

Minutes

Board of County Commissioners Hyde County

October 20, 2008

Chairman Charles Spencer called the Regular meeting of the Hyde County Board of Commissioners to order at 7:00 PM on Monday, October 20, 2008 in the Multi-Use Room, Government Center, Swan Quarter, N.C. The following members were present: Alice Armstrong, Gene Ballance, Tom Davis, Barry Swindell, and Charles Spencer. Also present were County Manager Carl Classen; County Attorney Sid Hassell; Clerk to the Board Lois Stotesberry; and members of the public.

Following a pledge of allegiance to the flag and opening prayer by Commissioner Davis the meeting was called to order.

Agenda:

Chairman Spencer asked for any changes to the October 20, 2008 meeting Agenda as presented by the Clerk.

Commissioner Davis moved to accept the Agenda as presented by the Clerk. Mr. Swindell seconded the motion. The motion passed on the following vote: Ayes – Armstrong, Ballance, Davis, Swindell, and Chairman Spencer; Nays – None; Absent or Not Voting – None.

Consideration of Minutes:

Chairman Spencer asked for approval of meeting minutes.

Commissioner Davis moved to approve the September 15, 2008 Meeting Minutes with addition of the Ocracoke Community Radio Project Mission Statement on page 4, line 10; the October 6, 2008 4:30 PM Special Meeting Minutes; and October 6, 2008 7:00 PM Regular Meeting Minutes as presented by the Clerk. Mr. Ballance seconded the motion. The motion passed on the following vote: Ayes – Armstrong, Ballance, Davis, Spencer, and Swindell; Nays – None; Absent or Not Voting – None.

Special Presentation:

John Monaghan, Piedmont Natural Gas Community Relations Manager, accompanied by Jeff Klein, Operation Supervisor, and Jim Sharpnak, Elizabeth City Representative discussed the recent incident at Mattamuskeet School and answered citizen's questions about natural gas service in Hyde County. Mr. Monaghan reported that a consultant was brought in to investigate and has determined there had been a tiny meter leak, an odorant additive was above the required level, and without air movement later in the week the odor had re-entered the building.

Mr. Monaghan reported that a consultant representing Hyde County Schools also examined Mattamuskeet Elementary, Middle, and High School heating systems and determined that an operator valve (designed to open and close when cycling off and on to purge waste) on the Elementary School heating system had allowed the odor to re-enter the building.

Health Inspector Hugh Watson provided copies of a summation of events and findings of the Hyde County Health Department Epi-Team - Mattamuskeet Elementary School Odor Complaint of October 9, 2008 and was available for comment.

Public Comments:

Chairman Spencer called for comments from the public.

Franklin Swindell, Engelhard – asked Piedmont Natural Gas representatives when citizens of Hyde County could expect to benefit from the natural gas system, and would like them to conduct a survey.

Iris Faulkner, Ponzer – stated that \$17,000 was donated to the County for construction of a public dog pound and would like to know why that has not been built. Mrs. Faulkner also stated that a lawyer has been hired to sue County Manager Carl Classen and all of the commissioners. Mrs. Faulkner cited the 1934 Hatch Act stating that the Justice Department has been informed that Commissioner Davis receives three checks including one for legal services provided to Hyde County Department of Social Services.

Sharon Spencer, Fairfield – stated that the Board’s decision to hire Carl Classen as County Manager was inconsiderate to herself and Anson Byrd (incoming commissioners) because it tied their hands. Mrs. Spencer also stated a salary of \$96,875 was too costly in comparison with other rural North Carolina county manager salaries.

Anson Byrd, Fairfield – stated the Board’s action taken to hire Mr. Classen had generated an enormous response of calls to his home with only one being positive.

Franklin Swindell, Engelhard – thanked Mrs. Spencer for her statement requiring financial accountability from elected officials.

Barbara Gibbs, Engelhard – asked if Mr. Classen’s contract had been signed. Chairman Spencer confirmed that the contract was signed.

Other Matters:

Budget Revisions and Transfers

County Manager Carl Classen had no budget amendments, revisions, or transfers to report to the Board.

Presentation of Schedule of Values

As part of the revaluation process, Tax Administrator Linda Basnight and Bob Pearson of Pearson Appraisal Services presented the proposed Schedule of Values. Per State law, the Schedule of Values must be offered for public comment following required advertising. As per the revaluation schedule outline discussed in spring 2008, the public hearing is scheduled in conjunction with the November 3 Regular Commissioners meeting and the advertising for the public hearing would occur October 21. The public notice would also be posted in the post office on Ocracoke.

Commissioner Ballance moved to receive presentation on the proposed Schedule of Values. Mr. Swindell seconded the motion. The motion passed on the following vote: Ayes – Armstrong, Ballance, Davis, Spencer, and Swindell; Nays – None; Absent or Not Voting – None.

Commissioner Swindell moved to approve holding a public hearing on the proposed Schedule of Values to be held in conjunction with the November 3 Regular Commissioners meeting. Mr. Davis seconded the motion. The motion passed on the following vote: Ayes – Armstrong, Ballance, Davis, Spencer, and Swindell; Nays – None; Absent or Not Voting – None.

Subdivision Application – Wade E. White & Stanford White, Fairfield Township, Hyde County

Messrs. White owns a 20.66 acre tract of land on North Lake Road in Fairfield. They wish to extract a 1.45 acre lot from the 20.66 acre parcel, which they plan to sell. There is currently a log cabin on the parcel that they wish to sell. The cabin is served by county water and has a septic tank. The division of this lot, if signed by properly designated authorities, meets the requirements of the current Hyde County Subdivision Ordinance.

Commissioner Davis moved to approve the Wade E. White & Stanford White Subdivision Application contingent upon the applicant providing the County Planner a properly formatted plat with certifications executed as required by the Hyde County

Subdivision Ordinance. Ms. Armstrong seconded the motion. The motion passed on the following vote: Ayes – Armstrong, Ballance, Davis, Spencer, and Swindell; Nays – None; Absent or Not Voting – None.

Fire Chiefs Association

The Fire Chiefs Association, represented by Lindsey Mooney of Fairfield Volunteer Fire Department, submitted a letter requesting that the dispatch center be put under the management of the County Manager with a user's group board made up of seven (7) members, two (2) appointed by the Fire Chiefs Association, two (2) appointed by the EMS Director, two (2) appointed by the Sheriff, and one (1) appointed by the Hyde County Board of Commissioners. The Fire Chiefs Association letter was signed by Mathew Halla, Engelhard Volunteer Fire & Rescue; Albert O'Neal, Ocracoke Volunteer Fire Department; Jeffrey Stotesberry, Swan Quarter Volunteer Fire Department; Eddie Basnight, Fairfield Volunteer Fire Department; and Johnny Stotesberry, Ponzer Volunteer Fire & Rescue. Scranton Volunteer Fire Department Chief Mark Carawan did not sign the letter.

Mr. Mooney noted several recent 911 calls that he and the Association felt would have been dispatched according to the Hyde County Emergency Operation Plan (EOP) had the dispatchers followed EOP guidelines. The EOP was compiled by the Emergency Manager, Fire Department Chiefs, and Sheriffs over the past ten (10) years with changes made when necessary.

A letter from Stephanie Cahoon (concerned citizen) was attached, which stated she made a 911 call to the dispatch center on Friday, August 22, 2008 asking for help at a head-on collision and was told Hyde County Dispatch could not help her and to call the Tyrrell County sheriff's office.

No action was taken.

Carteret/Dare/Hyde Scenic Byway Committee Report

Chairman of the Carteret/Dare/Hyde Scenic Byway Committee Earl O'Neal and Elizabeth Watson of Watson Heritage Strategies, Chestertown, MD, consultant to the Committee, reported to the Board on the work of the Committee and requested endorsement of their application for moving forward.

Hyde County has been a joint sponsor of this Scenic Byway Committee and has provided a 1/3rd share of the local match along with Carteret and Dare counties.

The Board will re-visit the Scenic Byway Committee's request at the November 17, 2008 Commissioners meeting on Ocracoke.

Boards and Committee Reports:

Commissioner Ballance reported that he attended the Ocracoke Civic & Business Association meeting last week. NCDOT representatives suggested ways to reduce fuel expense for the ferry service. Mr. Ballance also stated that research is being done to begin meetings utilizing simultaneous communication.

Commissioner Armstrong reported that she attended the Albemarle Commission meeting. Discussion included water basin transfer issues.

Commissioner Swindell reported that members are needed to serve on the Health Board.

Chairman Spencer reported that he attended the Mental Health Board meeting and that services are stable. Mr. Spencer also reported that members are needed to serve on the ABC Board.

No other Board or Committee reports were offered so Chairman Spencer continued with the Agenda.

County Commissioners Reports:

Commissioner Davis addressed public comments made by Mrs. Iris Faulkner and reported that he had not accepted any money from DSS for work done since December, 2006 for the Department of Social Services.

County Manager's Report:

County Manager Carl Classen presented a year-to-date financial report of the County budget including percentages completed through September 30, 2008; reported the Rivers and Associates, Inc., Engelhard Water Treatment Plant Project funding amendment requested may no longer be necessary; Mattamuskeet EMS Station construction bids are due on October 29 with installation of crew quarters by December 31 and a garage structure by February; Ponzer Community Building Repairs are near completion; Meetings via simultaneous communication are expected to start soon; Mattamuskeet Lodge Sewer Projects continue with funding provided by the Clean Water Management Trust Fund and extension of the sewer line funded by the Rural Center and the Golden LEAF Foundation; Swan Quarter Dike Project; Swan Quarter Park Project; Engelhard Community Park Maintenance; Ocracoke Convenience Site/County Building Improvements; Old Courthouse Building Re-Use; and Ocracoke NPS Boat Ramp.

Monthly reports submitted include the Board of Elections; Health Department; Senior Center; Emergency Services Department; Tax Department; Utilities Department; and Register of Deeds.

Closed Session:

Mr. Davis moved to enter Closed Session in accordance with NCGS §143A-318.11(a)(6) to discuss personnel matters. Mr. Swindell seconded the motion. The motion passed on the following vote: Ayes Armstrong Ballance, Davis, Swindell, and Chairman Spencer; Nays – None; Absent or Not Voting – None.

The Commissioners entered closed session at 9:15 PM.

Mr. Davis moved to return from Closed Session. Mr. Ballance seconded the motion. The motion passed on the following vote: Ayes – Armstrong, Ballance, Davis, Swindell, and Chairman Spencer; Nays – None; Absent or Not Voting – None.

The Commissioners re-entered regular session at 9:27 PM.

Commissioner Armstrong asked what the County will do if Wade Selby, N&S Motors, doesn't service and/or tow the ambulances when needed.

In his October 8 letter (written in response to public comments made during the October 6 Board of Commissioners meeting), Emergency Services Director David Warren reported that EMS crews make their own service appointments and Jane Hodges or Crystal Edgar coordinate them with their work schedule.

County Manager Carl Classen will talk with Wade Selby to clarify any miscommunication.

There being no further matters to come before the Commissioners, Mr. Swindell moved to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Davis seconded the motion. The motion passed on the following vote: Ayes – Armstrong, Ballance, Davis, Swindell, and Chairman Spencer; Nays – None; Absent or Not Voting – None.

The meeting adjourned at 9:30 PM.

Respectfully submitted:

Minutes approved on the _____ day of _____, 2008.

Lois Stotesberry, Clerk
Hyde County Board of Commissioners

SEAL

Charles Spencer, Chairman
Hyde County Board of Commissioners