

**STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
COUNTY OF AVERY**

The Avery County Board of Commissioners met in Regular Session on Monday, July 1, 2019 at 3:30 p.m. in the Commissioners Board Room, Avery County Administrative Complex, 175 Linville Street, Newland, NC.

Members Present: Martha Hicks, Chair; Dennis Aldridge; Tim Phillips; Wood Hall Young, Jr.

Members Absent: Blake Vance

Call To Order

Chair Hicks called the meeting to order at 3:30 p.m.

Wood Hall Young, Jr. led prayer.

Tim Phillips led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Celebrate County Government

Brandy Ross with the Communications Department was recognized for 15 years of service to Avery County.

Cecily Avery with the Department of Social Services was recognized for 15 years of service to Avery County.

Phillip Barrier, Jr., County Manager, presented plaques from the Marines thanking each department for helping in the planning of the maneuvers. The plaques were presented to the Emergency Medical Services Department, Emergency Management, Airport Authority, Sheriff's Office and County Government.

Public Comment

Kristie Hemingway spoke about scouting for locations for a business and stated that she was in search of a location to put a type of winery in and that she had not had any success. She said she was open to any suggestions.

Board Appointments

NCACC Voting Delegate

The NCACC Conference will be held in Guilford County August 22-24, 2019. During the business session on Saturday, August 24, 2019 each county will be entitled to one vote on items that come before the membership. Each county should designate one voting delegate for the NCACC conference.

Motion by Tim Phillips and second by Wood Hall Young, Jr. to appoint Martha Hicks as the voting delegate for the NCACC Conference. Motion unanimous with those in attendance (4-0).

Review of Applicant

There is one applicant for the Juvenile Crime Prevention Council for review. This will be considered for appointment at the next regular meeting.

Avery County Ranger's Report – Joe Shoupe

Joe Shoupe, Avery County Ranger, presented the Ranger's report. The county staff consists of the Smoke Chaser position which is a temporary 8 month employee and the Ranger. There is a Strike Team of local firefighters who have the training and availability to assist us as needed with fires and natural disasters. There are currently 25 active members.

The citizens of Avery County continue to benefit from the N.C. Forest Service BRIDGE crew. This program utilizes non-violent youthful offenders to perform fire control, forestry related work, and community service projects throughout western North Carolina. The N.C. Forest Service continues to operate the Linville River Nursery which provides seedlings for the Christmas tree industry.

Avery County experienced a mild fire season in the Fall of 2018 and Spring of 2019. This was due to above average rainfall. The seven fires that we responded to only burned 2.25 acres.

We spend many man-hours in various training that enables us to perform our duties safely and efficiently.

It is the responsibility of the NC Forest Service to assist private landowners with the management of their forests. Specific accomplishments this year were:

- 30 management plans written for 994 acres
- 288 acres naturally regenerated
- 11 acres were site prepared and planted in white pine
- 10+ acres were planted for wildlife food plots
- 20 acres of soil & water protection practices
- 2 acres of brush fuel mitigation
- 60 pounds of tree seeds collected for nurseries to grow seedlings
- 26 landowners referred to consulting foresters
- 10 Urban forestry assists

Mr. Shoupe thanked the Board of Commissioners for their continued support for the Avery County Ranger's Office.

Avery County Economic Development Committee Presentation

Ken Walter presented a video to the Board that was developed by the Economic Development Committee.

Mr. Walter said this was a concept to spotlight Avery County. We want this to show that this is an absolutely great place to start a business, grow a business and raise a family. We want to do this on a fairly regular basis, months apart, of course. We are talking about Heritage Park, Avery Transportation, Avery High School, etc. These are the kinds of videos to show that this is a progressive county. This was done by a company called Blue Ridge Film Productions. The cost of doing a 1 ½ to 2 minute video is \$400.00 or less. This is a special service for Avery County. We are gifting this to the county and we are hoping that as a Board you will say to us that this is a great concept and go forward with it and will allow us to take the funds from our budget.

Mr. Walter asked how the Board would like to proceed. Tim Phillips stated that he thought this was a good idea and felt that it needed to be done. Mr. Walter said that we will come back to you every time we are going to do this. Mr. Phillips said we are going to have to get our name out there.

Chair Hicks thanked the Economic Development Committee for what they are doing for the citizens of Avery County.

Tax Administrators Report – Bruce Daniels

Tax Collections Report

The Total Tax Collections for the month of June 2019 is \$72,088.94.

Motion by Wood Hall Young, Jr. and second by Tim Phillips to approve the Tax Collections Report as presented. Motion unanimous with those in attendance (4-0).

There were no releases for the month of June 2019.

Sales

There were 49 sales for the month of June at 93%. June 2018 there were 60 sales at 89%.

Avery County Tax Collection Report

The total tax levy for 2018 was \$20,756,514.10. Total discoveries were \$241,516.27; total releases for 2018 were \$15,313.36.

The total tax collected for 2018 was \$20,306,357.49; this is a collection rate of 97.83%

Payment agreements outstanding for 2018 are: \$4,395.21; for 2008-2018 is \$15,733.80. Bankruptcies outstanding for 2018 is \$41,482.16; for 2008-2018 is \$219,869.79. Attorney pursuits outstanding for 2018 is \$6,583.86; for 2008-2018 is \$201,016.95.

County Manager Updates – Phillip Barrier, Jr.

VAYA Health Update

VAYA Health covers 23 counties. Every year the state budget has cut their budget and over the last four years it has been cut around 48 million dollars. This is jeopardizing behavioral health services.

Community Room—Ag. Building

There will be a meeting on July 11, 2019 at 2:00 p.m. regarding the Community Room at the Agriculture Building.

Department Head Meetings

Management is beginning meetings with the department heads. We are discussing a mission statement. We are also discussing with the department heads what the reputation of their departments is with the citizens. We will also be providing a section on our website called “Public service by the numbers”.

Resolution to Approve Conveyance of Property to Another Unit of Government

WHEREAS, the County of Avery owns a 2011 Ford Van bearing vin # 1FTDS3EL8BDB29325 which has been designated as surplus property; and

WHEREAS, North Carolina General Statute §160A-274 authorizes a governmental unit in this state to exchange with, lease to, lease from, sell to, or purchase from any other governmental unit any interest in real or personal property upon such terms and conditions as the governmental unit deems wise, with or without consideration; and

WHEREAS, the County of Avery has determined that it is in the best interest of the County to convey the 2011 Ford Van bearing vin #1FTDS3EL8BDB29325 to the Toe River Health District, and deems it wise to do so for no consideration, on condition that the van is used solely for the benefit of the citizens of Avery County and in the event that the van is not used solely for the benefit of the citizens of Avery County, or if the Toe River Health District is dissolved or otherwise ceases to exist, then the van shall revert back to the County of Avery.

THEREFORE, the County of Avery resolves that:

1. The County of Avery hereby conveys to the Toe River Health District the following property: a 2011 Ford Van bearing vin #1FTDS3EL8BDB29325 on condition that the van is used solely for the benefit of the citizens of Avery County and in the event that the van is not used solely for the benefit of the citizens of Avery County, or if the Toe River Health District is dissolved or otherwise ceases to exist, then the van shall revert back to the County of Avery.
2. The property herein described shall be conveyed for no consideration.
3. The County Manager is authorized to execute all documents necessary to convey the property in the manner authorized by this Resolution.

Motion by Wood Hall Young, Jr. and second by Dennis Aldridge to adopt the Resolution Approving Conveyance of Property to Another Unit of Government. Motion unanimous with those in attendance (4-0).

Motion by Wood Hall Young, Jr. and second by Tim Phillips authorizing the County Manager to sign the Memorandum of Understanding between the County of Avery and Toe River Health District. Motion unanimous with those in attendance (4-0).

Public Hearing Regarding the Economic Development Committee Expenditures for the 2019/2020 Fiscal Year

Motion by Wood Hall Young, Jr. and second by Tim Phillips to go into a time of Public Hearing at 4:30 p.m. regarding the Economic Development Committee Expenditures for the 2019/2020 Fiscal Year. Motion unanimous with those in attendance (4-0).

Mr. Barrier stated that the public hearing was being held to receive public comment regarding the Economic Development Committee Expenditures for the fiscal year 2019/2020. These expenditures include training and meeting expenditures not to exceed \$1,800.00; travel expenditures not to exceed \$500.00; advertising with the Chamber of Commerce and others not to exceed \$2,000.00 and funding for Economic Development projects not to exceed \$2,500.00.

There were no further public comments.

Motion by Wood Hall Young, Jr. and second by Dennis Aldridge to go out of the Public Hearing at 4:37 p.m. and back into Regular Session. Motion unanimous with those in attendance (4-0).

Motion by Dennis Aldridge and second by Tim Phillips to approve the Economic Development Committee expenditures as presented. Motion unanimous with those in attendance (4-0).

Finance Officer Report – Tim Greene
Budget Amendment

The EMS Department salary and fringe accounts need to be amended due to a step increase and change in pay method.

Motion by Wood Hall Young, Jr. and second by Dennis Aldridge to adopt the Budget Amendment in the amount of \$35,733.00 with a debit of \$27,947.00 to Salaries—EMT's (105300.0220); debit of \$2,138.00 to FICA (105300.0500); debit of \$2,728.00 to Retirement (105300.0600); debit of \$838.00 to 401K Retirement (105300.0800); debit of \$2,082.00 to Allocated Insurance & leases (105300.0950); Credit of \$35,733.00 to Fund Balance—Appropriated (103990.0000). Motion unanimous with those in attendance (4-0).

Budget Amendment

The Sheriff's Department needs to amend the salary & fringe line items due to a reclassification of the admin support specialist.

Motion by Tim Phillips and second by Wood Hall Young, Jr. to adopt the Budget Amendment in the amount of \$2,733.00 with a debit of \$2,107.00 to Salaries (105100.0220); debit of \$161.00 to FICA (105100.0500); debit of \$205.00 to Retirement (105100.0600); debit of \$106.00 to 401K Retirement (105100.0800); debit of \$154.00 to Allocated Insurance & Leases (105100.0950); credit of \$2,733.00 to Fund Balance—Appropriated (103990.0000). Motion unanimous with those in attendance (4-0).

County Attorney Report – Michaelle Poore

There is nothing for the Board's consideration today.

Approval of Minutes

Motion by Wood Hall Young, Jr. and second by Tim Phillips to approve the April 29, 2019 Special Meeting Minutes; May 6, 2019 Budget Workshop Minutes; May 9, 2019 Budget Workshop Minutes. Motion unanimous with those in attendance (4-0).

Agenda Consent Items

Adopted by Consensus of the Board.

Upcoming Meetings

The next Regular meeting scheduled is July 15, 2019 at 3:30 p.m. There will be a Special Meeting regarding the Community Room at the Agriculture Building on July 11, 2019 at 2:00 p.m.

Adjourn

Motion by Wood Hall Young, Jr. and second by Dennis Aldridge to adjourn this meeting at 4:42 p.m. Motion unanimous with those in attendance (4-0).

**Martha Hicks, Chair
Avery County Board of Commissioners**

ATTEST: _____
Cindy Turbyfill, Clerk