

Surry County Board of Commissioners
Meeting of April 5, 2021

The Surry County Board of Commissioners met at 6:00 p.m., April 5, 2021. The meeting was held in the Board Room, Historic Courthouse, Dobson, N.C., virtually via Zoom and YouTube.

Board members present in-person for the meeting were Chairman Mark Marion, Vice-Chairman Bill Goins, Commissioner Larry Johnson and Commissioner Van Tucker. Commissioner Eddie Harris was not in attendance (excused).

Others present in-person for the meeting, at various times, were:
Chris Knopf, County Manager
Sandy Snow, Assistant County Manager
Rhonda Nixon, Finance Officer
Jessica Montgomery, Public Works Director
Denise Brown, Purchasing Officer
Chief Deputy Paul Barker, Sheriff's Office
Lt. Randy Shelton, Sheriff's Office
Martha Brintle, MIS Director

Attending virtually was Ed Woltz, County Attorney.

Chairman Marion called the meeting to order, delivered the invocation and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Chairman Marion expressed the Board's condolences to Commissioner Harris following the loss of his mother.

Chairman Marion requested the Board review and approve the agenda. Upon motion of Commissioner Tucker, seconded by Commissioner Goins, the Board voted unanimously to approve the agenda.

Chairman Marion requested the Board consider the minutes of the March 10, 2021 Board Retreat as presented. Upon motion of Commissioner Johnson, seconded by Chairman Marion, the Board voted unanimously to approve the minutes as written.

Chairman Marion requested the Board consider the minutes of the March 15, 2021 meeting minutes as presented. Upon motion of Commissioner Goins, seconded by Commissioner Tucker, the Board voted unanimously to approve the minutes as written.

Chairman Marion requested the Board consider the consent agenda. Upon motion of Commissioner Johnson, seconded by Commissioner Goins, the Board voted unanimously to approve the consent agenda as follows:

Requests from the Assistant County Manager:

- Approve for the Health and Nutrition Center to completely transition from Patagonia Health to Cure MD at a cost of \$16,000.
- Approve for the Health and Nutrition Center to purchase digital X-ray sensors.
- Approve Parks and Recreation to partner in hosting Running the Vines and to request a road closure permit from NC DOT.
- Approve the extension of the COVID-19 leave policy, maintaining current guidelines, through September 30, 2021.

Chairman Marion declared the meeting to be an open forum and invited members of the audience to address the Board on any matters of civic concern.

J.T. Henson spoke about the necessities of government abating and correcting public nuisances. He discussed properties on Sherry Lane and Galax Trail. Mr. Henson requested the Board amend the County's solid waste ordinance to add verbiage for unsubstantiated complaints to be charged to the complainant. He said his neighbors want to know if there is Board support for the passage of the solid waste ordinance amendment. Mr. Henson urged the Board to pass the solid waste ordinance amendment and said it can be revised in the future if needed.

There being no further comments, Chairman Marion closed the open forum.

County Manager Chris Knopf presented a request to approve prequalification assessment tools for the new jail, to include an application form and scoring matrix.

Upon motion of Commissioner Goins, seconded by Commissioner Tucker, the Board voted unanimously to approve prequalification assessment tools for the new jail, to include an application form and scoring matrix.

Public Works Director Jessica Montgomery presented a request to approve a landfill tarp system from tarpARMOR for the Surry County Landfill's new cell.

The tarp system would be used as an alternative method to cover waste. Soil is normally used. Ms. Montgomery said use of the tarp system would extend the life of the landfill. She said the tarp system would pay for itself in three months, be able to shift resources to other Surry County landfill needs and save \$636 of equipment cost per day. Ms. Montgomery said \$56,000 in funds are remaining from the landfill expansion project budget and can be used for the tarp system purchase.

Upon motion of Commissioner Johnson, seconded by Commissioner Tucker, the Board voted unanimously to approve the \$46,596.41 purchase of the landfill tarp system from tarpARMOR for the Surry County Landfill's new cell.

Mr. Knopf and the Board discussed two vacancies on the Planning Board. Commissioner Johnson said he received applications from Russell Cockerham and Dr. Dean Simmons for the vacancies. He said the applications from Mr. Cockerham and Dr. Simmons were received before a third person showed interest. It was decided that the third person be considered for future appointments.

Upon motion of Commissioner Johnson, seconded by Commissioner Goins, the Board voted unanimously to appoint Russell Cockerham and Dr. Dean Simmons to the Surry County Planning Board.

Mr. Knopf discussed with the Board, for information only, the upcoming RFP process for jail inmate health services. The RFP would call for a three-year service period, with option for a one-year renewal. Mr. Knopf said Southern Health Partners, Inc. has been notified in writing by the Sheriff's Office that their contract will end June 30. He said the RFP committee's recommendation will come to the Board at the May 3 Board meeting.

In General County Business, Commissioner Johnson announced the "A Place to Play" ribbon cutting scheduled for Saturday, April 10 at 11 a.m. at the Armfield Civic Center in Pilot Mountain. He said all were invited.

Commissioner Tucker discussed the County's litter campaign and how he has seen a group of young men that pick up litter in the Pilot Mountain and Shoals area. The group is supportive of the County's litter campaign and regularly meets and collects litter. After Commissioner Tucker made the request, the Board agreed to invite the group to be recognized at a future Board meeting.

Commissioner Goins announced the DOT Litter Sweep scheduled for April 10-24 and requested that Nathan Walls, Assistant to the County Manager, write a press release about the topic. He and Commissioner Johnson said they have seen more people collecting litter recently, so they think word is getting out that more volunteer efforts are needed.

Chairman Marion asked County Attorney Ed Woltz on an update regarding public nuisances. Mr. Woltz said that Health Director Samantha Ange and Development Services Director Johnny Easter are working on the Galax Trail case.

Upon motion of Commissioner Goins, seconded by Commissioner Tucker, the Board voted unanimously to enter closed session.

The Board returned to open session and resumed regular business.

Upon motion of Commissioner Goins, seconded by Commissioner Tucker, the Board voted unanimously to approve, but not release, Board Retreat March 10, 2021 closed session minutes.

Upon motion of Commissioner Goins, seconded by Chairman Marion, the Board voted unanimously to approve, but not release, March 15, 2021 closed session minutes.

Upon motion of Commissioner Goins, seconded by Commissioner Tucker, the Board voted unanimously to appoint Jessica Montgomery to the Facilities Director position and make Facilities a division of the Public Works Department, in which Ms. Montgomery is director.

Upon motion of Commissioner Goins, seconded by Commissioner Johnson, the Board voted unanimously to create and advertise an Emergency Management Coordinator position and advertise the Emergency Services Director position for recruitment.

The Board discussed and then acted on selecting the electric provider for the new detention center.

Commissioner Tucker said that Duke Energy sells power to Surry-Yadkin Electric Membership Corporation. He said a good rate comparison between the two companies is needed since this is a business decision for the County that will see \$10,000 or more in charges on monthly bills. Commissioner Tucker said they are both great companies but a 25- or 30-year rate comparison is needed, and he is not ready to decide tonight.

Upon motion of Commissioner Johnson, seconded by Chairman Marion, the Board voted 3-1 (Yays - Chairman Marion, Commissioner Johnson and Commissioner Goins; Nay - Commissioner Tucker) to select Surry-Yadkin

Electric Membership Corporation as the electric provider for the new detention center.

Upon motion of Commissioner Goins, seconded by Commissioner Johnson, the Board voted unanimously to adjourn at 7:30 p.m.

Sandy Snow
Deputy Clerk to the Board