

GENERAL GOVERNMENT-GOVERNING BODY-INTRODUCTION

Clerk to the Board Shannon Shaver congratulated and welcomed Commissioner Rick Morris, Commissioner Andy Nickelston, and Commissioner Jamie Yontz.

GENERAL GOVERNMENT-GOVERNING BODY-ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN

Clerk to the Board Shannon Shaver polled the Board for the Election of the Chairman of the Stokes County Board of Commissioners.

Commissioner Morris – Commissioner Walker
Commissioner Nickelston – Commissioner Mendenhall
Commissioner Yontz – Commissioner Mendenhall
Commissioner Mendenhall – Commissioner Mendenhall

Clerk to the Board Shannon Shaver noted that Commissioner Mendenhall would serve as Chairman for the Stokes County Board of Commissioners.

Clerk to the Board Shannon Shaver turned the meeting over to Chairman Ronnie Mendenhall.

GENERAL GOVERNMENT-GOVERNING BODY-ELECTION OF VICE CHAIRMAN

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

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

Commissioner Yontz nominated Commissioner Nickelston to serve as Vice Chairman of the Stokes County Board of Commissioners.

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

Commissioner Yontz moved to close the nominations. Commissioner Nickelston seconded and the motion carried unanimously with a 4-0 vote.

Chairman Mendenhall polled the Board:
Commissioner Morris – Commissioner Walker
Commissioner Yontz – Commissioner Nickelston
Commissioner Nickelston – Commissioner Nickelston
Chairman Mendenhall – Commissioner Nickelston

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

Clerk to the Board Shannon Shaver commented:

- My apologies as I do not usually run a meeting but I did not open the floor for nominations for Chairman.
- Do we need to go back and do anything to cover this?

Chairman Mendenhall asks for clarification from County Attorney Browder.

County Attorney Browder responded:

- It is fine.
- There is nothing that needs to be done.

GENERAL GOVERNMENT-GOVERNING BODY

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

Chairman Mendenhall commented:

- Thanks to everyone for coming.
- It is a new day.
- It makes me think about 2004.
- This is when I was named Principal of North Stokes High School.
- I said to the students and teachers that it was a new day at North Stokes and today is a new day in Stokes County.
- I thank my fellow Commissioners for having enough confidence in me to make me Chairman.
- That says a lot to me.
- To each of you, I say thank you for that.
- I feel sure that as the past Boards have been able to do, this Board will continue to move the County forward in a positive way.
- When it comes time to work together, I feel sure this Board will be able to do that.
- I know that we will not agree on everything.
- That would be impossible for five people to agree on everything.
- The great thing about a democracy is that everyone has their right to their opinion.
- In the end, when we need to make a decision, I believe that each of these five Board members will make the best decision possible for Stokes County.
- I will be as fair and consistent as possible.
- I am a big believer in consistency.
- We have a lot of work to do.
- We have done a lot of work in the past.
- I believe with all my heart that we will get it done.
- The budget is right around the corner.
- This is one of our biggest tasks.
- Start thinking about some things that you believe in and want to work towards.

Vice Chairman Nickelston commented:

- Thanks to Chairman Mendenhall for getting things started this morning.
- I am glad that each and every one could be here today.
- It is so good to have my family here with me today.
- This is just like running a business to me.
- When I come in and sit in this chair it is time to get to work.
- That is what is expected of employees that work for us and I am not different.
- If there is anything I can ever do for anyone, please do not hesitate to reach out to me.
- I am looking forward to working with this group.
- I feel like we have a good group here and can get some things done.

Commissioner Yontz commented:

- Thanks to all of our friends and family for coming out and supporting us here today.
- Most of all, thank you for having the faith in us to lead the county.
- I look forward to it.
- There are going to be days that you disagree with the decision that I make.
- I promise you that everybody in this room is going to disagree with something I do.
- That is okay.
- That is why there are five of us up here.
- If that were not so, we would only need one Commissioner.
- With that in mind, going forward let's have spirited debate.
- Let's put our differences behind us move ahead, and get the county moving in the right direction.
- Anything that you need, please approach us with it.
- If we don't know, we will try and find out.
- To think that we know everything that goes on in this county is just not true.
- I have been on the School Board for 8 years and at the last meeting I was learning things that I did not know at the first meeting.
- It is continual growth for us as well.
- Please bring issues to us, present them to us, and we will certainly entertain them.
- I look forward to serving you.

Commissioner Morris commented:

- Thank you Mr. Chairman.
- It is great to be up here again.
- I have sat up here about a thousand times before.
- I want to start by thanking the good Lord that Shannon's mom and daughter are going to be okay, that Jimmy Walker is getting better, and that Jake has shown up here all of the sudden.
- I saw him yesterday down at The Arts Place and I thought you were still home in the bed, so that was a pleasant surprise.
- It has been kind of a rough time on the Administration up here.
- Let's hope that ends here pretty soon.
- Good that all you guys are doing well.

- I would like to thank everyone for coming today.
- Thanks to the Stokes County voters for putting some confidence in me to represent them in this legislative role.
- I am going to do my absolute best to set, develop, establish, and maintain good strong policies for the county, and to do a budget that really works for the county.
- Those are the two main things that Commissioners do.
- I am very dedicated to having an honest, efficient, and transparent local government.
- Speaking of transparency, I have a couple of agenda items in mind just to give you a little preview.
- One is the new Wellness Center.
- My phone has been melting since the last meeting.
- I would like to discuss that a little bit more at the next meeting.
- Getting back to transparency, I have asked the CEO of RiverStreet Communications, Eric Kramer, to come back under our Information Agenda at the first meeting in December.
- I have asked him to talk to us about how they may be able to help us live stream these meetings.
- We need good sound and good audio so that we can make it really easy for the folks out there to watch the meeting and to know exactly what we are doing.
- These guys have some good ideas on that.
- They can update you on a couple of other things they are doing as well.
- I think those will both be pretty interesting discussions for our first meeting, along with agenda items that the other Commissioners I am sure have already put in.
- I would like to get my contact information up on the website this week.
- I want to do business by telephone and email.
- I am not going to do county business by Facebook.
- I don't particularly like Facebook or the people who operate it.
- They are not friendly to conservatives.
- I would just as soon minimize the use of Facebook in the future, especially when it comes to local government.
- All of these things are things I talked about during the primary and the general election.
- I am also going to establish some regular office hours, both in the evening and daytime, at the County Government to make it easy for folks to come by and talk about county business with me if they would like to.
- If they do not want to come over here for some reason, then I will go to them.
- I want to be very accessible to the voters that put us in here and understand as well as possible what it is they want done.
- I want done what the voters want done.
- I want to apologize in advance to my brothers down in Walnut Cove who are doing the parade this weekend.
- I had already signed up for a bluegrass music camp all weekend so I will have to miss the first parade.
- The King one has been delayed so maybe we will get in on that one this year.
- Again, thank everybody for your support.
- I am looking forward to getting in the legislative business, and moving Stokes County forward.

Chairman Mendenhall commented:

- Before we adjourn today, I do have one comment for our County Attorney.
- This is something very important that I think we need to clarify at today's meeting.
- As I move forward in making the first agenda for this Board, I want guidance as this is the first time this has happened since I have been on the Board, we have a Commissioner in the hospital.
- He will not be here for the first meeting I know; he believes he may be able to attend the second one.
- What are the legalities of him being able to come through by phone?
- If he is not able to do that, there are some items that will affect him.
- Some of these items that have been brought forward are items he brought forward in the beginning.
- Would we be able to hold off on these until he is able to be here if he cannot participate by phone?
- I would not feel right about that.
- I think the decorum and courtesy should be given to him to not discuss an item that he brought forward in the beginning until he can participate.

County Attorney Browder responded:

- As is often the case the general statute is not clear.
- It really does not speak to this.
- In this situation, it is really up to the Board as to whether or not you want to allow remote attendance.
- I checked the Board's policies.
- This is not addressed in your policies.
- You can certainly vote to do that.
- There is no problem with a Commissioner participating in a conference call for the purpose of discussion.
- When it comes to voting, if the absent Commissioner votes by telephone, and his vote is the deciding vote that could be problematic since it is not addressed in the statute.

Chairman Mendenhall continued:

- I would like to ask the Board, as we go through this to bear with me on the agenda items for the first week or two until he can get here.
- If we put it on discussion, would each Board member allow Commissioner Walker to participate by phone?

Chairman Mendenhall noted that there was consensus from the Board for Commissioner Walker to participate by phone if possible.

Chairman Mendenhall opened the floor for any further discussion/comments/questions.

Commissioner Morris commented:

- If one of the items you are referring to is the Wellness Center and you want to wait for him on that, I have no problem with that.

- I would like to do the other item, since Eric is coming from RiverStreet.

Chairman Mendenhall extended thanks to Commissioner Morris.

Adjournment

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

Vice Chairman Nickelston moved to adjourn the Organizational Meeting.

Commissioner Yontz seconded and the motion carried unanimously with a 4-0 vote.

Shannon Shaver
Clerk to the Board

Ronnie Mendenhall
Chairman