

**STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
COUNTY OF AVERY**

The Avery County Board of Commissioners met in Regular Session on Monday, November 6, 2017 at 3:30 p.m. in the Commissioners Board Room, Avery County Administrative Complex, 175 Linville Street, Newland, NC.

Members Present: Martha Hicks, Chair; Blake Vance, Vice-Chair; Faith Lacey; Tim Phillips; Wood Hall Young, Jr.

Members Absent: None

Call To Order

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

Phillip Barrier led prayer.

Wood Hall Young, Jr. led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Proclamations and Awards

Celebrate County Government

Harold Greene, David Shelton, Jeff Raimos, and Linda Hanna were recognized for 20 years of service to Avery County.

Behind the Scenes Hero Award

Sheriff Kevin Frye explained that he was here to recognize two very special people. He explained that it takes whole teams of people to get things done. The things that bother us the most is when a child has been hurt or abused especially sexually abused. Those are some of the most traumatic cases. Those are the cases that stick with you most of your life. In order to successfully make sure that we are able to prosecute those cases we want to do everything in our power to make sure those cases will go through court. Through that we use the Children's Advocacy Center of the Blue Ridge. It is part of the South Mountain Children and Family Services. This center has been operating here since 2011. In 2016 the CAC performed 123 forensic interviews, 65 of those were in Avery County. Over 50 of these happened from June to December 2016. They performed 56 child medical exams, 26 of those were for Avery County. We meet once a month with a multiple disciplinary team. This is the way we are able to make these cases for abuse. These people do not get recognition very often. If you are an advocate for kids these people are the best ones to have on your side. The first recognition is Beth Browning, a family nurse practitioner who has been employed with South Mountain for 29 years. She has performed over 3,000 child medical exams. The next recognition is Selena Moretz who is the director and forensic interviewer at South Mountain. She has been employed since 2011. She has performed over 600 forensic interviews.

Public Comment

There were no public comments.

Board Appointments

Community Child Protective Team (Child Fatality Team)

Chair Hicks stated that Dr. Burleson was serving on this board but he retired. Mr. Kenneth Townsend is the new superintendent for the Avery County Schools. This application has been reviewed and is ready for appointment.

Motion by Blake Vance and second by Wood Hall Young, Jr. to appoint Kenneth Townsend, Superintendent of the Avery County Schools, to the Community Child Protective Team. Motion unanimously approved (5-0).

High Country Workforce Development Committee

Amy Crabbe and Edward Hinson are willing to serve on this Board for Avery County. Both applicants work for businesses in Avery County.

Motion by Faith Lacey and second by Wood Hall Young, Jr. to appoint Amy Crabbe and Edward Hinson to the High Country Workforce Development Committee. Motion unanimously approved (5-0).

There is one application to review for the Avery County Transportation Advisory Board. The applicant is Cheryl Buchanan.

Chair Hicks stated that a public hearing was scheduled for 5:00 p.m. We are ahead of schedule so we are going to move some items up on the agenda to take care of before 5:00 p.m.

Finance Officer Report – Nancy Johnson

Budget Amendment

The Avery County Manager requests a budget amendment to move funds from available for appropriations to public buildings and grounds for analysis and work on the jail roof leak.

Motion by Wood Hall Young, Jr. and second by Tim Phillips to adopt the Budget Amendment for Public Buildings and Grounds in the amount of \$7,500.00 with a debit of \$7,500.00 to Repairs and Maintenance (10.5000.1510) and a credit of \$7,500.00 to Available for Appropriations (10.7000.6000). Motion unanimously approved (5-0).

Budget Amendment

Emergency Management requests a budget amendment to recognize a reimbursement grant awarded from Homeland Security Grant Program paid out through the NC Dept. of Public Safety for the purchase of a prime mover truck.

Motion by Tim Phillips and second by Faith Lacey to adopt a Budget Amendment regarding a Homeland Security Grant for the purchase of a prime mover truck in the amount of \$60,000.00 with a debit of \$60,000.00 to Capital-Automobile (10.5250.7400) and a credit of \$60,000.00 to Emergency Management Grant (10.3800.0000). Motion unanimously approved (5-0).

Budget Amendment

The Avery County Sheriff's Office requests a budget amendment to recognize two grants received from the Department of Public Safety for equipment and a domestic violence officer.

Wood Hall Young, Jr. questioned if this was a recurring grant. Ms. Johnson stated that it was a one year grant.

Blake Vance made a motion to table this budget amendment until more information could be obtained.

Tim Phillips said that they would need to know upfront that this was just for one year.

Blake Vance withdrew his motion to table this budget amendment.

Motion by Faith Lacey and second by Tim Phillips to approve the Budget Amendment regarding two grants received from the Department of Public Safety for equipment and domestic violence officer for the Sheriff's Office with a debit of \$36,600 to Grant Salary (105100.0240); \$2,800.00 to Fica (105100.0500); \$2,929.00 to Retirement (105100.0600); \$1,830.00 to 401K (105100.0800); \$15,504.00 to Group Insurance (105100.0700); \$660.00 to Cell Phones (105100.1360); \$450.00 to Uniforms (105100.3600); \$650.00 to Training (105100.1000); \$3,275.00 to Travel (105100.1400); \$4,300.00 to Capital Outlay- Equipment (105100.7410); and a credit of \$17,250.00 to Fund Balance Appropriation (103990.0000); \$51,748.00 to Governor's Crime Control Grant (103615.0000).

Debit of \$24,500.00 to Capital-Equipment (105100.7410) and a credit of \$24,500.00 to Crime Control Grant (103611.0000). Motion unanimously approved.

Homeland Security Grant Program – Paul Buchanan; David Charles Vance

Paul Buchanan, Assistant Emergency Management Director, explained that Emergency Management had received a grant from Homeland Security for \$60,000 to purchase a prime mover. The prime mover is a ton and a half vehicle designed to pull the hazmat trailers, generators, etc. The only hiccup to it is if someone needs it down state then it will go down state because it is owned by Homeland Security. Avery County has to front the money and as soon as we get the truck in then they literally start paperwork and we get the \$60,000 back.

Motion by Blake Vance and second by Tim Phillips to accept the \$60,000 Homeland Security Grant for a prime mover for the Emergency Management Department. Motion unanimously approved (5-0).

Economic Development Logo Recommendation – Ken Walter; Larry Hazen

Representatives from the Economic Development Committee, Ken Walter and Larry Hazen presented a short video that showed a logo developed by students from Appalachian State University for consideration by the Board of Commissioners. Larry Hazen explained that there were numerous phone calls and emails and that this was quite an intensive project with the marketing committee. This was the logo that we wound up with. Research was put in the colors and shape of the logo. We are trying to sell Avery County. We took some scenes and pictures of the sites in the county. Our mission statement was to provide Avery a brand identity that embodies and invites economic growth. The logo is the branding element that we have started with. The main requirements we were looking for in the logo was easily recognizable and easy to spot. 70% of the mountain counties are circles. 78% have mountains. 1/3rd of the logos have slogans that are part of their design. We took a logo that networks all of Avery County. We think the students did an excellent job in portraying Avery County. We would like to take the video and when we meet with people we want to show this to them. These students took it on themselves to do this project because they thought it would enhance their ability. Wood Hall Young, Jr. stated that these students needed to be compensated for the work that they have done.

Motion by Wood Hall Young, Jr. and second by Tim Phillips to accept the logo for Avery County that has been presented. Motion unanimously approved (5-0).

Bids—Boomerang Designs – Agricultural Building

Phillip Barrier, County Manager, advised that the bids were opened for the Agricultural Building and there were four different bids. Mr. Johnson has his recommendation and it is in the packet. As Manager I spent today calling some of the references for the company that Mr. Johnson has recommended. I am open to discussion and questions. Garanco is the recommendation by Boomerang. Their basic bid was \$1,399,900.00 to build the agricultural building. Mr. Young stated that he was at the meeting when the bids were opened. He said there is a problem with the electrical subcontractor. I would like to accept the bid but I would like to change the electrical subcontractor. Michaele Poore, County Attorney, stated if the Board doesn't want to accept a bid at this meeting that the Board could table and consider at the next meeting. Mr. Barrier stated that we can call a special meeting. Mr. Young asked if the County Manager could call Garanco and ask them about changing the electrical subcontractor. Blake Vance stated that his preference was for the contractor to use as many local subcontractors as they could. Faith Lacey stated that she thought this should be tabled and have a special meeting and discuss this. Ms. Poore advised that the Board could reject all of the bids and re-advertise.

Motion by Faith Lacey and second by Blake Vance to table the approval of the bid for the Agricultural Building until a Special Meeting is called and the electrical subcontractor issue be investigated. Motion unanimously approved (5-0).

Contract—Boomerang Design—Swimming Pool

Mr. Barrier advised that in the agenda packet was the contract for Boomerang to be our swimming pool architect. The attorney and I went through this thoroughly and Boomerang did make the changes that she had noted to her satisfaction. I ask that we approve the contract.

Ms. Poore referenced the Board to page 17 of the contract, Article 11 which sets forth the compensation to be made to Boomerang for their services in this matter. It is a flat fee unless they run into additional services for some reason that they have to do extra work and the Board can seek from that what they might consider is extra work. Mr. Barrier and I looked at that and it seemed to be a reasonable fee schedule. They have a completion timeframe from the time they begin until they finish is two years. Part of the additional fees would be triggered by the total time involved. Mr. Barrier stated that if Avery County was to terminate this agreement, we would be responsible for paying Boomerang for their services. Ms. Poore pointed out that on page 17 there is percentages through the schematic design phase which is 15% of the fee and they take it all the way down to 100%. Mr. Barrier reminded the Board that there is a revenue for \$1,000,000 but a budget amendment has not been done for the rest. Ms. Poore stated that she thought this contract addresses some of the concerns the Board had with the previous contracts as far as having more things clearer.

Motion by Wood Hall Young, Jr. and second by Tim Phillips to approve the contract engaging Boomerang Designs as the architect for the new swimming pool.

VOTE: Vote passes 3 to 1.

Ayes---Martha Hicks, Tim Phillips, Wood Hall Young, Jr.

Noes----Faith Lacey; Blake Vance

Avery County High School Project Ordinance

Mr. Barrier stated that in July a resolution was approved to release the Education Lottery funds to begin phase I of the architect's rendition of an upgrade to the Avery County High School. This is a project ordinance to allow the Finance Officer for Avery County and the Finance Officer for the Board of Education to ask for \$147,026 from the lottery funds. Ms. Poore stated that this establishes the project ordinance so the funds can come into the county and they will either be paid by the county or the funds will be turned over to the school board to be paid by the school board. The project ordinance sets up that fund for those funds to come in.

Motion by Wood Hall Young, Jr. and second by Blake Vance to approve the Avery County High School Project Ordinance, the application to the North Carolina

Education Lottery Public School Building Capital Fund, and authorize the Chair to sign. Motion unanimously approved (5-0).

Tax Administrator Report – Bruce Daniels

Tax Collections Report

The Total Tax Collections for the month of October 2017 is \$1,378,741.20. We are about 37 ½% total levy thus far in collections. The big months are coming up.

Motion by Blake Vance and second by Wood Hall Young, Jr. to approve the Total Tax Collections for the month of October 2017 as presented. Motion unanimously approved (5-0).

Regular Releases

The Regular Releases for the month of October 2017 is \$1,897.09. All with the exception of \$36.44 has been rebilled and collected.

Motion by Wood Hall Young, Jr. and second by Blake Vance to approve the Regular Releases as presented. Motion unanimously approved (5-0).

Mr. Daniels reported on the Revaluation Sales for October 2017.

Recess

Chair Hicks called for a recess until the time of the Public Hearing at 5:00 p.m.
Chair Hicks called the meeting back into Regular Session at 5:00 p.m.

Public Hearing 2018 Schedule of Values

Motion by Wood Hall Young, Jr. and second by Tim Phillips to go into a time of Public Hearing regarding the 2018 Schedule of Values at 5:00 p.m. Motion unanimously approved (5-0).

Mr. Daniels reported that on September 5, 2017 a schedule of values was submitted to the Board of Commissioners and notices placed in the newspaper. The schedule of values was on display in my office and also in the Clerk's office for public comment, questions, etc. I have not seen anyone come into my office for questions or comments. I resubmit the schedule of values for your approval. Essentially this is the guides and standards for our reappraisals. This sets our values and allows us to go into our software and set values for quality of construction, type of building, and so. We have to adhere to these standards. These standards will hold for the next four years.

Motion by Blake Vance and second by Tim Phillips to go out of the Public Hearing regarding Adoption of the Schedule of Values at 5:06 p.m. and back into Regular Session. Motion unanimously approved (5-0).

Motion by Wood Hall Young, Jr. and second by Blake Vance to adopt the 2018 Schedule of Values. Motion unanimously approved (5-0).

Mr. Barrier stated that he thought Mr. Daniels needed to read the following statement out loud:

I, Bruce Daniels, Avery County Tax Assessor, requests the 2018 Schedule of Values be adopted. After holding a public hearing and the Schedule being on display in the Tax Assessor's office and the Commissioner's office, there has been no opposition to the Schedule of Values. The newspapers have been so notified and we will be running a notice for the next four weeks in compliance with North Carolina State Law. So with your approval, we will go forward and be in compliance.

The County Attorney stated she thought that the Board needed to vote again.

Motion by Wood Hall Young, Jr. and second by Blake Vance to adopt the 2018 Schedule of Values. Motion unanimously approved (5-0).

County Manager Updates – Phillip Barrier, Jr.

Playground Update

The picnic shelter is up. We will be pouring the concrete, sidewalks and bathrooms if the weather holds. The next thing we will do in the spring will be fencing and cornhole.

Awarding of Division of Water Resources Grant

We have been awarded the Division of Water Resources Grant for \$187,000 that will be located at the pool complex for the storm water.

Chair Hicks questioned when we can start using this money and get someone in there to work on the storm water. Robbie Willis, Avery County Recreation Director, stated that he needed to get with Dr. Orr at NC State and Boomerang Architects so that the design can be compliant with the Division of Water Resources.

Updated No Smoking SOP

We have a smoking policy that was passed in 2010. It is not a tobacco policy. Part of that policy is that the County Manager can select the places that are allowable for smoking. I have changed the Standard Operating Procedure and the main thing I changed is the smoking area around the courthouse to be outside of the sidewalk on the perimeter of the building. It will be in policy as of November 6, 2017 and as soon as we get the signs we will put them up. The ordinance is in my office and it will be hung up in the foyer of the courthouse.

Broadband

We got word Friday that Governor Roy Cooper has recommended that Avery County receive the \$100,000 grant so we are still in the running for the grant. We have passed the first phase.

Mr. Barrier, Ken Townsend, Jeff Jaynes and Nancy Johnson went last Monday to attend the public school funding class and it was very valuable and learned a lot.

Surplus Property

The surplus property has been advertised and posted on the website and we will open bids on the 20th for the properties. I have not had any phone calls on that.

Healthy Halloween

This was the Thursday before Halloween at the Rock Gym. There were over 500 kids in attendance. This was the 11th year. There were over 20 vendors for the public.

The county employees had Healthy Halloween at the health department.

Miscellaneous

Veteran's breakfast is this Thursday at 8:00 a.m. at the Senior Center.

Trash sites will be open on Veteran's Day; closed on Wednesday and Thursday for Thanksgiving.

We had an anonymous donor donate furniture to the Senior Center.

Dr. Boyd's annual Christmas party is December 5th at 5:30 p.m.

Salary Study Vendor Selection

Mr. Barrier explained that the Board had met with MAPS group and Piedmont Triad Regional Council. Blake Vance apologized for not being able to be at either meeting due to a work conflict and said he trusted his fellow board members. Mr. Phillips stated that he was impressed with the Piedmont Triad Regional Council. Mr. Young stated that he was impressed with both but that he thought the Piedmont Triad Regional Council would be able to put in more time. Chair Hicks stated that always the less expensive is not the best but that she had spoken with Ashley in Payroll and Ashley felt that Piedmont Triad Regional Council would get more out of the study because they had not done the study before. Faith Lacey questioned if we really need to spend the money for a study. Chair Hicks stated that she had been through one of these and the employees do expect to get what the study says. We need to expect when we do the budget that is going to be extra money. Blake Vance stated that he thought this was wise to hold on to good employees. Mr. Phillips stated that we needed to value good employees. Mr. Young stated that if we are doing the studies we need to keep up with what the studies say we need.

Motion by Wood Hall Young, Jr. and second by Tim Phillips to employ Piedmont Triad Regional Council for a salary study for the county employees.

VOTE: Vote passes 4 to 1.

Ayes: Martha Hicks; Blake Vance; Tim Phillips; Wood Hall Young, Jr.

Noes: Faith Lacey

Chair Hicks stated that funds for this study had been included in the budget.

County Attorney Report – Michaelle Poore

Ms. Poore stated she did not have anything that the Board needed to address at this time.

Agenda Consent Items

Adopted by consensus of the Board.

Upcoming Meetings

The January Commissioners meeting is on the 1st which is a holiday. Consensus by the Board to move the meeting to Monday, January 8, 2018 at 3:30 p.m.

Adjourn

Motion by Blake Vance and second by Wood Hall Young, Jr. to adjourn this meeting at 5:40 p.m. Motion unanimously approved (5-0).

Martha Hicks, Chair
Avery County Board of Commissioners

ATTEST: _____
Cindy Turbyfill, Clerk