

Surry County Board of Commissioners
Meeting of February 1, 2021

The Surry County Board of Commissioners met at 6:00 p.m., February 1, 2021. The meeting was held in the Board Room, Historic Courthouse, Dobson, N.C., virtually via Zoom and YouTube.

Board members present for the meeting were Chairman Mark Marion, Vice-Chairman Bill Goins, Commissioner Eddie Harris, Commissioner Van Tucker and Commissioner Larry Johnson. Commissioners Harris and Tucker attended virtually.

Others present for the meeting, at various times, were:

Chris Knopf, County Manager
Sandy Snow, Assistant County Manager
Ed Woltz, County Attorney
Martha Brintle, MIS Director
Penny Harrison, Tax Administrator
Nathan Walls, Assistant to the County Manager
Rita Horton, MIS
Dr. Frank Beals, Elkin City Schools Board
Dr. Myra Cox, Elkin City Schools Superintendent
Joel Hoyle, Elkin High School Principal
Amanda Burton, Elkin Middle School Principal
Josh Pardue, Elkin City Schools Athletic Director
Dr. Kim Morrison, Mount Airy City Schools Superintendent
Jay Temple, Mount Airy City Schools
News Media

Mr. Woltz, Ms. Brintle, Ms. Horton and Ms. Harrison attended virtually.

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

Chairman Marion requested the Board review and approve the agenda. Upon motion of Commissioner Johnson, seconded by Commissioner Goins, the Board voted unanimously to approve the February 1, 2021 meeting agenda.

Chairman Marion requested the Board consider the minutes of the January 19, 2021 meeting as presented. Upon motion of Commissioner Goins, seconded by Commissioner Johnson, the Board voted unanimously to approve the minutes as written.

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

Requests from the Assistant County Manager:

- Approve Nick Brown as Communications Director; Dale Harold and Eddie Jordan will be contacts for Emergency Management; and David Speight as Emergency Services Interim Director.

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.

Nick Tomlin provided comments virtually expressing his support for the Elkin school gym project. He said now is the time and students need another gym.

Elkin High School Principal Joel Hoyle discussed Elkin City Schools' need for another gym. He described specific occurrences, exemplifying why ADA improvements and a new gym are needed.

Elkin Middle School Principal Amanda Burton provided comments from her 7th and 8th grade students on having another gym and its benefits for physical education classes.

Jennifer Lane also voiced her support for a new Elkin schools' gym.

Christy White, an Exceptional Children teacher, discussed safety issues her students have experienced getting to the gym.

James Freeman said he had his own gym at Mount Airy Junior High School in the 1970s and 1980s. He said that Elkin students deserve the same opportunity because having only one gym creates scheduling issues.

Dr. Frank Beals said the current Surry Board of County Commissioners is taking the Elkin school gym project more seriously than past Boards, and said the current Board needs to take advantage of the current low interest rates.

Josh Pardue, athletic director for Elkin middle and high schools, discussed the need for a new gym. He said 12 sports teams share one gym right now and use the recreation center when able. Mr. Pardue said that parents adjust their schedules for transportation, and the large amount of people sharing one gym makes it hard to schedule practices and games.

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

Tax Administrator Penny Harrison requested that the Board allow her permission to advertise unpaid current fiscal year taxes.

Ms. Harrison informed the Board that many people paid their taxes this year with a stimulus check.

Upon motion of Commissioner Goins, seconded by Commissioner Johnson, the Board voted unanimously to allow the Tax Department to advertise unpaid taxes for fiscal year 2020-2021.

Dr. Kim Morrison and Jay Temple of Mount Airy City Schools presented the Mount Airy City Schools Facility Needs Survey, which is required by N.C. General Statutes.

Mr. Temple shared his previous employment experience and how he came to work for Mount Airy City Schools.

He said that Bill Powell's LT Consulting study will save the County money on school projects.

Mr. Temple discussed how Mount Airy City Schools has saved approximately \$23,000 on a geothermal field project. He said Dr. Morrison would be coming back at a future meeting to request use of the savings on another project.

Mr. Temple requested the Board sign the required Mount Airy City Schools Facility Needs Survey document, which does not commit the Board to funding.

County Manager Chris Knopf presented a request from NCDOT to replace two stolen Welcome to Surry County signs, stating that DOT would replace small Surry 250 decals with larger decals, and stating the locations of the two stolen signs. The stolen signs were formerly located on N.C. 268 and N.C. 89.

Mr. Knopf and Commissioner Tucker discussed better locations for all Welcome to Surry County signs and how staff would do a windshield survey to determine better locations if necessary.

Upon motion of Commissioner Tucker, seconded by Commissioner Goins, the Board voted unanimously to spend \$3,785 from the County General Fund for the two new N.C. DOT Welcome to Surry County signs.

Mr. Knopf asked the Board to amend the agenda to add a COVID-19 testing contract extension request. The contract extension is between the Surry County Health & Nutrition Center and Northern Regional Hospital.

Upon motion of Commissioner Goins, seconded by Commissioner Johnson, the Board voted unanimously to add a COVID-19 testing contract extension request to the agenda.

Mr. Knopf provided details of the request to extend the contract for COVID-19 testing between the Surry County Health & Nutrition Center and Northern Regional Hospital.

Upon motion of Commissioner Johnson, seconded by Commissioner Goins, the Board voted unanimously to extend the contract for COVID-19 testing between the Surry County Health & Nutrition Center and Northern Regional Hospital not to exceed \$45,000, with funds coming from the County General Fund.

In General County Business, Commissioners Johnson and Tucker praised Health & Nutrition Center staff for their COVID-19 vaccination efforts.

Upon motion of Commissioner Goins, seconded by Chairman Marion, the Board voted unanimously to go into closed session.

The Board came out of closed session and resumed regular business.

Upon motion of Commissioner Johnson, seconded by Commissioner Goins, the Board voted unanimously to adjourn at 9:35 p.m.

Nathan Walls
Clerk to the Board