

Regular Session, February 17, 2014 7:00 p.m.
Catawba County Board of Commissioners

Board of Commissioners

Discussion on District vs. At-large Representation for Members of the Board of Commissioners 157 02/17/14

Budget

Budget Transfers 157 02/17/14

Elections

Resolution Supporting Citizen Participation in Government Through Elections 156 02/17/14

Public Comments for Items Not on the Agenda

District vs. At-large Representation for Members of the Board of Commissioners 154 02/17/14

Purchasing/Emergency Services

Donation of Ambulance and stretcher to CVCC 154 02/17/14

Resolutions

Donation of Ambulance and Stretcher to CVCC 154 02/17/14

Resolution for Advertising Delinquent Real Property Taxes 154 02/17/14

Support for Investing in Manufacturing Communities Program Application 155 02/17/14

Resolution Supporting Citizen Participation in Government Through Elections 156 02/17/14

Tax

Report on Unpaid Real Property Taxes and Resolution to Advertise 154 02/17/14

Western Piedmont Council of Governments

Support for Investing in Manufacturing Communities Program Application 155 02/17/14

The Catawba County Board of Commissioners met in regular session on Monday, February 17, 2014 at 7:00 p.m. in the Robert E. Hibbits Meeting Room of the 1924 Courthouse, 30 North College Avenue, Newton, North Carolina.

Present were Chair Katherine W. Barnes, Vice-Chair Randy Isenhower, and Commissioners Dan Hunsucker, Lynn M. Lail and Barbara G. Beatty.

Also present were County Manager J. Thomas Lundy, Assistant County Managers Dewey Harris and Mary Furtado, County Attorney Debra Bechtel, Assistant County Attorney Jodi Stewart (joined the meeting at 7:15p.m.), and County Clerk Barbara Morris.

1. Chair Katherine W. Barnes called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. Chair Barnes noted that this meeting followed an information session on solar farms presented by representatives of Duke Energy and attended by the Catawba County Board of Commissioners and the Catawba County Planning Board in the 2nd Floor Meeting Room of the Government Center. No Board action was taken at that meeting.
2. Vice-Chair Randy Isenhower led the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.
3. Commissioner Lynn M. Lail offered the invocation.
4. Commissioner Lail made a motion to approve the minutes from the Board's Regular Meeting and Closed Session of February 3, 2014. The motion carried unanimously.

5. Recognition of Special Guests: Chair Barnes recognized everyone present and said she was pleased to see such a large number of people attending the meeting.
6. Public Comments for Items Not on the Agenda: Chair Barnes opened the floor for any public comments, including district versus at-large representation for members of the Board of Commissioners, which was scheduled for later on the agenda. One person came forward to speak against the current at-large representation system, stating this method failed to represent minorities in the County (Billy Suddreth). Five individuals came forward supporting the current at-large representation system, and applauded the fair and full representation of all Catawba County citizens that the Board had historically displayed (Clarence Hood, Neal Yang, Catherine Grasley, Paul Byrd and Franklin Lawson).
7. Appointments – No appointments were made at this meeting.
8. Departmental Reports:
 - a. Purchasing/Emergency Services:

Purchasing Manager Debbie Anderson came forward and requested the Board approve the donation of a 2006 Ford E-450 Type III ambulance and Stryker stretcher to Catawba Valley Community College. CVCC requested the ambulance and stretcher, which will be used for the college's EMS degree and continuing education programs. CVCC is currently operating an outdated Type 1 ambulance designed as a mock ambulance, which does not have the same user attributes that the students will encounter as EMTs or Paramedics. This donation will also provide two ambulances for use when students are performing driving maneuvers both in initial and in-service programs. The donated ambulance has approximately 173,314 miles.

North Carolina General Statute 160A-274 authorizes the sale, lease, exchange and joint use of governmental property. Under this statute, a governmental unit may transfer personal property to another governmental unit with or without monetary consideration. The statute does require action by the governing body. Commissioner Dan Hunsucker made a motion to adopt the resolution and approve this donation. The motion carried unanimously. The following resolution applies:

**RESOLUTION No.
DECLARATION OF SURPLUS PROPERTY AND DONATION TO THE
CATAWBA VALLEY COMMUNITY COLLEGE**

WHEREAS, the County has the authority to declare property no longer needed as surplus and donate said property to another governmental unit account to the precepts of NCGS 160A-274; and

WHEREAS, the following property is no longer needed for any governmental use by Catawba County:

2006 Ford E-450 Type III Ambulance
Stryker Stretcher

WHEREAS, said vehicle shall be given to Catawba Valley Community College to be used for a governmental purpose.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Commissioners hereby declares said property as surplus and authorizes the vehicle to be donated to Catawba Valley Community College.

This the 17th day of February 2014.

b. Tax:

Tax Collector Lori Mathes presented a request for the Board to accept a report from the Catawba County Tax Collector which set out the total amount of unpaid taxes for the current year, and to order the Tax Collector to advertise delinquent tax liens as prescribed by North

Carolina General Statute 105-369. As of January 31, 2014, delinquent real property taxes in Catawba County totaled \$4,780,429.42, which represents 6.94% of the 2013 real property levy. Vice-Chair Isenhower asked how this compared to the previous year and Ms. Mathes indicated that the collection percentage was 1 percent better than the prior year. Vice-Chair Isenhower made a motion to accept the Tax Collector's report and adopt a resolution ordering her to advertise delinquent real property taxes. The motion carried unanimously. The following resolution applies:

RESOLUTION No.

BE IT RESOLVED, the Board of Commissioners for Catawba County, in compliance with NCGS 105-369(a), orders the Tax Collector to advertise all unpaid tax liens, as prescribed in NCGS 105-369.

This the _____ day of February, 2014.

9. Other Items of Business:

a. Dee Blackwell, Executive Director, Western Piedmont Council of Governments and Scott Millar, President, Economic Development Corporation, presented a request for the Board to adopt a resolution of support of the Western Piedmont Council of Governments' plan to apply to become part of the Investing in Manufacturing Communities Program, an initiative of various federal agencies designed to accelerate the resurgence of manufacturing in the United States and present opportunities for the region to sustain and grow manufacturing employment. At Chair Barnes' request, Mr. Blackwell explained that there would be 12 regions designated by the Economic Development Administration as "Manufacturing Communities" and these regions would be provided opportunities to sustain and grow manufacturing employment and have Cabinet level representation to support this initiative. Chair Barnes commended CVCC's efforts to fill the skill gap that existed. The application would go to Washington, DC in March 2013. Commissioner Lail made a motion to adopt the resolution of support. The motion carried unanimously. The following resolution applies:

**Resolution of Support for the
Western Piedmont Council of Governments'
Investing in Manufacturing Communities Program Application**

Whereas, the Western Piedmont Council of Governments is designated by the Economic Development Administration (EDA) as an Economic Development District and said district includes Alexander, Burke, Caldwell and Catawba Counties (Hickory-Lenoir-Morganton Metropolitan Statistical Area); and

Whereas, the region continues to sustain a long tradition of manufacturing, employing as many as 79,689 persons within that employment sector in 2000; and

Whereas, regional manufacturers currently employ 37,771 persons, representing 27% of the workforce (three times the national average of 9%); and

Whereas, manufacturing wages in the region pay 16% higher than the average wage; and

Whereas, the Investing in Manufacturing Communities Program (IMCP) Challenge is an initiative of various federal agencies designed to accelerate the resurgence of manufacturing in the United States; and

Whereas, the United States Government ranks the region highly for its concentrations of manufacturing in the furniture and textile sectors, which Catawba County has taken to the next level with the Manufacturing Solutions Center in Conover and the Corporate Development Center and programs supporting advanced manufacturing at Catawba Valley Community College; and

Whereas, the EDA plans to designate twelve regions as "Manufacturing Communities"; and

Whereas, the Western Piedmont Council of Governments and its partners developed an application to submit to the Economic Development Administration; and

Whereas, the IMCP initiative presents opportunities for the region to sustain and grow manufacturing employment for the benefit of the citizens of our community; and

Whereas, the benefits derived from such a designation advances the region's economic development efforts and improves the quality of life for its residents.

Now, therefore be it resolved, the Catawba County Board of Commissioners supports the IMCP application, agrees to serve as a regional partner, and encourages the federal agencies to designate the Economic Development District as a "Manufacturing Community."

Adopted this 17th day of February, 2014.

b. Assistant County Manager Dewey Harris came forward and requested the Board consider adopting a resolution supporting citizen participation in government through elections in Catawba County. The North Carolina State Board of Elections is the state agency charged with overall responsibility for the administration of the elections process in North Carolina. The State Board of Elections works in conjunction with county Board of Elections offices across the state to handle numerous aspects of election administration. The goal of the Catawba County Board of Elections Office is to serve the public in an efficient and courteous manner and to provide well-planned and managed elections. The resolution supporting citizen participation in government through elections in Catawba County acknowledges the formal role of the State and County in conducting all elections held within the county, including municipalities in the county, and seeks to increase public awareness of the importance of citizen participation in county government through voting. Mr. Harris read the following resolution in its entirety and Jerry McCombs, President of the Catawba County NAACP, came forward to express the NAACP's support of the resolution. Chair Barnes also recognized that the Chair of the Catawba County Board of Elections, David Hood, was present at the meeting. She expressed her pride in the County Election staff and the fair and impartial way elections were conducted in the County. Vice-Chair Isenhower agreed with Chair Barnes and thanked staff for working with Mr. McCombs on developing the resolution. Commissioner Hunsucker made a motion to adopt the resolution. The motion carried unanimously. The following resolution applies:

A RESOLUTION SUPPORTING CITIZEN PARTICIPATION IN GOVERNMENT THROUGH ELECTIONS IN CATAWBA COUNTY

WHEREAS, the North Carolina State Board of Elections is the state agency charged with overall responsibility for the administration of the elections process in North Carolina, and

WHEREAS, the Office of the State Board of Elections works in conjunction with County Board of Elections offices to ensure that elections are conducted lawfully, and

WHEREAS, the state's 100 county Boards of Election operate voting sites, maintain voter registration lists and handle numerous aspects of election administration, and

WHEREAS, Catawba County North Carolina has formally adopted in its Code of Ordinances a "Statement of Philosophy" which identifies several principles that guide the delivery of all county services including elections, and

WHEREAS, the goal of the Catawba County Board of Elections Office is to serve the public in an efficient and courteous manner and to provide well-planned and managed elections with immediate results, and

WHEREAS, the Catawba County Board of Elections is responsible for supervising voter registration and conducting all elections held within the county, including all municipalities in the county.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Catawba County Board of Commissioners hereby affirms its support for citizen participation in government through access to all registered voters for honest and impartial elections according to established law governing election procedures.

FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED that Catawba County, North Carolina, is a community that supports and upholds the right of every eligible voter to cast a ballot.

FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED that a copy of this resolution be posted at the Catawba County Election Office, and placed on the county's website, social media outlets, and other venues that increase public awareness of the importance of citizen participation in county government through voting.

Adopted this ____ day of _____, 2014.

c. Chair Barnes started a Board discussion regarding district vs. at-large representation stating that several years ago the Board had researched and studied this issue. She pointed out that 44 of the 100 counties of North Carolina utilized at-large representation and the counties surrounding Catawba County, with the exception of Gaston and Mecklenburg, also used at-large representation. The Board heard citizens' comments regarding a request to change to district representation at the beginning of the meeting and, at this point on the agenda, each Board member expressed their belief that, under the current at-large representation, they each looked at the large picture, saw the County as a whole and represented every citizen in the County. They all stated they received calls from citizens throughout the County and were pleased that no one hesitated to call a commissioner based on where that commissioner lived. They further expressed their intent, individually and as a Board, to represent every person in the County, regardless of where they lived, their economic level, race, or political party. The Board concluded it would not move to change the current at-large representation system.

d. Budget Transfers: Pursuant to Board authority granted to the County Manager, the following budget transfers have been completed:

Self Insurance Special Contingency

From:

115-150120-994200	Special Contingency	\$1,565
115-150120-691500	Special Contingency	\$1,565

To:

115-150120-995110	Transfer to General Fund	\$1,565
115-150120-680800	Insurance Settlements	\$1,565

Special Contingency Revision

525-350200-831090	Miscellaneous Operating	\$1,565
525-350200-695115	From Self Insurance Fund	\$1,565

2/11/14: Lightening damage insurance settlement. Lightening struck the landfill damaging telephones, laptop docking station, switches, and the fax machine. The County's insurance investigated and paid a portion of the damages. These funds are deposited into Insurance Settlements account and now need to be used to reimburse a portion of the cost of the damages.

Self Insurance Special Contingency

From:

115-150120-994200	Special Contingency	\$11,591
115-150120-691500	Special Contingency	\$11,591

To:		
115-150120-995110	Transfer to General Fund	\$11,591
115-150120-680800	Insurance Settlements	\$11,591

Special Contingency Revision		
110-430100-984000	Motor Vehicles	\$11,591
110-430100-695115	From Self Insurance Fund	\$11,591

2/11/14: Transfer was needed to replace vehicle number 43-800 which was totaled due to a no-fault accident. The Insurance settlement amount was \$11,591. State contract price to replace the vehicle is \$25,800. The remaining funds needed to replace the vehicle were transferred from lapsed salary available due to a position that was vacant for several months.

County Manager Contingency

From:		
110-190100-994000	Contingency	\$13,500

To:		
110-140050-870150	Minor IT Equipment	\$13,500

2/12/14: Transfer to complete purchase of electronic pollbooks for all precincts. Originally planned to purchase 70 and use some existing laptops to meet the full need but the State software is not compatible with Windows XP so 30 additional laptops are needed.

School Capital Projects

From:		
420-750100-863200-31121-4-03	St. Stephens HS Hydronic Piping	\$34,780

To:		
420-750100-863200-31108-3-01	Tuttle Elementary Renovations	\$34,780

2/19/14: Per a request from Dan Brigman, Catawba County Schools Superintendent, the chiller at Tuttle Elementary experienced an equipment failure that is impacting heating and cooling at the school. The System requests transfer from the St. Stephens High School Hydronic Piping project to affect the needed repairs.

10. Attorney's Report: None.
11. Manager's Report: None
12. Adjournment. The meeting adjourned at 7:55 p.m.

Katherine W. Barnes, Chair
Catawba County Board of Commissioners

Barbara E. Morris
County Clerk