

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA )  
 )  
COUNTY OF STOKES )  
 )

OFFICE OF THE COMMISSIONERS  
STOKES COUNTY GOVERNMENT  
DANBURY, NORTH CAROLINA  
DECEMBER 12, 2016

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 12, 2016, at 1:30 pm with the following members present:

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

County Personnel in Attendance:  
County Manager Richard D. Morris  
Clerk to the Board Darlene Bullins  
County Attorney Tyrone Browder  
Finance Director Julia Edwards  
DSS Director Stacey Elmes  
DSS Social Work Supervisor Lori Priddy  
DSS Administrative Officer Patty St. Hilaire  
Public Works Director Mark Delehant  
Tax Administrator Jake Oakley

Chairman Jimmy Walker called the meeting to order and welcomed those in attendance for today's meeting.

#### **INVOCATION**

Chairman Walker invited those who wished to join in the invocation to please do so.

Chairman Walker delivered the invocation.

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

Chairman Walker invited the citizens in attendance to join the Board in the Pledge of

Allegiance.

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

Chairman Walker entertained a motion to approve or amend the December 12, 2016 Agenda.

Commissioner Jones moved to approve the December 12<sup>th</sup> Agenda as presented.

Commissioner Mendenhall seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

## **COMMENTS – Commissioners/Manager**

Chairman Walker opened the floor for comments from the Board and the County Manager.

Vice Chairman Lankford commented:

- Ethics for Life “And the angel said unto them, Fear not; for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people” (Luke 2:10)
- Wish everyone a Merry Christmas and prosperous New Year

Commissioner Mendenhall commented:

- It is my honor to be here in our first meeting serving as a county commissioner for Stokes County; my home county
- See a lot of faces today that I have known all my life, had many of these folks’ children in school while serving as a teacher and principal
- Always challenged by students, especially my high school students at North Stokes
  - I try to also put that challenge on myself everyday
  - That challenge that I am referring to is:
    - “Never accept mediocrity, always pursue excellence”
- Try to guide my life by always pursuing excellence and not accepting mediocrity
- Merry Christmas and Happy New Year to each of you

Commissioner Booth commented:

- Welcome everyone here today
- Thank everyone for being here today
- Commissioners rode in the King and Walnut Cove Parades
  - Was unable to ride in the King Parade due to a scheduling conflict
  - Threw out a lot of candy at the Walnut Cove Parade
- Hope everyone has a blessed Christmas

Commissioner Jones commented:

- Also enjoyed participating in the Walnut Cove and King Parades
- Wish everyone a wonderful holiday
- Met with the Our Communities of Northwest Stokes regarding the Francisco Property last week

- Committee does have a lot of hurdles, but really hope those can be overcome
- One thing that has really been weighing on my mind is the foster care issue
- Challenge everyone to go into your community and let them know how bad the County needs foster parents
  - Had 100 children last meeting
  - Have 97 children this meeting
  - This really concerns me
  - County is desperate for foster parents
- It is almost a hypocrisy that everyone gets so upset about the animal shelter, but no one is talking about the children
- That has really been weighing on my mind during the past few weeks
- This is a real community problem and we need to get the word out regarding the urgent need for foster parents

Chairman Walker commented:

- Both parades went very well
- Glad to see all the kids
- Participated in the recent ribbon cutting at the new Forsyth Tech Community College in the Meadows area
  - One of the happiest occasions for me – seeing the “state of the art” facility being opened in Stokes County
  - County has been waiting a long time for those doors to be open in Stokes County
  - This new facility will be a great benefit to Stokes County
- Also glad to see everyone here today

County Manager Rick Morris commented:

- County Employee Christmas Lunch – Tuesday, December 20, 2016
- Blood Drive – Wednesday, December 21, 2016 (10:00 am to 2:00 pm)
- Last meeting in December will be on Tuesday, December 27<sup>th</sup> due to the Christmas Holidays

## **PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Chairman Walker noted that the Board of Commissioners will hear Public Comments, but will not respond to Public Comments and that each speaker will be allowed three (3) minutes.

The following spoke during Public Comments:

**Texie Jessup**  
 6621 NC HWY 89 West  
 Westfield, NC  
**Re: Francisco**

Ms. Jessup presented the following comments:

- Here today to thank the county commissioners for working with the Francisco group during the past six (6) months
- The group is very pleased that both groups have been able to work together in the partnership that we have had
- Have accomplished much
- Believe within the week, we will have the septic system in place to be able to use the building for 100 people in an assembly
  - This has been a long time coming
  - Have not been able to use the building
  - Contract was signed on Friday and sent to Environmental Health
  - Understand it then goes to Planning
- Outside track is being used even in the cold weather
- Appreciate the county making sure the grounds were maintained over the summer
- Ready to begin Phase II of our part of the project which will include finalizing a plan for occupancy
  - Hope to have that completed by the end of February
- Phase III will begin once Phase II is completed
  - Phase III will be the final plan for the Board of Commissioners
- We hope to meet the expectations of not only county government, but also the people of Northwest Stokes, particularly the Francisco community
- We hope and expect to have your continued support for this
- Appreciate what you have done so far

**Sri Ananda Sarvasri**

1060 Tyler Road

Walnut Cove, NC

**Re: Happy, Healthy, & Green**

Mr. Sarvasri read and presented the following comments to the Board of County Commissioners:

**The Disgrace of the American Food System**

When we deviate from the natural order, there are consequences. When we destroy our soils through poisonous agriculture, destroy our food quality through food processing (stripping out nutrients), and destroy natural geology through fracking, we reap the consequences. Every time we destroy nature, we destroy ourselves.

In an earlier presentation, I described how our soils have been progressively destroyed and how yield crops that are deficient in minerals, vitamins, and enzymes. I provided a chart showing the exponential rise in degenerative diseases; heart disease, cancer, diabetes, Alzheimer's and others. These degenerative diseases hardly existed a hundred years ago. Now they are rising exponentially. Today, I present charts showing our disastrous food system. It is a disgrace.

Provided the Board of County Commissioners the following charts:

- Chart #1 - Shows a disastrous rise in the consumption of sugar, now at nearly 185 pounds per person per year. White sugar is the primary fuel for cancer. It is proven to be 8 times more addictive than crack cocaine.
- Chart #2 - Shows obesity and caloric intake and how our empty nutrition fuels greater consumption of addictive foods
- Chart #3 - Shows how America is doing much worse than other countries
- Chart #4 - Shows the massive increase in unhealthy fats
- Chart #5 - Shows the massive increase in carbonated, extremely acidic soft drinks
- Chart #6 - Shows the extreme acidity in soft drinks, which causes osteoporosis and loss of teeth; an acidic body correlates with degenerative diseases
- Chart #7 - Shows the massive production of highly acidic soft drinks containing both carbonic and phosphoric acid, now reaching 500 to 600 12 oz. cans per person, per year
- Chart #8 - Shows the massive increase in meat consumption which also causes acidosis in the body. Acidosis is linked to degenerative diseases such as cancer, diabetes, and heart disease. Human beings are not natural carnivores; we could never even think of living like a wolf or a tiger. We would never do the things they do for a meal. We would all recoil in disgust at killing animals with our teeth.

The exponential rise in social problems parallels the exponential rise in degenerative disease. Mental instability, emotional instability, intolerance, crime, violence, drug abuse, prescription drug abuse, suicides – virtually all our social problems have the same primary underlying cause. When we don't have normal body chemistry, we can't have normal body chemistry. Behavior is severely affected.

Surgeon General Dr. C. Everett Koop years ago claimed that 76% of all disease was caused by the highly destructive American diet. Now that figure is much higher. As the leaders of our County, you are responsible for the well-being of the people here. It is your responsibility to alert the people to the dangers facing our communities and take action to reverse these trends.

Three-minute time limit called.

Mr. Sarvasri did not have time to read his entire comments, but presented the following to the Board:

We must return to the natural order. We can't continue to poison our soils and our foods with unnatural chemicals. We can't continue to destroy nutrition through food processing. We must stop the purchase and consumption of intentionally designed, highly addictive foods, the only purpose of which is higher profits.

The highly destructive consequences of the American diet today are insidious. Just looking at foods on the market, you would never know their disastrous repercussions. They look great, even tantalizing. But they are empty foods devoid of essential nutrition and are designed for addiction.

Parents don't understand the severe consequences of the diet they feed their children. School administrators don't understand the severe consequences of feeding our children the devitalized

American diet. Things must change soon. The destructive trends are increasing exponentially, as you have seen from the charts.

The good news is that these trends are reversible. Scientific studies prove that when we return to a natural, organic, whole foods, plant-based diet, amazing transformations take place. In a prison north of Los Angeles, a whole-foods, plant based diet was introduced. Recidivism dropped from an unusual high of 95% to an amazing low of under 2% - an extraordinary drop in crime. The plant-based diet I refer to is being promoted by Kaiser Permanente, one of the largest insurance companies in the nation. It is also the diet from Genesis 1:29, the original plan of nutrition for human beings.

To save our County, we must return to the natural order. We should take the 4 million dollars reserved for a bigger jail and spend it wisely on education and healthy foods for our school children and inmates in the jail. We should eliminate crime in Stokes County. We should eliminate disease, violence, depression, and suicide through a program of education about nutrition and the consequences of our typical American diet. I implore you to take action to make Stokes County the "Happiest, Healthiest, Greenest County in the Nation."

**Paula Duggins**

1546 Asbury Speedway Road  
Westfield, NC

**Re: Francisco**

Ms. Duggins presented the following comments:

- I am here today speaking for Our Communities
- Read the minutes of the last meeting and appreciate the votes of confidence that a lot of you have given us
- I especially appreciate Commissioner Jones' comments that "if anyone can do this, this group can do this"
- I think Cindy Tuttle, Stokes Partnership, has said the same thing
- We certainly believe we can do this
- We have a lot of faith in the people of Our Communities
- I want to make sure that all the commissioners understand that this initiative that is known as Our Communities is much bigger and broader than just the school
- Our focus from the beginning has been economic and community development
- We have worked broadly on a lot of different issues including broadband, tutoring, arts in the school, etc.
- We appreciate the fact that so many of you have come to our meetings and events such as FarmFest
- I have worked in community development and my experience is that for a community initiative such as ours to succeed is that from the beginning there has to be a sense of urgency, a sense of hope, and opportunity
- We started this initiative in May 2014 when we started the first community planning forums
- The school was actually the hope piece
- Two months before we started the first initiative planning, the school department had announced plans to build a stem academy at the school – a middle school

- We felt that this was an opportunity to help launch this broader economic effort
- When you think about the school, think about the opportunity we have to partner in economic and community development and what an opportunity for the Board to do something in a very cost effective way - approach economic development by supporting community initiatives such as ours and such as the initiatives that are taking place in King, and in Walnut Cove
- Do not know how shared Vice Chairman Lankford's views are
- I am concerned about Vice Chairman Lankford's views about the school being quite narrow and not really looking at the big picture
- It only makes sense to me that Vice Chairman Lankford has such a black and white view that if the school is not transferred by July 1, 2017, it is sold
- Because it only makes sense to me, if you are really not planning on any economic development efforts in the northwest and if you are really ready to abandon those communities
- I think that this County has an opportunity for an approach to economic and community development that is low risk to you and does not take a lot of investment and really supports community initiatives
- I think you can support community initiatives by helping with grants in an economic development office

Three-minute time limit called.

Chairman Walker expressed appreciation to those who spoke.

## CONSENT AGENDA

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

Consent Agenda:

- Minutes of November 30, 2016 – Recessed Meeting
- Minutes of December 5, 2016 – Organizational Meeting

## Social Services - Budget Amendment #38

Finance Director Julia Edwards submitted Budget Amendment #38.

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>Social Services</b>			
100.5480.001	LIEAP	\$153,437.00	\$(9,029.00)	\$144,408.00
	<b>Totals</b>	<b>\$153,437.00</b>	<b>\$(9,029.00)</b>	<b>\$144,408.00</b>

This budget amendment is justified as follows:

To appropriate funding for the LIEAP Program to be administered at the County. 100% Federal Funding. The original budget request was for \$153,437.00 – the funding authorization received was for \$144,408.00.

This will result in a **net increase of \$9,029.00** 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>Current Budgeted Amount</b>	<b>Increase (Decrease)</b>	<b>As Amended</b>
100.3301.202	DSS- Federal Funding	<u>\$2,380,962.00</u>	<u>\$(9,029.00)</u>	<u>\$2,371,873.00</u>
	<b>Totals</b>	<b>\$2,380,962.00</b>	<b>\$(9,029.00)</b>	<b>\$2,371,873.00</b>

#### **Governing Body, Contingency - Budget Amendment #39**

Finance Director Julia Edwards submitted Budget Amendment #39.

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 Tax	\$00.00	\$5,266.00	\$5,266.00
	<b>Contingency</b>			
100.9910.000	Contingency	<u>\$175,006.00</u>	<u>\$(5,266.00)</u>	<u>\$169,740.00</u>
	<b>Totals</b>	<b>\$175,006.00</b>	<b>\$00.00</b>	<b>\$175,006.00</b>

This budget amendment is justified as follows:

To transfer funds from Contingency for unemployment tax payable to the State for Stokes County's account.

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.

#### **Vehicle Maintenance - Budget Amendment #40**

Finance Director Julia Edwards submitted Budget Amendment #40.

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>Vehicle Maintenance</b>				
100.4250.351	Maintenance & Repairs-Auto	\$3,500.00	\$6,500.00	\$10,000.00
<b>Contingency</b>				
100.9910.000	Contingency	<u>\$169,740.00</u>	<u>\$ (6,500.00)</u>	<u>\$163,240.00</u>
	<b>Totals</b>	<b>\$173,240.00</b>	<b>\$00.00</b>	<b>\$173,240.00</b>

This budget amendment is justified as follows:

To transfer funds from Contingency for repairs to the roll back vehicle.

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.

#### **Senior Services - Budget Amendment #41**

Finance Director Julia Edwards submitted Budget Amendment #41.

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>Senior Services</b>				
100.5860.263	SHIP Grant	<u>\$00.00</u>	<u>\$2,100.00</u>	<u>\$2,100.00</u>
	<b>Totals</b>	<b>\$00.00</b>	<b>\$2,100.00</b>	<b>\$2,100.00</b>

This budget amendment is justified as follows:

To appropriate SHIP Grant. No County Funding

This will result in a **net increase** of **\$2,100.00** 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	Current Budgeted Amount	Increase (Decrease)	As Amended
100.3301.366	Department of Insurance	<u>\$00.00</u>	<u>\$2,100.00</u>	<u>\$2,100.00</u>
	<b>Totals</b>	<b>\$00.00</b>	<b>\$2,100.00</b>	<b>\$2,100.00</b>

### **Proposed Application – Public School Building Capital Fund NC Education Lottery**

County Manager Rick Morris presented a proposed Application for Public School Building Capital Fund from the North Carolina Education Lottery, which was approved in the Fiscal Year 2016-17 Budget, in the amount of \$450,000.00 for debt service for the Construction of Nancy Reynolds Elementary School for the Board's review and approval at the December 12<sup>th</sup> meeting.

### **Proposed 2017 Board of County Commissioners' Meeting Calendar**

Clerk to the Board Darlene Bullins presented the following proposed 2017 Board of County Commissioners' Meeting Calendar for the Board's review and approval at the December 12<sup>th</sup> meeting:

## **PUBLIC NOTICE**

### **2017 COMMISSIONERS' MEETINGS SCHEDULE**

**The Stokes County Board of Commissioners will meet each month on the 2<sup>nd</sup> (Second) Monday at 1:30 pm and 4<sup>th</sup> (Fourth) Monday at 6:00pm**

#### **2nd MONDAY**

January 9, 2017  
February 13, 2017  
March 13, 2017  
April 10, 2017  
May 8, 2017  
June 12, 2017  
July 10, 2017  
August 14, 2017  
September 11, 2017  
October 9, 2017  
November 13, 2017  
December 11, 2017

#### **4th MONDAY**

January 23, 2017  
February 27, 2017  
March 27, 2017  
April 24, 2017  
May 22, 2017  
June 26, 2017  
July 24, 2017  
August 28, 2017  
September 25, 2017  
October 23, 2017  
November 27, 2017  
December 27, 2017\*

\*December 26<sup>th</sup> Meeting changed to Wednesday, December 27<sup>th</sup> (Due to Holiday)

The Board of Commissioners will conduct its regular meetings in the Commissioners' Chambers at the Administrative Building in Danbury. The Board will consider invitations to meet at different locations throughout the County at the invitation of community groups that wish to host a meeting.

**Commissioners' Meeting (Planning)** – First Tuesday of every other month 6:00 pm  
Planning meetings are held as needed- the meeting will be advertised prior to the dates listed below:  
Held in Commissioners' Chambers

February 7, 2017 (as needed)  
April 4, 2017 (as needed)  
June 6, 2017 (as needed)  
August 1, 2017 (as needed)  
October 3, 2017 (as needed)  
December 5, 2017 (as needed)

**Stokes County League of Governments – 6:30 pm**

Meeting with Town of Danbury, Town of Walnut Cove, City of King and Stokes County  
January 19, 2017 – Town of Walnut Cove  
April 20, 2017 – Town of Danbury  
July 20, 2017 – City of King  
October 5, 2017 – Stokes County

Any other change in Date, Time, or Place will be advertised and placed on the County Web Page –  
[www.co.stokes.nc.us](http://www.co.stokes.nc.us)

**Darlene Bullins**  
**Clerk to the Board**

Commissioner Booth moved to approve the Consent Agenda as presented. Vice Chairman Lankford seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

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

Chairman Walker noted there were no Information items for today's Agenda.

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

**Social Services Monthly Report**

DSS Director Stacey Elmes presented the following Social Services Monthly Report:

- Child Welfare Program Evaluation Review
  - Division of Social Services (NCDSS) has the responsibility to evaluate and provide technical assistance to county departments of social services to assure child welfare programs are in compliance with state laws, rules, and policies
  - State is reviewing Child Protective Services first
  - Program Evaluation was held in Stokes County in November 2015 with a Program Development Plan (PDP) developed and approved by NCDSS in February 2016

- A review of the current PDP was conducted on November 17, 2016
  - PDP will be revised to assure continued progress in developing and enhancing child welfare program in Stokes County
- Will be looking next at either In Home Services or Foster Care
- This review has been very helpful by allowing the department to see where improvements can be made
- Findings show that the department needs a Program Manager and a Social Work Supervisor which was included in the PDP
- Low Income Energy Assistance Program (LIEAP)
  - LIEAP is a Federally-funded program that provides for a one-time vendor payment to help eligible households pay their heating bills
  - Only households containing an elderly person age 60 and above or a disabled person receiving services through the Division of Aging and Adult Services (DAAS) are eligible to potentially receive benefits from December 1, 2016 through December 31, 2016 or until funds are exhausted
  - Any household can potentially receive benefits from January 1, 2017 through March 31, 2017 or until funds are exhausted
  - Applications are taken at Social Services in Danbury, King Outreach Ministry in King, and East Stokes Outreach Ministry in Walnut Cove
- Metrics (As of November 2016):
  - Income Maintenance
    - NC FAST – In Compliance
      - Child Care to go live in January 2017
      - Workers going through training now
    - WorkFirst – In Compliance
      - 69 open cases
      - \$12,314 in benefits delivered
    - FNS – In Compliance
      - 2,825 open cases
      - 5,980 participants
      - \$640,289 in benefits delivered
    - Adult Medicaid, Family & Children's Medicaid – In Compliance
      - Medical Assistance
        - 7,996 open cases
        - 9,017 participants
      - Special Assistance:
        - 189 open cases
        - \$84,332 Special Assistance benefits delivered
  - Child Support – In Compliance
    - Serving 1,336 children with collections at \$212,849
  - Program Integrity – In Compliance
    - 175 open cases
    - Collected \$2,604 with \$454.87 of collections retained in the county
  - Child Day Care – In Compliance
    - 155 children on waiting list for service
    - \$86,976 spent

- Added approximately sixteen (16) children during November
- Foster Care
  - Foster Care Services – Immediate Attention Required
    - 97 children in custody at the end of November and monitoring 1 other
    - Nine (9) children exited foster care in November and 6 children entered foster care in November
    - Of the six (6) children entering care, five (5) were because of parental substance abuse and the other was because of injurious environment between parent and child
    - During the month of November, DSS served 106 children in foster care
    - Caseloads are above capacity
    - State standard is a caseload of fifteen (15)
    - Currently, have a vacancy in this unit – has been posted externally
    - Working with VanGuard to try to find temporary assistance
    - Still searching for a part time, contract, temporary Community Social Services Assistant to help with transportation and observation of visits
    - As of today, we have 105 children in custody
  - Foster Home Licensing – Needs improvement
    - Currently have 25 licensed foster homes located in Stokes and other counties
    - A foster home licensing class finished on November 28, 2016 with eight (8) potentials in this class
      - Usually takes approximately six (6) months to get a home licensed
      - Hope to start a new foster parenting class in February 2017
    - Working on completing the licensing requirements now
  - Adoptions – In Compliance
    - One (1) adoption completed this month
- Child Protective Services
  - Investigations – In Compliance
    - Received 39 reports involving 49 children
    - There were 24 reports accepted for investigation
      - Nine (9) of these were substantiated
    - Have 50 active CPS investigations
    - Provided two (2) offer services visits
  - Case Management – In Compliance
    - Sixteen (16) open cases
  - Assists to other Counties
    - Six (6) assists

- Adult Services
  - Adult Protective Services – In Compliance
    - Received four (4) reports
    - Two (2) reports were screened
    - One (1) report received an offer services visit
  - Guardianship – In Compliance
    - Currently have 30 adult wards
    - State standard is a caseload of 30
  - SSBG/HCCBG/Payee/Adult Day – In Compliance
    - Twenty-three (23) open cases
  - Facility Monitoring – In Compliance
    - Monitor six (6) adult care facilities
    - No complaints received this month
  - Family Caregiver Program – In Compliance
    - Fifteen (15) open cases
    - Currently working two (2) referrals
  - SA IH/MAC – In Compliance
    - Seventy-eight (78) open cases
    - Currently working ten (10) referrals
  - CAP DA – In Compliance
    - Sixty-four (64) open cases
    - Currently working twelve (12) referrals
  - Intake – In Compliance
    - See any individual that comes into the agency needing assistance with anything from housing to utility assistance to other resources
  - Other – In Compliance
- Supervision (Staff/Supervisor Ratio) - Needs Improvement
  - The biggest area of concern is social work services with the need for a Social Work Supervisor in Child Welfare and a Program Manager for Social Work Programs
- Staffing (Years of Service) – In Compliance
  - One vacancy in foster care at the end of November
  - Had another vacancy effective Friday, December 9<sup>th</sup>
- Medicaid Transportation – In Compliance
  - (296) clients served
  - \$59,507 spent on transportation
- Clerical – In Compliance
  - (1,189) Walk Ins
  - Two (2) Fishing Licenses disbursed
  - Five (5) Voter Registrations turned in
  - Of the 23 children free for adoption, 19 of them are in pre-adoptive placements waiting for the paperwork/court work to be completed so the adoptions can be finalized

- Informational Material
  - Bridging Local Systems -- Strategies for Behavioral Health and Social Services Collaboration (DHHS)
    - Our collaboration for mental health services is with Cardinal Innovations
    - Hope those services with Cardinal Innovations improve
  - These states are struggling with a drug addiction-fueled crisis in foster care (PBS Newshour)
  - Where Are All the Social Workers Going? (Governing)
    - Deals with Social Work Turnover

County Manager Rick Morris spoke about additional information provided today to the Board at the request of the Chairman on how to fix the “red” in foster care:

- Current foster care situation and immediate needs to address our problems
  - Maximum recommended caseload for Child Protective Services (CPS) is 10 and Foster Care is 15
    - With the similarity of the two functions, it is our opinion that the Foster Care maximum caseload should not exceed 12
    - It is almost impossible to properly serve these most vulnerable foster children when a social worker is carrying a caseload of 15 or higher
  - At Stokes County DSS, one Community Social Services Assistant is needed to support social workers with transportation and supervision of visits for a caseload of 60 foster children
    - When the caseload exceeds 60, a second position for this function is required
    - Otherwise, social workers perform this function, which takes them away from their social work duties
  - Stokes County currently has 6 social worker positions in Foster Care with two vacancies
    - Totals are frequently exceeding 100, which places the individual worker caseloads between 15 and 20
    - This is high risk and unacceptable
    - Children are not receiving services they deserve
  - It is critical to maintain the required number of social workers and community social services assistants in Foster Care where new guidelines starting in January may increase the caseload
  - The Foster Care and Child Protective Services functions are further complicated because they have to be performed manually
    - DSS is in the process of gathering additional information on whether NC Fast will potentially provide an adequate and timely enough solution in lieu of purchasing a commercial case managed system from Northwoods
  - Social Worker turnover in Foster Care due to heavy workloads and other factors is especially detrimental to the foster children due to the personal nature of the services being provided to the children by their social workers

- Personnel costs to address foster care personnel needs for the last half of the fiscal year

**January 2017 to June 2017**

- Social Worker II (foster care) - \$14,616.54
    - Federal (57.5176%) = \$8,407.08
    - State (4.4056%) = \$643.95
    - County (38.0768%) = \$5,562.51
  - Social Work Supervisor II - \$17,099.16
    - Federal (57.5176%) = \$9,835.02
    - State (4.4056%) = \$753.33
    - County (38.0768%) = \$6,510.81
  - Community Social Services Assistant - \$9,000.00
    - Federal (57.5176%) = \$5,176.58
    - State (4.4056%) = \$396.51
    - County (38.0768%) = \$3,426.91
  - Social Work Program Manager - \$17,782.92
    - Federal (57.5176%) = \$10,228.31
    - State (4.4056%) = \$783.45
    - County (38.0768%) = \$6,771.16
  - Total County cost for four new positions from January 2017 to June 2017 = \$22,271.39

- Personnel costs to address foster care personnel needs for Fiscal Year 2017-18:

**July 2017 to June 2018**

- Social Worker III (foster care) - \$31,985.33
    - Federal (56.5278%) = \$18,080.60
    - State (4.6780%) = \$1,496.28
    - County (38.7942%) = \$12,408.45
  - Social Work Supervisor II - \$37,419.07
    - Federal (56.5278%) = \$21,152.17
    - State (4.6780%) = \$1,750.47
    - County (38.7942%) = \$14,156.43
  - Community Social Services Assistant - \$19,500.00
    - Federal (56.5278%) = \$11,022.93
    - State (4.6780%) = \$912.20
    - County (38.7942%) = \$7,564.87
  - Social Work Program Manager - \$38,915.63
    - Federal (56.5278%) = \$21,998.15
    - State (4.6780%) = \$1,820.48
    - County (38.7942%) = \$15,097.00
  - Total County cost for four new positions from July 2017 to June 2018 = \$49,586.75
- Historical document shows that the requests made to the BOCC at the special meeting in February 2016 and the county manager's Fiscal Year 2016-17 budget request:
  - The ability to start those who are hired as Social Work trainees or SWIs at a higher rate of pay



- Currently, those workers are making the same salary as an Income Maintenance Caseworker
- Incentive pay for social workers in foster care
  - Currently, our policy speaks to incentive being paid to Child Protective Social Workers
  - Presently, a Child Protective Services (CPS) worker who has been here for 6 months to one year receives \$75 each pay period; one to two years receives \$100 each pay period; and two years or more receives \$200 each pay period
  - This has helped keep our CPS Unit intact
- Positions
  - Social Worker Supervisor III
    - Needed to keep in line with the state recommendation that there be one supervisor per five (5) Social Workers in Child Welfare
    - Will also help reduce liability and increase accountability
  - Human Services Evaluator
    - Needed for all Social Work Programs (adult and child welfare) to provide quality assurance for programs and to ensure all mandatory training is provided, etc.
  - Community Social Services Assistant
    - Needed to help with visitation supervision of foster children
    - Current worker is overloaded and is not able to get it all done requiring foster care social workers to provide supervision for visits and provide transportation rather than doing their social work jobs
    - Current worker works many hours of overtime each week
  - Social Worker III
    - Needed to provide Adult Protective Services as numbers and workload indicate over the last several years that this is a need that isn't going away
  - Would also like to do away with four contract positions in Adult Services and would ask for two permanent Social Worker IIs instead
  - These contract workers provide Special Assistance In Home Social Work as well as Intake Services
- Needs requested in Budget 2016-17
  - Community Social Services Assistant
  - Social Work Supervisor III
  - Social Work Program Manager
  - Seven (7) reclassifications (Clerical & Adult Services)
- DSS Director Elmes and I still have concerns about new regulatory guidance that was supposed to take effect January 1, 2017 that could further increase our foster care numbers (has been delayed by the State due to a legal issue)
  - Another county did a pilot program and the numbers increased by approximately 15%
  - Not sure when this will start

- DSS Director Elmes also presented at today's meeting a comparison requested by the Chairman of foster care caseloads:
  - Stokes County
    - # of Children in Custody = 102
    - # of Foster Care Social Workers = 6
    - # children per Social Worker = 17
  - Surry County
    - # of Children in Custody = 84
    - # of Foster Care Social Workers = 5
    - # children per Social Worker = 17
    - Comments from Surry County
      - Ideally like to keep social workers at a caseload of 12-14 depending on issues like substance use/mental health
  - Davie County
    - # of Children in Custody = 51
    - # of Foster Care Social Workers = 5
      - 3 foster care social workers
      - One licensing
      - One LINKS
    - # children per Social Worker = 10
    - Comments from Davie County
      - Work really hard to keep caseload to no more than 12 children
  - Yadkin County
    - # of Children in Custody = 47
    - # of Foster Care Social Workers = 6
    - # children per Social Worker = 10
    - Comments from Yadkin County
      - Try hard to keep caseload between 10 and 12 children
- Social Work Supervisor Lori Priddy and Admin. Officer Patty St. Hilaire are also in attendance for today's meeting
- Will be glad to answer any questions the Board may have about the information provided today

Chairman Walker opened the floor for discussion.

Commissioner Jones commented:

- First, glad that we are not Massachusetts that has 9,500 kids, can't imagine
- This is a dire need
- Something needs to be done now to make this better
- From what I understand, it is usually substance abuse that is causing the majority of the issue
- Would like to know what is being done for the parent to help fix the substance abuse problem so that the kids can go back home?

DSS Director Elmes directed the question to Social Work Supervisor Lori Priddy.

Supervisor Priddy responded:

- A case plan is done for every child that comes into custody which becomes a court order of what the parents have to do in order for their children to be able to return home
- If substance abuse is what brought the child into foster care, then a substance abuse assessment has to be done
- The parents then have to follow our recommendations with random drug screening, random pill counts or whatever is ordered at that time
- Children are monitored three (3) to six (6) months after they return home

Commissioner Jones responded:

- That three (3) to six (6) months is a very short time for a drug addict

Supervisor Priddy continued:

- There is an order that must be followed long before the child is returned home
- Parents must have negative drug screens before supervised visits can be done, followed by unsupervised visits, followed by overnight stays
- Parents must have negative drug screens before being able to visit with children
- During this time, parents are randomly screened and must remain negative
- So the monitoring actually starts long before the child is ever returned home
- The three (3) to six (6) months being monitored after the child is returned home is pretty standard across counties

Commissioner Jones questioned what the success rate is for parents being able to meet the requirements, having negative screening, and getting their children back home.

Supervisor Priddy responded:

- It is not very positive
- I have been a supervisor a little over a year, there have been only five (5) children that have been returned home to their parents
- Most of the kids end up doing guardianship with a relative or adoption

Commissioner Jones commented:

- This doesn't seem to be working with the low number of children being returned back home
- What can we do to make this better?

DSS Director Elmes responded:

- One answer is funding

Supervisor Priddy responded:

- When children come into custody and the parents who have Medicaid lose their benefits which prevents some parents from being able to complete their plan because they do not have any funding or insurance to pay for the needed services

- Trying to get it changed so that the parents don't lose their Medicaid benefits and can get the needed services

Commissioner Jones continued:

- Turnover rate of Social Workers also impacts this situation negatively

Vice Chairman Lankford commented:

- Questioned the status of foster homes following the completion of the recent foster home classes and training?

Supervisor Priddy responded:

- There were 8 families who completed their MAPP training to be foster parents
- It takes an additional six (6) months to get the foster parents licensed

Vice Chairman Lankford questioned what was the holdup in getting the foster parents licensed?

Supervisor Priddy responded:

- These are numerous things that must be done before the application can be sent to the State – home inspections, physicals, etc.
- Once the requirements are completed and sent to the State, the State has three (3) months to process the application
- Some can be less than six 6 months, most take the six months
- It takes three (3) months for the state to process an application, no matter when it is sent
- It takes anywhere from 12 months to 18 months to get a family trained and licensed

Vice Chairman Lankford commented:

- Confirmed with Supervisor Priddy that this was no fault on the county, it was just the process that must be followed before an application can be sent to the State and the State returning the certification
- Have heard people in the community state that they would like to become foster parents
- Can see how people can get discouraged and not want to do it

Supervisor Priddy responded:

- One thing that the long process does is it shows commitment
- Lot of people are interested in being foster parents, but forget it when they see the requirements

Commissioner Booth commented:

- Have been looking over the information presented to the Board today
- Did not know this was going to be presented and discussed today
- This was the same thing that was discussed during our budget work sessions

- This was talked about during the budget process which was less than six (6) months ago

County Manager Morris commented:

- This information was presented to the BOCC in February 2016 and again in the budget process
- Too many cases per employee
- Currently, have only four (4) Social Workers with 103 kids

Commissioner Booth confirmed with DSS Director Elmes that there are two (2) Social Worker vacancies in foster care.

County Manager Morris noted that the contract positions for a transportation aide that the Board approved several weeks ago has not been able to be filled.

Commissioner Booth commented:

- The paperwork provided to the Board today requests the immediate need for four (4) more employees
- We talked about these positions in our budget
- Do you think these four (4) additional positions will solve the problem?

County Manager Morris noted the County is staffed to look after about half of the kids that are in custody (60 to 65).

Commissioner Booth commented:

- Noted the additional information regarding the comparison of foster care caseloads
- Stokes and Surry Counties has the same number of kids per Social Worker (17 kids per Social Worker)
- Surry County actually has one less worker

DSS Director Elmes responded:

- Surry County is also down workers and are also struggling

Commissioner Mendenhall commented:

- Confirmed with DSS Director Elmes that 12-14 kids per caseload is a feasible caseload for each worker to carry

DSS Director Elmes responded:

- The magnitude of the issues that the children being taken into custody are having is requiring so much more time and work - the mental health issues, children being born positive for substances
- Not having enough workers to transport children to required visits is very crucial right now

- Social Workers, who need to be doing social work, are having to transport children for visits which can take several hours

County Manager Morris confirmed with Supervisor Priddy that she actually has to transport children for visits, supervise visits, do home visits, and do whatever it takes to make sure these children receive the services needed.

Chairman Walker commented:

- Confirmed with DSS Director Elmes that besides the six (6) Foster Care Social Workers, the department has one (1) Foster Care Licensing Social Worker, one (1) Foster Care Social Work Supervisor and one (1) Transportation Aide
- Confirmed with DSS Director Elmes that the department does not have a Social Work Program Manager
- Surry County has the following positions:
  - Five (5) Foster Care Social Workers
  - One (1) Foster Care Licensing Social Work Supervisor
  - Two and a half Transportation Aides
  - One (1) Social Work Program Manager
- Stokes County has 9 positions
- Surry County has 9.5 positions with less children
- Biggest problem I am hearing today is heroin
- Confirmed with DSS Director Elmes the following:
  - For \$5,562.21 county funding, a Social Worker III for Foster Care can be hired for the remainder of this fiscal year
  - For \$6,510.81 county funding, a Social Work Supervisor III for Foster Care can be hired for the remainder of this fiscal year
  - For \$3,426.91 county funding, a Community Social Services Assistant for Foster Care transportation can be hired for the remainder of this fiscal year
  - For \$6,771.16 county funding, a Social Work Program Manager for Foster Care can be hired for the remainder of this fiscal year
  - For \$12,408.45 county funding, a Social Worker III for Foster Care can be hired for next fiscal year based on this year's percentages
  - For \$14,516.53 county funding, a Social Work Supervisor III can be hired for next fiscal year based on this year's percentages
  - For \$7,564.87 county funding, a Community Social Services Assistant can be hired for next fiscal year based on this year's percentage
  - For \$15,097.11 county funding, a Social Work Program Manager for Foster Care can be hired for next fiscal year based on this year's percentage
  - The percentages of county funding normally changes each fiscal year

DSS Director Elmes noted it can take quite a while to get the required approval for new positions from the State along with several weeks of hiring.

Chairman Walker continued:

- Another thing that has been discussed is contract which I know is not cost effective and not a good long term fix
- I know this is a very challenging situation

DSS Director Elmes responded:

- Have not had any luck finding a contract position
- Have been working with VanGuard to try to find some Social Work help
- Contract workers just do not want to drive to Stokes County

Commissioner Booth confirmed with DSS Director Elmes that the state ratio is 15 kids per Social Worker.

Commissioner Booth commented:

- Confirmed with DSS Director Elmes that the two vacancies in Foster Care have just occurred
- Remember last budget year, the Board approved full time positions instead of contract positions
- Reiterated the contract Transportation Aide that was approved by this Board has not been filled

DSS Director Elmes commented:

- Actually had someone in the contract Transportation Aide position, but once a full time Income Maintenance Caseworker position became available, the person applied and was hired for the full time position
- Very hard to find a contract position
- Individuals want benefits

Commissioner Booth continued:

- We did this six (6) months ago
- We had lengthy conversations about this a couple of months ago and decided not to do any positions
- Hard to put full time positions on and then have to let them go if not needed
- Reviewing the salary information, it would be a recurring cost of approximately \$49,586.75 county funding for the four (4) requested positions – Social Worker III, Social Work Supervisor III, Community Social Services Assistant, and Social Work Program Manager for fiscal year 2017-18
- Would be an additional \$22,271.39 for the remainder of this fiscal year for the four (4) requested positions

Commissioner Jones commented:

- This is not just a budget problem, this is a systemic issue
- No one has control over the number of children that enter the system
- These children must be taken care of

- County has a major turnover rate assuming part of the reason for the turnover is a pay gap
- Understand it is going to take more county funding, but there is certain things that we need to do
- Know we can't fix all the problems
- Have got to come up with a plan to keep foster care workers
- It is a very hard, depressing job
- It is hard on the kids when you are constantly changing Social Workers
- Read somewhere it cost approximately \$54,000 to train a Social Worker
- We train them and then they leave
- We need to come up with a plan and quit putting a Band-Aid on the issue
- Even if it means a little money, we need to fix this problem
- We have 105 Foster Children who need to be taken care along with their parents
- Would like to see this fixed as opposed to Band-Aids

Vice Chairman Lankford commented:

- There has been a lot of information handed out today
- Have not had time to review
- I know we have been trying to fix it over the last six (6) months or longer
- The positions are out there and no one has taken them
- Would like to see us fill the vacant positions first, before we go to adding positions

DSS Director Elmes responded:

- We have had the positions filled, two vacancies have just occurred
- Just can't keep people in those positions
- The number of foster children continues to increase

Vice Chairman Lankford continued:

- Can't just stop, have to continue working on it

County Manager Morris commented:

- The workers leave because of the workload and stress

Supervisor Priddy commented:

- The last worker left because of the caseload and the stress

Vice Chairman Lankford commented:

- Don't think we have a quick fix to the issue
- Would like to see people hired into the vacancies and then look at it further down the road

Commissioner Mendenhall commented:

- Confirmed with DSS Director Elmes that normally positions are left opened until filled because the positions are so hard to fill



Chairman Walker commented:

- What I attempted to do by requesting the additional information from the Director and Manager is to try to get the Board as much information as possible to give the Board a better perspective of the situation that is before the Board
- My question to the other members is what other information is needed by the Board to address this issue?

Vice Chairman Lankford responded:

- Need time to study the information that was provided to the Board
- Know we have had the problem, but this information just hit the desk today
- Need time to study the information

Commissioner Booth responded:

- Like Vice Chairman Lankford, need time to study the information that has just been presented to the Board today

Chairman Walker commented:

- Commissioner Booth and Vice Chairman Lankford make a valid point, as the information was presented to all Board members for the first time today at the meeting
- Questioned what is the pleasure of the Board regarding this issue?

Vice Chairman Lankford responded:

- Personally think we need to go ahead and try to get someone in the vacant positions as soon as possible
- Will be studying the information to see if there is anything that can be done to strengthen the need
- Put back on a future agenda

Chairman Walker requested what next steps does the Board wish to take regarding the issue?

Commissioner Jones responded:

- Want to see something done that will be successful in retaining the workers
- See what the pay scale should be compared to others so that this can be fixed
- Need to quit messing around and fix this

Chairman Walker questioned Commissioner Jones what action was she suggesting for this Board?

Commissioner Jones responded:

- Look at a formula to fix this issue
- We know the caseloads should be no more than 15 children per caseload
- We know it takes year to a year and a half to license foster parents

- We need fill the positions
- We need to figure out what is going to keep those positions filled
- The issue has to be fixed
- Have seen a lot of information
- We know that the caseloads are too big
- We know we have got to do something to stop the turnover
- We would like to know what we need budgetary speaking to address this issue if not soon but at least before the budget comes up so that we don't have this issue next year
- Have got to get those caseloads down

Commissioner Mendenhall commented:

- Confirmed with DSS Director Elmes that the department does not have a strategic plan
- Confirmed with DSS Director Elmes that a strategic plan with salary information, caseloads compared with surrounding counties and counties the same size as Stokes, and things of that nature could be presented to the Board
- Agree with Vice Chairman Lankford, this was a lot of information presented to the Board that the members needed time to study

Chairman Walker commented:

- Wanted to make sure the Board understood that the information provided today was not intended to try to force the Board into making a quick decision
- Requested the manager to provide the information to members at the meeting
- I said this over and over, I prefer a good decision to a fast decision
- Hope something can be resolved as quick as possible for the sake of the children, but need to take the amount time needed to make the right decision

Commissioner Jones commented:

- Just have one more comment, we are the Board for the Department of Social Services
- We need to figure out what is needed to turn this around and implement it

Chairman Walker commented:

- Believe I have heard three (3) commissioners who want to take another look at this after reviewing the information provided to them at today's meeting along with a strategic plan
- Agree with Commissioner Mendenhall regarding his request for a strategic plan pertaining to foster care at this particular time

Chairman Walker requested if there was consensus to have this item with a strategic plan on the Board's next Discussion Agenda.

Vice Chairman Lankford responded:

- Need to hire the two vacancies and then see where that puts us

- Not ready to make a decision until the two social workers and the transportation aide are hired

Chairman Walker commented:

- Even with the hiring of the two vacancies, the caseload numbers will remain the same
- Stokes has only 2 support workers compared to Surry's 4.5 support workers

Chairman Walker polled the Board regarding where to go from here.

Commissioner Mendenhall responded:

- Take another look at the next meeting with more information

Commissioner Booth responded:

- Need to fill the vacant positions
- Take another look, but not two weeks from now
- Don't think the positions can be filled in two weeks

County Manager Morris responded:

- Can work on a strategic plan while the positions are being filled

Chairman Walker confirmed with DSS Director Elmes that a draft strategic plan could be provided at the next meeting, but not sure two people can be hired by the next meeting.

Commissioner Jones responded:

- Need the information as soon as it can be presented
- Feel the department knows what they need

Chairman Walker, with consensus of the Board, directed DSS Director Elmes and County Manager Rick Morris to provide the Board with a Strategic Plan at the next commissioners' meeting if possible.

Chairman Walker also directed, as requested by Vice Chairman Lankford and Commissioner Booth, to fill the positions if at all possible.

Chairman Walker directed the Clerk to place the item on the Discussion Agenda for the December 27<sup>th</sup> meeting if the strategic plan is ready.

### **Tax Administration Report – November 2016**

Tax Administrator Jake Oakley presented the following informational data for the

November October 2016 Report for the Board's review:

<b>Fiscal Year 2016-17</b>	<b>Budget Amt</b>	<b>Collected Amt</b>	<b>Over Budget</b>	<b>Under Budget</b>
<b>Current 2016 Taxes</b>	\$20,420,409.00	\$12,438,114.73		\$7,982,294.27
<b>Percentage = 60.91%</b>				
<b>New Schools F-Tech Fund</b>	\$1,317,445.00	\$821,851.90		\$495,593.10
<b>Percentage = 62.38%</b>				
<b>Prior Taxes</b>				
<b>County Regular &amp; Motor Vehicles</b>	\$450,000.00	\$257,703.14		\$192,296.86
<b>Percentages = 57.27%</b>				

### **Releases Less than \$100 – Real and Personal Property**

Tax Administrator Jake Oakley presented the following Releases less than \$100 –

Real and Personal Property (November 2016) at the December 12<sup>th</sup> meeting for the Board's review:

<b>Releases Less Than \$100</b>	<b>Real/Personal</b>	<b>Property</b>
<b>Name</b>	<b>Bill Number</b>	<b>Amount</b>
Jack E. Atkins	10752-2016-2016	\$74.76
Eleanor R. Devore	5996-2016-2016	\$58.24
Eleanor R. Devore	5996-2015-2015	\$54.61
Eleanor R. Devore	5996-2014-2014	\$47.82
William Hampton Green	851471-2016-2015	\$55.24
William Hampton Green	851471-2016-2014	\$71.45
William Hampton Green	851471-2016-2013	<u>\$90.06</u>
	<b>Total Amount</b>	<b>\$452.18</b>

### **Refunds More than \$100 – Real and Personal Property**

Tax Administrator Jake Oakley presented the following Refunds more than \$100 –

Real and Personal Property (November 2016) at the December 12<sup>th</sup> meeting for the Board's review with consideration at the December 27<sup>th</sup> meeting:

<b>Refunds More Than \$100</b>	<b>Real/Personal</b>	<b>Property</b>	
<b>Name</b>	<b>Bill Number</b>	<b>Amount</b>	<b>Reason</b>
Judy W. Goldback	30354373	\$196.47	Vehicle Sold
Mackenzie E. Miller	33557440	<u>\$535.72</u>	Vehicle Sold
	<b>Total Amount</b>	<b>\$732.19</b>	

Tax Administrator Oakley commented:

- Business is as usual in the Tax Office
- Looking for approximately \$3.5 million from public utilities by the next meeting
- Will be advertising listing of personal property in the paper
- Listing forms should be mailed out to taxpayers on December 28<sup>th</sup>
- Request the Refunds More than \$100 – Real/Personal Property be placed on the December 27<sup>th</sup> Consent Agenda

Chairman Walker opened the floor for discussion.

The Board had no issues with the information provided from Tax Administrator Oakley.

Chairman Walker, with full consensus of the Board, directed the Clerk to place the following item on the December 27<sup>th</sup> Consent Agenda:

- Refunds More than \$100 – Real and Personal Property

**Proposed Transfer Agreement – Francisco Elementary School Property**

County Manager Rick Morris presented the following information regarding the proposed Transfer Agreement for the Francisco Elementary School Property, which was presented to the Board at the November 28<sup>th</sup> meeting, for further discussion by the Board:

- Draft copy, which was prepared by County Attorney Ty Browder, was provided to the Board at the November 28<sup>th</sup> meeting
- Draft copy has also been provided to the Our Communities Committee for their review and/or concerns
- Is not an urgent item until it is needed in the future to transfer the property to the Our Communities
- Request Board members provide staff any concerns for consideration by the Board

Chairman Walker opened the floor for discussion.

Commissioner Booth commented:

- Board can continue to review and request it be placed on a future Agenda for discussion

Chairman Walker requested the pleasure of the Board regarding the item.

Vice Chairman Lankford commented:

- Believe the item should remain open for the Board's review and any concerns from the Our Communities and then be brought back for further consideration when needed

The Board unanimously agreed to place the item back on the Agenda when needed.

### **Legislative Goals Conference – Voting Delegate/Legislative Goals**

County Manager Rick Morris presented the following information regarding the upcoming Legislative Goals Conference:

- Legislative Goals Conference is scheduled for January 12-13, 2017 in Wake County
- County did not receive notification this year regarding the submission of Legislative Goals for consideration (apparently blocked by county's system)
- County can still submit goals at the conference if so desired
- County needs to designate a commissioner or other official as a voting delegate for the 2017 Legislative Goals Conference (former Commissioner Inman normally volunteered for this designation)
- The following top five (5) goals were approved at the NCACC Legislative Goals Conference which was held on January 15-16, 2015 in Moore County
  - (1) HH-1: Support continued state funding of Medicaid and support efforts by the state to provide healthcare access for all citizens
  - (2) PE-1: Seek legislation to restore the statutory requirement that 40% of the net lottery proceeds be allocated to counties for school capital needs and increase the annual appropriation of lottery funds until the 40% allocation is restored
  - (3) PE-4: Seek legislation to repeal the statutory authority under N.C. G.S. 115C-431 (c) that allows local school boards to file suit against a county board of commissioners over county appropriations for education
  - (4) GG-1: Oppose any shift of state transportation responsibilities to counties
  - (5) TF-1: Oppose unfunded mandates and shifts of state responsibilities to counties
- Former Commissioner Inman served as the County's voting delegate

Chairman Walker opened the floor for discussion.

The Board unanimously agreed to place the item back on the December 27<sup>th</sup> Agenda for further discussion of goals and the voting delegate.

Chairman Walker, with full consensus of the Board, directed the Clerk to place the Voting Delegate and Legislative Goals for 2017-18 on the December 27<sup>th</sup> Action Agenda.

### **Appointments – Francisco Property – Our Communities of Northwest Stokes**

County Manager Rick Morris presented the following dates that need participation from the Board to meet with Our Communities of Northwest Stokes regarding the Francisco Property (meets December 12, 2016

the first Wednesday of each month at 11:00 am):

- January 4, 2017 – Commissioner Jones has already volunteered
- February 1, 2017
- March 1, 2017
- April 5, 2017
- May 3, 2017
- June 7, 2017

Chairman Walker opened the floor for volunteers.

The Board agreed on the following participants:

- January 4, 2017 – Commissioner Jones/Chairman Walker
- February 1, 2017 – Vice Chairman Lankford/Commissioner Booth
- March 1, 2017 – Commissioner Booth/Commissioner Mendenhall
- April 5, 2017 – Commissioner Jones/Chairman Walker
- May 3, 2017 – Commissioner Mendenhall/Commissioner Booth
- June 7, 2017 – Vice Chairman Lankford/Commissioner Mendenhall

#### **External Posting – Animal Control and Environmental Health**

County Manager Rick Morris presented the following vacancies that needs to be immediately posting externally:

- Animal Control Officer
- Environmental Health Specialist

County Manager Morris commented:

- Vacancies need to be filled as soon as possible if no qualified internal applicant applies
- Very critical positions in both departments
- Request both postings be moved to today's Action Agenda

Chairman Walker noted that he would like to revisit this item's placement on the Agenda at a later time.

Chairman Walker opened the floor for discussion.

Commissioner Booth confirmed with Manager Morris that the positions are currently being advertised internally and internal applicants, if qualified, are considered first.

The Board had no issues placing the item on today's Action Agenda.

Chairman Walker, with full consensus of the Board, directed the Clerk to place the item on today's Action Agenda.

**Appointment – Hanging Rock State Park Advisory Committee**

County Manager Rick Morris presented the following information regarding an appointment to serve on the Hanging Rock State Park Advisory Committee:

- Superintendent Robin Riddlebarger requested the participation from a member of the Board to serve on the Hanging Rock State Park Advisory Committee
- The committee meets quarterly at the Park
- Primary function of the advisory committee is to advise and make recommendations to the Park Superintendent and Division Director

Chairman Walker opened the floor for nominations.

Commissioner Jones volunteered to serve on the committee.

Chairman Walker nominated Commissioner Ronda Jones.

Chairman Walker entertained a motion to close the nominations.

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

Chairman Walker, with full consensus, directed the Clerk to place the item on the December 27<sup>th</sup> Action Agenda.

**Appointment – Triad Community Board – Cardinal Innovations**

Chairman Walker presented the following information regarding appointments to the Triad Community Board for Cardinal Innovations:

- As previously discussed by the Board, the following needs to be appointed by the Board of Commissioners:
  - Client or Family Member – J. Leon Inman has volunteered to serve
  - Community Stakeholder – Pam Tillman has volunteered to serve
  - Commissioner or designee
- First Meeting is scheduled for January 19, 2017 at 5:30 pm
- Board meets quarterly in Winston Salem

Chairman Walker opened the floor for nominations.



Vice Chairman Lankford nominated the following:

- Client or Family Member – J. Leon Inman
- Community Stakeholder – Pam Tillman
- Commissioner or designee – Commissioner Ronnie Mendenhall

Chairman Walker entertained a motion to close the nominations.

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

Chairman Walker, with full consensus, directed the Clerk to place the item on the December 27<sup>th</sup> Action Agenda.

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

County Manager Rick Morris presented the following information regarding the appointment to the CenterPoint Human Services – Board of Directors:

- Appointment will serve for the final meeting to address dissolution of the CenterPoint Human Services – Board of Directors
- Meeting will be January 26, 2017 at 5:30 pm in Winston Salem
- Same commissioner can serve on the Triad Community Board and the CenterPoint Board of Directors

Chairman Walker opened the floor for nominations.

Vice Chairman Lankford nominated Commissioner Ronnie Mendenhall.

Chairman Walker entertained a motion to close the nominations.

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

Chairman Walker, with full consensus, directed the Clerk to place the item on the December 27<sup>th</sup> Action Agenda.

**Appointments – Northwest Piedmont Rural Planning Organization (NWRPO) (TAC)**

Chairman Walker presented the following information regarding the appointment of

Vice Chairman Ernest Lankford who currently serves on the Northwest Piedmont Rural Planning  
December 12, 2016

Organization – TAC:

- NWPRPO requests the re-appointment of Vice Chairman Lankford to the NWPRPO – TAC
- Vice Chairman Lankford has agreed to be considered for re-appointment

Chairman Walker opened the floor for nominations.

Chairman Walker nominated Vice Chairman Ernest Lankford.

Chairman Walker entertained a motion to close the nominations.

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

Chairman Walker, with full consensus, directed the Clerk to place the item on the December 27<sup>th</sup> Action Agenda.

**Appointments – Winston Salem Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC)**

County Manager Rick Morris presented the following information regarding the Winston Salem Transportation Advisory Committee – TAC:

- Appointment was previously held by former Commissioner J. Leon Inman
- Committee meets seven (7) times per year in Winston Salem

Chairman Walker opened the floor for nominations.

Commissioner Booth nominated Vice Chairman Ernest Lankford.

Chairman Walker commented:

- Vice Chairman Lankford already serves on several other boards/committees, always doing an excellent job
- Have no issues with Vice Chairman Lankford serving on the Board, but just trying to balance the number of boards/committees each commissioner is appointed to

Vice Chairman Lankford noted that he had no issues with allowing someone else to serve on the committee.

Commissioner Booth withdrew his nomination of Vice Chairman Lankford.

Commissioner Booth nominated Commissioner Ronnie Mendenhall.

Commissioner Mendenhall had no issues with being considered for the appointment.

Chairman Walker entertained a motion to close the nominations.

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

Chairman Walker, with full consensus, directed the Clerk to place the item on the December 27<sup>th</sup> Action Agenda.

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

### **Public Buildings – Proposed Custodial/Maintenance/Security Positions – Forsyth Tech**

Chairman Walker opened the floor for further discussion regarding the proposed Custodial/Maintenance/Security positions for Forsyth Tech which were presented at the November 28<sup>th</sup> meeting.

County Manager Rick Morris presented a brief recap regarding the request presented to the Board on November 28<sup>th</sup>:

- Director Mark Delehant and Forsyth Tech Director Ann Watts are in attendance to answer any questions if needed
- Director Delehant had requested two (2) Custodian/ Maintenance/Security positions for the Forsyth Tech/Early College campus at the November 28<sup>th</sup> meeting
- The Board discussed the request at the November 28<sup>th</sup> meeting
- Decision today could be for one position, two positions, or no positions

Chairman Walker entertained a motion regarding the request.

Commissioner Mendenhall commented:

- Was not a commissioner when the item was presented
- Would like to ask a few questions

Chairman Walker, with no objections from the Board, indicated that questions could be asked of Director Delehant and Director Watts.

Commissioner Mendenhall continued:

- Have worked on custodial issues for many years, normally use square footage as a basis to determine the number of positions needed

- Confirmed with Director Delehant that the new community college facility is 20,000 square foot

Director Delehant commented:

- This is a very elaborate facility
- Position also maintains the grounds along with security at night
- Under the agreement with Forsyth Tech, the County is obligated to provide custodial, maintenance, and security for the facility
- There is a total of 40,000 sq. ft. that must be maintained on the campus
- Currently, there is one employee on staff for the entire campus
- There needs to be two shifts with night classes
- Currently, staff reports at 12:00 noon in order to cover security for night classes leaving no available staff in the morning hours
- Had an issue the other morning with three students stuck in the elevator with no staff on site; I had to respond from the government center

Commissioner Mendenhall continued:

- Confirmed with Director Delehant that the request is for two full time positions

Commissioner Jones commented:

- I have read the letter twice and seems to me that somewhere it was implied that the County would provide two positions to fulfil our obligation to Forsyth Tech
- Questioned if it were two positions requested by Forsyth Tech?

Director Delehant reiterated that his request is for two, full time positions.

Vice Chairman Lankford commented:

- Made a suggestion at the last meeting to look at approving one custodian for about three months and then have information for exactly what is needed before adding a second position
- The reason for my suggestion was that this is a new 20,000 sq. ft. facility which should not be having any maintenance issues
- Realize there needs to be an additional position in order to have two shifts (currently has one staff member on site)
- With what was presented, there are no actual comparisons to our facility
- Can't compare what Forsyth Tech is doing at their main campus in Winston Salem with our current facility

Commissioner Booth commented:

- Would like to make sure I understand what the agreement with Forsyth Tech actually contains
- Would like to know if the agreement states two positions?
- Don't remember any agreement that states two positions

County Manager Morris responded:

- North Carolina General Statutes require the County provide staff for custodial, maintenance, and security for the new community college
- Don't think there was a number of positions, just an agreement to provide the needed services to maintain the facility

Director Delehant commented:

- When the current employee is out, it throws my staff under a considerable bind
- My department is currently under a considerable bind with a custodian who is out for an extended illness
- Employees are out sick, have vacations scheduled, unexpected emergencies, etc.

Vice Chairman Lankford confirmed with Director Delehant that the custodian who is out for an extended illness could be covered by a contract position.

Commissioner Booth continued:

- Confirmed with Director Delehant that currently the one employee is trying to cover both facilities (community college/early college - 40,000 sq. ft.) along with Autumn Square
- Questioned if one position was approved, would this cover the needs for two shifts?

Director Delehant responded:

- If I was given one position, I feel it would only cover the custodial duties
- With employee sickness and scheduled vacation, feel it would still throw the department in a bind
- With this new facility, would like to be able to keep it looking like new as long as possible
- My request for two positions would provide the needed services for the entire campus along with Autumn Square

Commissioner Booth continued:

- Confirmed with Director Delehant that the current position maintains the Early College (20,000 sq. ft.) along with Autumn Square
- The Early College had no coverage in the morning hours when there were night classes

County Manager Morris commented:

- If only one position is approved, each employee could be covering 40,000 sq. ft. if needed

Director Delehant commented:

- Each employee would have a primary building but be responsible for the entire campus if something was needed in another building and the other employee is out

County Manager Morris responded:

- Have to keep in mind that when that employee is working, he is responsible for 40,000 sq. ft.

Commissioner Booth continued:

- Don't see one person cleaning all 40,000 sq. ft.
- Seems to me that one employee would be responsible for the early college and one employee be responsible for the community college
- Understand the employee would have to leave his primary building if there was an emergency in the other building
- If you go two positions, how would you work the schedules?

Director Delehant responded:

- Do have a lot of emergencies with a lot of students
- The two positions would have separate shifts
- The current employee would take care of primary maintenance, fill in when someone was out, do heavy duty cleaning such as waxing and cleaning carpets
- With only one staff member, it is impossible to wax floors and clean carpets
  - Have the equipment to wax floors and clean carpets, just don't have the staff and time
- The current employee would also take care of Autumn Square

Commissioner Booth continued:

- Confirmed with Director Delehant that the current position has been taking care of the early college (20,000 sq. ft.) along with Autumn Square

Director Delehant responded:

- Has worked like that, but had no staff to cover when the employee was out and normally had some type of issue waiting for him when he arrived
- Not a productive situation

Chairman Walker commented:

- Understand that Commissioner Mendenhall, while serving as Superintendent for the School System, has a good grasp on staffing of custodians
- Would like to hear Commissioner Mendenhall's comments in regards to how this would equate to staffing a 40,000 sq. ft. facility if part of the school system

Commissioner Mendenhall responded:

- Used a formula of one position for every 25,000 sq. ft. of space
- Off the top of my head, it looks like you could get by with 1.5 positions which would give you a total of 2.5 positions
- This would give Director Delehant two full time positions and one half time positions

Director Delehant responded:

- Agree if it were just custodians, could probably get by with adding an additional 1.5 positions

Chairman Walker confirmed with Commissioner Mendenhall that this situation is similar to staffing custodial positions at the high school with night activities.

Commissioner Mendenhall commented:

- With night activities, you had a night staff to cover the custodial needs and to lock up the facility

Chairman Walker continued:

- Would like to know what Director Delehant and Director Watts think about Commissioner Mendenhall's suggestion of 1.5 positions

Director Delehant responded:

- Part time positions are normally hard to find with most employees wanting full time benefits
- Can only work up to a certain amount hours before having to provide health insurance
- Not sure how it would work, but willing to try anything
- Want to keep the building sharp
- Tried several different scenarios before requesting the two full time positions

Commissioner Mendenhall responded:

- Agree with Director Delehant about keeping this new facility looking sharp
- Just coming on board, did not know of the agreement about the services being mandated for the community college
- Seems there is some confusion among the Board regarding each employee covering the entire 40,000 sq. ft.

Director Delehant responded:

- Understand the confusion, but must keep in consideration that there is activity in all 40,000 sq. ft., at the same time

County Manager Morris responded:

- There is no agreement on the number of positions
- The mandate is to provide the needed personnel to get the job done

Chairman Walker commented:

- Confirmed with Commissioner Mendenhall that after the latest discussion regarding a part time position, a part time position may not be the best way to go

Commissioner Mendenhall responded:

- May have to decide between one or two positions

Chairman Walker continued:

- Not real comfortable that one will be enough
- Not sure that two might be too many
- Floor is open for a motion from any member

Vice Chairman Lankford moved to approve one position, evaluate the one position with Director Delehant bringing the item back to this Board within 2-3 months. Commissioner Booth seconded the motion.

Chairman Walker commented:

- Hesitant to go with only one position
- Believe trying the 1.5 positions might be the answer
- Will probably not go with the motion

Commissioner Booth commented:

- 2-3 months is a short time, can see what needs to be done once the position is evaluated by Director Delehant
- It may be that two positions are needed, time will definitely tell

Chairman Walker commented:

- Like the part of the motion to evaluate the situation after a few months
- Don't want to put the department in a bind right from the start

Commissioner Booth commented:

- The department is in a bind right now, it has been open for approximately three (3) weeks with only one staff member

The motion failed (2-3) with Chairman Walker, Commissioner Jones, and Commissioner Mendenhall voting against the motion.

Chairman Walker stated the floor is open for additional motions.

Commissioner Mendenhall moved to approve 1.5 positions with an evaluation within a few months. Chairman Walker seconded the motion.

County Manager Morris confirmed with the Board that the half time position could be contracted.



The motion failed (2-3) with Commissioner Jones, Commissioner Booth, and Vice Chairman Lankford voting against the motion.

Director Delehant noted that the Autumn Square facility also has to be included when determining the need which is about an 8,000 to 10,000 sq. ft. facility.

Commissioner Booth noted that this would bring the amount of sq. ft. to approximately 25,000 sq. ft. which is what is used by the school system to determine positions.

Chairman Walker commented:

- One motion for 1 position failed
- One motion for 1.5 positions failed

Commissioner Jones moved to approve two positions as requested by Director Delehant who should know his needs better than the rest of us. Chairman Walker seconded the motion for discussion.

Chairman Walker opened the floor for discussion.

Commissioner Jones commented:

- Contract is expensive for a half time position
- Half time is very hard to hire
- You have elements of bad weather
- Employees get sick and need vacation
- Total square footage exceeds 50,000 sq. ft. that has to be maintained
- Has the element of needing maintenance and security, not just custodial
- Would be cheaper in the long run to hire the two full time positions
- Part time can get more expensive if insurance has to be provided
- If the two positions are not approved, believe we should look back at the mandate to see if statutes require a specific number of positions according to sq. footage
- Director Delehant is the person who deals with this and knows what he needs
- Feel a leap of faith might be a good idea on a lot of levels

Vice Chairman Lankford commented:

- Feel at this point in time and not having the information totally needed and have just an opinion, can't support no more than one position and see where we go from there

The motion failed (2-3) with Commissioner Mendenhall, Commissioner Booth and Vice Chairman Lankford voting against the motion.

Chairman Walker commented:

- One motion for 1 position failed
- One motion for 1.5 positions failed
- One motion for 2 positions failed
- Confirmed with County Attorney Ty Browder that the same motion can't be made again; the motion would have to be revised

Chairman Walker entertained a new motion or a revised motion.

Vice Chairman Lankford moved to approve one custodial position and the maintenance be handled by Public Works Maintenance Staff along with collecting data on how this is working out and take additional action when and if needed.

Chairman Walker confirmed with County Attorney Browder that Commissioner Lankford's motion was a different motion.

Commissioner Booth seconded the motion.

Commissioner Mendenhall requested the motion be restated.

Vice Chairman Lankford responded:

- Approve to hire one custodian
- Approve that any needed maintenance be taken care of by the County's Maintenance Department
- Approve that information be collected on how the one position is working
- Approve that Director Delehant provide the Board (after four months) with information regarding how the one position is working and the Board would then go from there

Chairman Walker commented:

- Prefer the 1.5 positions
- Need something done
- Willing to be flexible to keep things moving
- Not exactly what I would like

The motion carried (4-1) with Commissioner Jones voting against the motion.

### **Our Communities of Northwest Stokes – June 30, 2017 – Deadline Date**

Chairman Walker opened the floor for further discussion regarding the June 30, 2017 deadline for Our Communities of Northwest Stokes which was presented at the November 28<sup>th</sup>

meeting.

Chairman Walker commented:

- Requested this be on today's Agenda
- One person from Our Communities has indicated that the group would like to know where this Board is at as far as what is supposed to happen on June 30, 2017

Chairman Walker requested direction from the Board as to discussion or motion.

Vice Chairman Lankford moved that the Board of County Commissioners keep the date of June 30, 2017 as the date that the County is out of the project which was outlined in the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) that was approved and signed off by the Board of Commissioners and Our Communities. Commissioner Mendenhall seconded the motion for discussion.

Chairman Walker opened the floor for discussion.

Commissioner Jones commented:

- Feel all of us want this project to be completed
- Feel June 30, 2017 is a good target date, but being a drop dead date may be a little abrupt especially if the group has something in the works
- Think we need to be a little bit more open minded and flexible if they have proof and something that can give the Board hope that something can be worked out with a possible short extension
- Don't want to be so absolute that we cut our nose off to spite our face
- Great opportunity
- Think we should keep an open mind

Commissioner Booth commented:

- There have been several meetings with the community group
- At the last meeting I attended with Chairman Walker, the group had just discovered a way that they can occupy the building
- It has been 9 months without being able use the building
- Think the group has been at a disadvantage not being able to find a solution to use the facility
- Have found someone who can monitor the Sewer System for usage
- Don't have a closed mind regarding the date
- Not sure the MOU stated June 30, 2017 as being the drop dead date

Vice Chairman Lankford reiterated the MOU stated June 30, 2017 as the date.

Commissioner Booth continued:

- Have seen a lot of improvement
- Attended the FarmFest
- Believe the school and the grounds are looking better than when the school was open
- Feel this is the Francisco community, no different than if it was in Sandy Ridge or Lawsonville
- If a school was closed down, the community would be involved trying to keep it open like when Nancy Reynolds was on the verge of being shut down
- Any community would try to keep the facility for the community
- My goal is that the community will be able to take this property
- It is too good of a building to just let go
- Realize there is a lot of things to be done – roof issues
- If the school had been kept open, there would be roof issues to be dealt with and requests for county funding
- I am not ready with seven months left in the agreement to say that June 30, 2017 is a drop dead time and that this Board will not listen to what the community has to say
- At that time, there could be a positive situation in which the property can be taken over by the community
- There may some situations where grants will be coming after June 30, 2017 and the County may have to consider keeping the facility a little longer
- I am looking for a positive for that community and any other community that may be in the same circumstances

Commissioner Mendenhall commented:

- I have not had any information up until today
- I just received a copy of the MOU

Chairman Walker requested Commissioner Mendenhall to read from the MOU the wording that contains information regarding the June 30, 2017 date.

Commissioner Mendenhall read the following from the MOU:

- Goal – Phase I (through June 30, 2017)
  - Develop a feasible and sustainable plan for the repurposing of the Francisco Elementary School (facility and grounds) to serve the people and communities of northern Stokes County

Vice Chairman Lankford commented:

- I was singled out today by a person from the community
- Would like to reply to those comments
- Do not know how that person can form that opinion regarding being closed minded
- I do not have a closed mind
- I serve 47,000 people in Stokes County
- I want to be fair to each one of those 47,000 people

- When the community people came to us, I believe they asked for eight (8) months to get this project going and see if they could handle the project
- I volunteered to offer the group until June 30, 2017 which was 16 months because I felt it would take longer than the 8 months
- That was approved by the Board of Commissioners and Our Communities (OC)
- I feel that is how this Board needs to go forward
- I don't have a closed mind
- I will be up front with you, I don't have a closed mind
- If that community comes to us and wants to transfer the property, I will sign it today
- Everything has a closed time, you set dates and you stick with those dates
- That is the way it works
- You try to help people and evidently they don't appreciate it
- You try to work with them anyway you can
- The Board of County Commissioners has worked with this group
- Have done everything they have asked for from planning to septic to insurance; it just goes on and on
- This Board has been right there with them and has helped them with every phase and done what they have asked for
- How anyone can come and say we have a closed mind, I don't understand it
- I am just being honest, I don't understand it
- If that is the way they feel, that is ok
- I am very open minded when it comes down to serving the people in this county
- You have to understand that the Board of Commissioners has to make decisions for the 47,000 residents
- Can't make decisions just for select groups other than what is in the best interest of everybody
- This is where I am today
- I have an open mind
- I look at the big picture
- I think we have given the group ample time
- I think we are working with this group
- It would be my pleasure to keep on doing it, but we have to have a cutoff date
- We have already agreed to June 30, 2017
- Don't understand why the question is being asked again
- The answer to the question has already been approved and signed off by both groups
- This is why I am sticking to the June 30, 2017 that has already been agreed on by both groups

Commissioner Booth commented:

- Confirmed with Vice Chairman Lankford that the MOU had been signed off by the OC
- Would like to hear from the OC group

Chairman Walker, with full consensus from the Board, allowed Horace Stimson to speak on behalf of the OC group.

Mr. Stimson spoke the following comments on the behalf of the OC group:

- Hope the Board of Commissioners and staff have heard from us how much we appreciate the work
- I do acknowledge our discussions and a phone call with Vice Chairman Lankford early on to make sure we were able to go through June for this planning process
- As far as the big picture, I want you to be as proud of what is going to be, hopefully accomplished, as you are with Forsyth Tech Community College
- That was tough
- You did it without a lot of capital except the land acquisition
- It took time
- Would like to see us together come to that outcome
- With respect to the MOU, I found three (3) pieces that is relevant to this discussion
- What I was really wanting when I asked the question, is not so much the June 30<sup>th</sup>, but rather how are we doing so far, are we making good progress and are we meeting the expectations and how do we keep moving forward?
- Referred to the following items outlined in the MOU
  - Potential Outcomes
    - OC is successful in creating a feasible and sustainable plan
    - OC is unsuccessful in creating a feasible and sustainable plan and there appears to be no path in doing so and no alternative. Thus, the County puts the property on the market for sale

Chairman Walker requested the Clerk to make copies of the MOU for the BOCC.

Mr. Stimson continued

- Looking for both groups to be able to address issues and opportunities in the upcoming months
- I seldom enter a project that comes out the way I think it will come out
- Our whole purpose is for us to figure the outcome
- Probably both groups thought this was a mission impossible, but believe we have turned it into a maybe and want to take it further
- Want to make sure we do what we said we were going to do
- Trying to figure out some ways to accelerate things because of some lost time
- We know that is a challenge and need to do that the best we can
- Continue to read items form the MOU:
  - Property Transfer
    - Stokes County is prepared to transfer ownership of the Francisco School Property to a non-profit or another acceptable entity at any time a re-purposing plan is approved subject to legal requirements for the transfer of county owned real estate that are set out in General Statutes 160A-280
  - Plan Not Approved

- If a re-purposing plan is not approved by June 30, 2107, Stokes County intends to place the property on the market for sale
- Did not put in the clause that you often see – assuming the approval is not unreasonably withheld – operating under good faith
- We are committed to figuring out this plan which is a tough thing to do – trying to find tenants, revenue, sustainable plan, etc.
- This group did not wait to see what the County was going to do with the property, we started doing our homework
- We want to get a head start
- We are not planning on waiting to start looking at funding sources
- We want a good plan to execute
- For the community and citizens of Stokes, there may be certain decisions that this group and Board may have to make

Chairman Walker noted to Mr. Stimson that he felt the information provided had answered Commissioner Booth's questions.

Mr. Stimson thanked the Board for allowing him to speak at today's meeting.

Chairman Walker confirmed with Commissioner Booth that his questions had been answered by the OC.

Chairman Walker requested the Clerk to restate the motion.

Clerk Bullins responded:

- Vice Chairman Lankford moved that the Board of County Commissioners keep the date of June 30, 2017 as the date that the County is out of the project which was outlined in the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) that was approved and signed off by the Board of Commissioners and Our Communities.

Vice Chairman Walker and Commissioner Mendenhall confirmed the motion read by Clerk Bullins was correct.

Chairman Walker commented:

- Want to see the project succeed as much as anyone
- Wish things were different
- Understand the need for a community school
- Want to see something there that benefits the community
- I think it behooves the community to plan in terms of a finite date that we committed
- The County has already committed approximately \$30,000 toward the project
- The County has a lot of issues that need funding with no extra funds in the county
- I support and will continue to support the project in whatever way we can

- I want the County to be able to transfer the property to the community but I think we have to realize the funding for the property has to end at a certain time
- I think the 16 months was very generous
- Don't want to slam the door in your face, but realistically, the county has been generous with 16 months
- I said earlier, even if the County were to say we need to transfer the property in 16 months that does not mean for economic development purposes or for other needs, I think there could be some other form of county support beyond that
- I think that would have to be dealt with on an as needed basis

Commissioner Jones requested clarification from Vice Chairman Lankford.

Commissioner Jones questioned Vice Chairman Lankford if the motion is intended to be a drop dead date even if it is a good plan and sustainable that may have grants pending, just want to make sure that your motion is June 30, 2017 being the drop dead date.

Vice Chairman Lankford responded:

- June 30, 2017 is what we all agreed on
- I am expecting this project to be complete and they have took the property over and have a successful plan

Commissioner Jones responded:

- I don't get that from the MOU, I get that they must have a viable and sustainable plan by June 30, 2017

Vice Chairman Lankford reiterated that June 30, 2017 is the date.

Chairman Walker commented:

- Confirmed with County Attorney Ty Browder that the only thing that can't be changed by this Board is the tax rate that has been set

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

Commissioner Booth questioned Chairman Walker regarding his confirmation with County Browder about the tax rate being changed?

Chairman Walker responded:

- My statement is in regards to what this Board can and cannot do
- This Board can't change the tax rate once it is set, anything else can be revisited by this Board



### **Appointments – Stokes Aging Planning Committee**

Clerk Bullins noted that there was one vacancy for the Stokes Aging Planning Committee and that the Committee will be meeting in January.

Vice Chairman Lankford noted that the group agreed in their bylaws to recommend nominations.

Chairman Walker opened the floor for nominations.

There were no nominations from the Board.

Chairman Walker entertained a motion to close the nominations.

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

Clerk Bullins noted the item would be on their Agenda until an appointment is made by the Board.

Chairman Walker, with full consensus, directed the Clerk to place the item on the December 27<sup>th</sup> Action Agenda.

### **External Postings – Animal Control and Environmental Health**

Chairman Walker entertained a motion regarding the external postings for a vacant Animal Control Officer and a vacant Environmental Health Specialist which were presented at today's meeting.

Commissioner Jones moved to approve the external postings for the vacant Animal Control Officer and the vacant Environmental Health Specialist. Commissioner Booth seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

### **CLOSED SESSION**

Chairman Walker entertained a motion to enter Closed Session for the following:

- To consider the initial employment or appointment of an individual to any office or position, other than a vacancy in the Board of County Commissioners or any other public body, or to consider the qualifications, competence, performance, character, and fitness of any public officer or employee, other than a member of the Board of Commissioners or of some other public body pursuant to G.S. 143-318.11(6)
- To consult with an attorney employed or retained by the public body in order to preserve the attorney-client privilege between the attorney and the public body, which privilege is hereby acknowledged pursuant to GS 143-318.11(a)(3)

Vice Chairman Lankford moved to enter Closed Session for the following:

- To consider the initial employment or appointment of an individual to any office or position, other than a vacancy in the Board of County Commissioners or any other public body, or to consider the qualifications, competence, performance, character, and fitness of any public officer or employee, other than a member of the Board of Commissioners or of some other public body pursuant to G.S. 143-318.11(6)
- To consult with an attorney employed or retained by the public body in order to preserve the attorney-client privilege between the attorney and the public body, which privilege is hereby acknowledged pursuant to GS 143-318.11(a)(3).

Commissioner Booth seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

The Board re-entered the open session of the December 12<sup>th</sup> meeting.

### **Adjournment**

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

Commissioner Jones 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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**Jimmy Walker**  
Chairman