

POLK COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
June 1, 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 participated remotely.

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

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

 - A. May 11, 2020 and May 18, 2020 Budget Work Session minutes, and May 18, 2020 regular meeting minutes.
 - B. July - December 2020 Board of Commissioners' meeting schedule.
 - C. Approve the contract with Riverstreet Networks to conduct a Broadband Engineering Study and Design, and to give the County Manager signatory authority. The Board approved the budget amendment to fund this contract at its March 16, 2020 meeting.
 - D. Juvenile Crime Prevention Council (JCPC) County Fund Plan for FY 2020/21 including membership.
 - E. Budget Amendment to increase capital line by \$27,000 to purchase and equip vehicle.
 - F. Schedule a remote electronic Work Session for the NCDOT Comprehensive Transportation Plan Survey for Monday, June 15, 2020 at 5:00 pm. Commissioners will view presentation in the Emergency

Operations Center (EOC) first floor Womack Building, public may call in to listen. The information will also be presented in person at a future meeting with the public in attendance.

6. Citizen Comment(s) - Citizens may submit their comments to the Clerk to the Board by email - ahigh@polknc.org, or phone - 828-894-3301 ext. 221, by 5:00 pm June 1, 2020 to be read during the meeting.

There were none.

7. FY 2020/21 Polk County Annual Budget – Budget work sessions were held on May 11, 2020, May 18, 2020, and June 1, 2020. The budget public hearing was held on May 18, 2020. The Budget Ordinance is in the packet.

Commissioner Moore said he asked the Board to consider a tax cut for the citizens since the County has such a large rainy day fund. Chairman Yoder said he feels we have an appropriate fund balance because we don't know what's going to happen with everything going on right now. There was no further discussion.

Commissioner Gasperson moved to approve the Fiscal Year 2020/2021 Budget Ordinance with changes agreed upon at today's budget work session to move \$33,200 from workman's comp to the liability insurance line, and to increase the Maintenance line by \$9,626 to bring a part-time cleaner to full-time for new cleaning regulations at the Courthouse due to COVID-19 until December 31, 2020, seconded by Commissioner Beiler and the motion carried unanimously.

8. The Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act Budget Discussion.

Manager Pittman explained the Corona-virus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act funding was set aside by the Federal Government and distributed to the States, and is different from the State of Emergency FEMA money we will be discussing later. He said from the CARES Act, Polk County could receive up to \$587,186. A budget is required to be presented to the State by June 15, 2020, and the money can only be spent on actual COVID-19 expenses, and must be used by December 31, 2020. Manager Pittman said included in the packet is a tentative budget, with the understanding that things may change, and things could move around if they would benefit the County as a whole. The Commissioners asked for a review of the budget.

Joshua Kennedy, Health and Human Services Agency (HHSA) Director, said part of his budget will be used to increase testing with the goal to get 5% of the population tested. Commissioner Gasperson asked about testing at long term care facilities, and was concerned at how quickly COVID-19 can spread at one of these facilities. Mr. Kennedy stated they are partnering with those facilities, providing supplies, and support. Mr. Kennedy said some of his budget will also be used to update the existing Nixel Communication notification system, to purchase Viper Cache, and various computers and printers. Vice-Chairman Melton asked if the computers and printers would be purchased or leased, and

Mr. Kennedy said purchased. Commissioner Moore asked if these were just estimates, and for more explanation about Nixel and Viper. Bobby Arledge, Emergency Management Director said yes the prices are estimates, and the Nixel is a system we use to communicate with residents to notify them of emergency situations, and the updated system will allow much more capabilities and functionality. He said the Viper radios are a secure system we can get through the State.

Aaron Greene, School Superintendent, said at this time he has no guidelines for re-opening and that may change how money will be spent. He again stressed the need for flexibility, he sees the potential need for nursing support, and more personal protection equipment (PPE) to be available for students and staff. Commissioner Gasperson asked how he would control social distancing, and Mr. Greene replied they would do the best they could with 2100 students in 7 schools. Mr. Greene said they are dedicated to have our kids and staff safe, and they are working on options to see what that looks like in Polk County. He said the School Board will be discussing the options at their June 15th meeting and will have something in place by July 20, 2020.

Vice-Chairman Melton asked why each town was designated a certain amount. Manager Pittman said the thought process was to take the amount of the grant and divide it by the population, and get a per person figure which was \$29 then take the population of each town and designate that amount to them. He said they would have the same accountability requirements of providing receipts to us, just as we have to the State.

The Commissioners discussed and decided for item 7 on the budget to leave the amount the same, \$93,205, but remove the town designations.

Vice-Chairman Melton moved to approve the CARES grant as presented through December 31, 2020, seconded by Commissioner Gasperson and the motion carried unanimously.

Vice-Chairman Melton moved to approve the CARES grant as presented through December 31, 2020, seconded by Commissioner Gasperson and the motion carried unanimously.

9. FEMA Reimbursement for COVID-19.

Bobby Arledge, Emergency Management Director presented the State Applicant Disaster Assistance Agreement for the first round of reimbursement from FEMA. He said we should get 75% of covered expenses from March 16 to May 7 since we have been under a State of Emergency.

Vice-Chairman Melton moved to apply for FEMA reimbursement for COVID-19, seconded by Commissioner Beiler and the motion carried unanimously.

10. Designation of Applicants Agent and Applicants Assurances for Public Assistance.

Bobby Arledge, Emergency Management Director said the Commissioners need to designate a primary and secondary agent to apply for the FEMA grants. Commissioner Moore moved to to appoint Bobby Arledge as the primary agent, and Marche Pittman as the secondary agent, seconded by Commissioner Beiler and the motion carried unanimously.

11. Polk County Communications Center Management Proposal.

Sheriff Wright said he has a personal stake in making the communication center the most professional center possible. He said dispatch is a lifeline to his officers and citizens, and he wants to partner with the County and he feels if his plan is implemented it will benefit the community. He presented his proposal, a copy of which is hereby incorporated by reference into these minutes. Commissioner Moore suggested including rotating different fire departments on the committee. Manager Pittman said the Fire Chief's Association could appoint the representative. Commissioner Gasperson asked if there would be any additional tax dollars spent, and he said he liked it being a collaboration with the County, working with the County Manager and staying a County department. The Sheriff said there would be no additional cost, and it is a collaboration. The consensus of the Board was to move forward with a Memorandum of Understanding and continue the discussion at the June 15, 2020 meeting.

12. Commissioner Comment(s)

The Commissioners said it was a good meeting with good dialogue. They discussed the protests, and marches going on throughout America, and the need for equal justice.

13. Closed Session

- A. Commissioner Moore moved to go into closed session for the purpose 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.

14. Adjournment

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

Attest:

POLK COUNTY BOARD OF
COMMISSIONERS

Ange High
Clerk to the Board

Myron Yoder
Chairman