager Rick Morris
Clerk to the Board Darlene Bullins
County Attorney Tyrone Browder
Finance Director Julia Edwards
Register of Deeds Kathy Young

Clerk to the Board Darlene Bullins called the Organizational Meeting to order.

INVOCATION

Clerk to the Board Darlene Bullins invited those who wished to join the invocation to please do so.

Commissioner Jones delivered the invocation.

GENERAL GOVERNMENT-GOVERNING BODY-PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Clerk to the Board Darlene Bullins opened the meeting by inviting the citizens in attendance to join the Board in the Pledge of Allegiance.

GENERAL GOVERNMENT – GOVERNING BODY – INTRODUCTION

Clerk to the Board Darlene Bullins congratulated Commissioner Jimmy Walker on his re-election.

Clerk to the Board Darlene Bullins congratulated and welcomed new Commissioner Ronnie Mendenhall.

GENERAL GOVERNMENT – GOVERNING BODY – ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN

Clerk to the Board Darlene Bullins opened the floor for nominations for Chairman of the Stokes County Board of Commissioners.

Commissioner Lankford nominated Commissioner Jimmy Walker to serve as Chairman of the Stokes County Board of Commissioners.

With no further nominations, Clerk to the Board Darlene Bullins entertained a motion to close the nominations.

Commissioner Jones moved to close the nominations. Commissioner Lankford seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

Clerk to the Board Darlene Bullins polled the Board:

Commissioner Jones – Commissioner Walker

Commissioner Walker – Commissioner Walker

Commissioner Booth stated: “I cannot vote for this person at this time, but will support and work with the Chair 110%

Commissioner Mendenhall – Commissioner Walker

Commissioner Lankford – Commissioner Walker

Clerk to the Board Darlene Bullins turned the meeting over to Chairman Jimmy Walker.

GENERAL GOVERNMENT – GOVERNING BODY – ELECTION OF VICE CHAIRMAN

Chairman Walker opened the floor for nominations for Vice Chairman of the Stokes County Board of Commissioners.

Chairman Walker nominated Commissioner Ernest Lankford to serve as Vice Chairman of the Stokes County Board of Commissioners.

With no further nominations, Chairman Walker entertained a motion to close the nominations.

Commissioner Jones moved to close the nominations. Commissioner Mendenhall seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

Chairman Walker polled the Board:

Commissioner Lankford – Commissioner Lankford
Commissioner Mendenhall – Commissioner Lankford
Commissioner Booth stated: “I cannot vote for this person at this time”
Chairman Walker – Commissioner Lankford
Commissioner Jones – Commissioner Lankford

Chairman Walker noted that Commissioner Lankford would serve as Vice Chairman for the Stokes County Board of Commissioners.

GENERAL GOVERNMENT – GOVERNING BODY

Chairman Walker opened the floor for comments from the Board of Commissioners:

Commissioner Mendenhall commented:

- Looking forward to working with each member of the Board
- See great things ahead during the next four years
- Hope and know the group will work well together for the next four years and be able to come to a consensus on many important issues for Stokes County
- Very excited for the opportunity to work with each member of this Board

Vice Chairman Lankford commented:

- Would like to thank Commissioner Mendenhall for his comments
- Would like to review a little bit about what the Board of Commissioners has done during the past four years and even farther back than that:
 - As a Board of Commissioners, this Board has worked together very, very good and has moved this County forward probably as well as any Board has done
 - Things have worked very well when you look at:
 - Business

- Education
- Conservative budgets
- Representing the taxpayers which provides most of the revenue
- Employment
- Being good to a great staff of employees
- Every member has all chipped in a little bit of what experience each member has (including former Commissioner Inman) and made things happen
- It was not just one member, it was all five members
- See this Board as five people working together to make things happen
- If this Board continues to work together, you will continue to see a very strong Stokes County in the future
- I am committed to seeing a very strong Stokes County in the future – serving the total people of Stokes County and seeing that the Board treats each one of them in a fair mode
- Hope the Board can work together to make this happen

Commissioner Booth commented:

- Welcome Ronnie Mendenhall to this Board
- Commissioner Mendenhall ran a very good campaign and led the ticket all the way
- Think this Board, during the past six years that I have served, has moved this County forward in education and job creation (Walmart bringing several jobs & Dollar General already here with more stores to come)
- Don't think the school system can say that we have not been school minded
- Built schools in a very bad recession when no one else was building schools (over \$30 million worth of debt)
- Ribbon cutting for the new community college is scheduled for Thursday, December 8th
- Committed to moving this county even further forward
- Feel this Board will work together to continue to move this County forward

Commissioner Jones commented:

- Congratulations to Commissioner Mendenhall
- Very glad to have Commissioner Mendenhall on this Board and look forward to working with him and the rest of the Board
- Remember working under Commissioner Mendenhall at the school system
 - Remember a conversation one day that Commissioner Mendenhall stated “try not to burn bridges”
 - There are times that you have to burn bridges and stand alone to do what is right
 - I have tried not to burn bridges, but I am good at striking a match when needed

- Hope this Board will continue to work together to do what is best for the County

Chairman Walker commented:

- Want to thank my fellow Board members for their trust and confidence in allowing me to serve as the Chairman of this Board
- Truly view this as the Chairman serving this Board
- Would appreciate any suggestions or recommendations to make the process go smoother to ultimately serve the public
- Would also welcome any concerns
- Will try to be fair and consistent
- Will try to keep the Board informed
- Will also try to put the Board first
- Looking at the Chairman as more of a serving capacity along with leadership
- Appreciate Commissioner Booth's comments about the schools, would like to mention the savings to the County by building schools when costs were probably at their lowest (labor & materials)
- Commissioner Booth was involved in the County seeking QZABonds & QSCBonds (low interest rates) which is a cost saving to the County
- As Vice Chairman Lankford stated, this is a five-person Board and hope to serve the public better being a five-person Board
- Not saying every vote will be unanimous; each member has the ability to reach their own decision about an issue
- Again, will try to be as fair and consistent as possible
- Will be glad to help any Board member in the capacity of being Chairman

Chairman Walker opened the floor for comments from the county staff attending the meeting.

County Manager Rick Morris, Clerk to the Board Darlene Bullins, and Finance

Director Julia Edwards offered the following comments:

- Congratulated Chairman Walker and Commissioner Mendenhall on their election and look forward to working with the Board

County Attorney Ty Browder commented:

- Congratulated Chairman Walker on his re-election
- Congratulated Commissioner Mendenhall on his election
- Look forward to continuing to work with the new Board, Manager, and Clerk

Vice Chairman Lankford commented:

- Would also like to congratulate and welcome Commissioner Mendenhall, don't think I mentioned that in my earlier comments

Register of Deeds Kathy Young commented:

- Congratulated Chairman Walker on being chosen Chairman
- Congratulated Vice Chairman Lankford on being chosen Vice Chairman
- Congratulated Commissioner Mendenhall on his election to the Board
- Look forward to working again with the Board
- Welcome anyone to come by and visit the office at any time
- Seeing you in the departments shows that you care
- Good luck

Former Chairman J. Leon Inman commented:

- Congratulated Chairman Walker on being chosen as Chairman
- Congratulated Vice Chairman Lankford on being chosen as Vice Chairman
- Congratulated Commissioner Mendenhall for this election to the Board of County Commissioners
- Great honor serving this great County
- Have served with great Boards
- Will be one of your strongest supporters
- Stokes County is heading in a great direction
- Stokes County is sitting in a very good light statewide, many envious of the high speed internet that is coming into this County
 - As Manager Morris stated, high speed internet will be a “game changer” for Stokes County
- Keep up the good work

Chairman Walker received consensus from each member that they had no issues with the current seating arrangement and stated that changes could occur later if necessary.

Adjournment

There being no further business to come before the Board, Chairman Walker entertained a motion to adjourn the Organizational Meeting.

Commissioner Booth moved to adjourn the Organizational Meeting. Commissioner Mendenhall seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

Darlene M. Bullins
Clerk to the Board

Jimmy Walker
Chairman