

POLK COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
November 16, 2020 - 7:00 PM
R. Jay Foster Hall of Justice Womack Building Columbus, NC
Columbus, NC
MINUTES

PRESENT: Chairman Yoder, Vice-Chairman Melton, Commissioner Beiler, Commissioner Gasperson, and Commissioner Moore. Also in attendance were County Manager Pittman, Attorney Berg, and Clerk to the Board High, media, and citizens. (Attorney Berg attended remotely)

1. Call to Order - Chairman Yoder.
2. Invocation - Vice-Chairman Melton.
3. Pledge of Allegiance - Commissioner Moore.
4. Approval of Agenda
 - A. Commissioner Moore moved to approve the agenda, seconded by Vice-Chairman Melton and the motion carried unanimously.
5. Consent Agenda

Vice-Chairman Melton moved to approve the consent agenda, seconded by Commissioner Beiler and the motion carried unanimously.

 - A. October 5, 2020 Public Hearing and Regular Meeting Minutes.
 - B. Tax refund requests through November 10, 2020 in the amount of \$648.49.
 - C. Vaya Health Quarterly Report ending September 30, 2020.
 - D. Budget Amendment - Transfer \$12,105 COVID grant funds from Sr. Svcs. supplies to Sr. Svcs. Capital for the purchase of kitchen equipment.
6. Citizen Comment(s)

One citizen submitted a video comment recognizing Commissioner Gasperson's service to the community the past twelve years. Chairman Yoder requested all citizens submit their comments physically, or in writing until the Board reviews and approves their meeting procedure policy at the organizational meeting on December 7, 2020.
7. Foothills Humane Society Update.

Bill Coleman introduced himself as the new Executive Director at Foothills

Humane Society (FHS). He said he started his new positions on October 5, 2020 and brings over 25 years experience as a senior management leader of non-profit organizations in North Carolina, Tennessee and Kentucky. Commissioner Gasperson commented on the great working relationship the County and FHS have created over the years to help provide the citizens mandated essential services through a collaboration with Polk County Animal Control. Mr. Coleman said he looks forward to continuing their partnership, and thanked the Board for the opportunity to meet with them.

8. 2020 Elections Review.

Cliff Marr, Elections Director spoke on behalf of the bipartisan Polk County Election Board giving a presentation about the recent election, a copy of which is hereby incorporated by reference into these minutes. He thanked his team especially the elections board, and two deputy directors, as well as the several part time and support staff. He said his staff went above and beyond to ensure safety with COVID19, and even a power outage during early voting. They all worked tirelessly with more absentee ballot requests than ever before, and a record turn out for early and in person voting with social distancing and other necessary restrictions to consider.

He said he appreciated the support and funding received from the Commissioners, and is confident Polk County had a fair and accurate election. Mr. Marr said there could be a recount for two races in the future for the Supreme Court Justice and Attorney General, which may require some future budget amendments within the election department. The Commissioners thanked Mr. Marr and his staff for a well run election, and said they are proud to have Mr. Marr as the Polk County Elections Director.

9. Uniform Schedules of Values, Standards, and Rules for the 2021 County-Wide Revaluation.

Melissa Bowlin, Tax Administrator presented information requested by the Board at their last meeting. She said she researched the average percent increase in sales for single family residence for surrounding Counties. Polk County increased 34% compared to Henderson County's 34% increase; Buncombe County's 26% increase; and Rutherford County's 37% increase. Vice-Chairman Melton asked Ms. Bowlin if she had the comparisons of the base rate per heated square foot for surrounding counties. She said using the average sales data, Polk County is \$169; Rutherford County is \$136; Henderson County is \$169; and Buncombe County is \$203. Ms. Bowlin pointed out the base rate being proposed in the 2021 schedule of values for Polk County is \$112.

Commissioner Beiler moved to adopt the Uniform Schedules of Values, Standards, and Rules for the 2021 County-Wide Revaluation, seconded by Vice-Chairman Melton and the motion carried unanimously.

10. Commissioner Comment(s)

Vice-Chairman Melton said he has worked with Commissioner Gasperson for many years, and it has been a pleasure. He believes Commissioner Gasperson

has always had the citizens best interest at heart, and he wished him the best of luck.

Commissioner Beiler agreed, adding it's been a pleasure serving alongside commissioner Gasperson, and he appreciated the history he provided.

Commissioner Beiler extended congratulations to everyone who was elected and looks forward to continuing serving the citizens.

Commissioner Moore thanked Commissioner Gasperson for welcoming him, and thanked Vice-Chairman Melton and his church, Columbus Baptist, for the meals and gifts given out on Veterans Day. He said he knows it means so much to the veterans of the county.

Commissioner Gasperson requested his comments be inserted into the minutes verbatim.

Thank you Citizens of Polk County - My journey over the past 12 years serving on the Polk County Board of Commissioners has been one of the most challenging and satisfying experiences of my adult life. I have had the privilege to work with many remarkable elected officials, county employees and volunteers all striving to make our county an excellent place to live, work, play, raise families, be educated and worship.

I am very grateful to everyone who has supported me through several election cycles and years of public service, especially my wife Sue and my adult children Laura, Corey and Julia.

I realize that "For everything there is a season, and a time for every purpose under heaven". And for me, the time has come to transition from serving as a Commissioner to other purposes and experiences. Of course I will continue to work to improve our county. So for now, I will pack up my large number of campaign signs and extend my congratulations to Commissioners elect Yoder, Overholt and Moore.

Chairman Yoder said he appreciated Commissioner Gasperson's experience and tolerance serving on the Board for the past twelve years. He thanked all the citizens for coming out to vote, and said he appreciated their support.

11. Closed Session

- A. Commissioner Moore moved to go into closed session for the purposes of attorney client privilege and personnel, seconded by Vice-Chairman Melton and the motion carried unanimously.
- B. Vice-Chairman Melton moved to return to open session, seconded by Commissioner Beiler and the motion carried unanimously.

12. Adjournment

Commissioner Beiler moved to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Commissioner Moore and the motion carried unanimously.

Attest:

POLK COUNTY BOARD OF
COMMISSIONERS

Ange High
Clerk to the Board

Myron Yoder
Chairman