

Regular Session, June 15, 2015, 7:00 p.m.
Catawba County Board of Commissioners

Appointments

Juvenile Crime Prevention Council	545	06/15/15
Economic Development Corporation	545	06/15/15
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Budget Transfers

Budget Transfers	549	06/15/15
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Library

Adoption of the Catawba County Library Strategic Plan – 2016-2019	546	06/15/15
Funding of one Digital Services Librarian Position	546	06/16/15

Public Hearing

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Resolution

Submission of Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) – Building Community Through Capacity and Knowledge Program	544	06/16/15
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The Catawba County Board of Commissioners met in regular session on Monday, June 15, 2015, at 7:00 p.m. in the Robert E. Hibbitts Meeting Room of the 1924 Courthouse, 30 North College Avenue, Newton, North Carolina.

Present were Chair Randy Isenhower, Vice-Chair Barbara G. Beatty and Commissioners Katherine W. Barnes, Sherry E. Butler and Dan A. Hunsucker.

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 and County Clerk Barbara Morris.

1. Chair Randy Isenhower called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. and noted a quorum was present.
2. Vice-Chair Barbara G. Beatty led the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.
3. Chair Isenhower offered the invocation.
4. Commissioner Katherine W. Barnes made a motion to approve the minutes from the Board's Budget Hearings with Departments and Outside Agencies of May 26, 2015, the Board's Budget Public Hearing and Wrap-Up of May 28, 2015, and the Regular Meeting of June 1, 2015. The motion carried unanimously.
5. Recognition of Special Guests: Chair Isenhower welcomed everyone present and thanked them for their interest in the business of the County. He welcomed new Hickory Daily Record Reporter Gerrit Van Genderen.
6. Public Comments for Items Not on the Agenda: None.
7. Public Hearing:
ICMA Fellow Megan Dale requested the Board hold a public hearing to receive citizen comments and consider approval of the submission of a Community Development Block Grant (CDBG)

application to the North Carolina Department of Commerce, Rural Economic Development Division, for the Commerce Fellows "Building Community Through Capacity and Knowledge" program.

The purpose of the Commerce Fellows program is to provide technical assistance, capacity building and training to North Carolina local governments. The State is partnering with North Carolina universities to provide high-quality professional development to local government staff with a focus on community development and improving opportunities for low and moderate income individuals.

The County will apply for the University of North Carolina - Chapel Hill School of Government training program. The School of Government will allow the County to send multiple employees to in-person courses, provide access to four online training series and authorize the County to also send municipal staff to the courses to increase community-wide benefit. Five County employees, the City Manager of Claremont, and the City of Newton's Planning Director will benefit from attending in-person courses. Numerous other staff will benefit from attending online courses. A total of \$25,000 is being requested for course tuition, lodging and travel expenses for program participants. The grant requires no local match. Staff will work with the Western Piedmont Council of Governments to meet all grant reporting requirements.

Chair Isenhower opened the public hearing; no one came forward to speak; Chair Isenhower closed the public hearing. Ms. Dale answered Board members questions regarding who in the County would be attending training, what municipalities would be benefiting and the topics of the webinars. Commissioner Sherry E. Butler made a motion to approve the submission of this grant application by ICMA Fellow Megan Dale. The motion carried unanimously. The following resolution applies:

**RESOLUTION FOR THE CATAWBA COUNTY
APPLICATION FOR COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT FUNDING
COMMERCE FELLOWS BUILDING COMMUNITY CAPACITY AND KNOWLEDGE PROJECT**

WHEREAS, the Catawba County Board of Commissioners has previously indicated its desire to assist low and moderate income citizens within the County; and,

WHEREAS, the Catawba County Board of Commissioners held a Public Hearing concerning the proposed application for Community Fellows Building Community Capacity and Knowledge through Community Development Block Grant funding; and,

WHEREAS, the Catawba County Board of Commissioners wishes the County to pursue a formal application for \$25,000 in Community Development Block Grant funding to build community capacity; and,

WHEREAS, Catawba County Board of Commissioners certifies it will meet all federal regulatory and statutory requirements of the State of North Carolina Community Development Block Grant Program.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED by the Board of Commissioners that Catawba County is authorized to submit a formal application to the North Carolina Department of Commerce for approval of a Community Development Block Grant for Commerce Fellows Building Community Capacity and Knowledge project.

Adopted this the ____ day of _____, 20____ in Newton, North Carolina.

8. Appointments:
Chair Isenhower recommended the appointment of Dr. David Stegall and the reappointment of Karen Harrington for a first term, Attorney Va Yang for a second term, Sarah Nelson for a third term, Jennifer Mace for a fourth term, Brandi Talbert for a sixth term and Ronn Abernathy and Jennie Connor for seventh terms on the Juvenile Crime Prevention Council. These terms will expire June 30, 2017. Chair Isenhower recommended the reappointment of Steve Von Drehle for a first full term

on the Economic Development Corporation and Lynne Jenkins for a third term on the Town of Maiden Planning Board. These terms will expire June 30, 2018. Chair Isenower recommended the appointment of Vice-Chair Barbara Beatty as Voting Delegate and Commissioner Kitty Barnes as Voting Alternate for the 2015 National Association of Counties (NACo) Annual Conference. Commissioner Dan Hunsucker recommended the appointment of Ken Elliott for a first term on the Newton-Conover Auditorium Authority Board. This term will expire June 30, 2018. These recommendations came in the form of a motion, which carried unanimously.

9. Departmental Report:
Library.

Library Director Suzanne White and Consultant Anthony Chow presented a request for the Board to adopt the Catawba County Library Strategic Plan 2016-2019 to enhance and grow library services and programming in alignment with community needs, and approve the funding of one Digital Services Librarian position at a total cost of \$66,728, in order to proceed with the top priority of the Strategic Plan. Ms. White introduced the members of the Friends of the Library and the Strategic Planning Group who were present at the meeting.

The State Library of North Carolina awarded a grant of \$20,352 to the Catawba County Library in 2014 to contract with a planning consultant (Dr. Anthony Chow of Strategic Performance Systems) to develop a long-range strategic plan. Catawba County Library assessed current services and solicited community input to strategically identify priority goals for increasing alignment with citizens needs. Through the process, the Library convened a citizen-based steering committee and conducted a comprehensive community needs analysis over a ten-month period from July 2014 to April 2015, which garnered input from over 1500 residents through interviews with key stakeholders, public and staff surveys, targeted focus groups and public community forums. This feedback culminated in the creation of a strategic plan that focuses on three main priorities and has been endorsed by the Library Board of Trustees, which recommended approval of the plan to the Board of Commissioners.

The Library also collaborated with Hickory Public Libraries, which was simultaneously going through the same process using the same planning consultant, in gathering, sharing, and analyzing input to develop and prioritize goals and objectives, and will continue to collaborate in providing services in the future.

Driven by the results of the comprehensive community needs assessment, the Library will focus its efforts on the following strategic goals:

- As a Community Center of Excellence, Fuel Citizens' Passion for Reading, Personal Growth and Learning
- Innovate to Provide 21st Century Access that Empowers Citizens
- Library Anytime, Anywhere: Expand Citizens' Access to Information and Ideas

With increased reliance on libraries during times of economic downturn, the plan focuses on enhancing the County libraries' role in serving as community centers, increasing libraries' capacity to provide the technology, digital resources and personnel to bridge the digital divide for citizens, and increasing outreach and collaboration in the community to engage and empower citizens with resources, services and collections.

The committee developed specific supporting strategies for each of the goals. Several strategies are contingent on funding availability and, as a result, have been prioritized against one another in order of importance. The Library has already begun leveraging resources and making progress towards some of these strategies.

1. Fund Digital Services Librarian to drive implementation of digital strategy for expanded access through 24-hour availability of digital learning resources and a more intuitive, user-friendly

website, and oversee the provision of state of the art technology and technology programming to ensure access across the entire community.

2. Ensure availability of up-to-date computers and software within branches to facilitate bridging the digital divide and positioning the branches as community centers of excellence.
3. Creation of TechConnect spaces to expose citizens to state-of-the-art technologies while ensuring underserved populations have access.
4. Fund Literacy Outreach Specialist to lead in early literacy efforts to ensure children start school ready to learn and positioned to excel; partner with community to expand reach of early literacy opportunities for all preschool children and their caregivers; enhance and support active learning for children by collaborating closely with schools to implement services and programs that strengthen students' access to reading and learning resources; and provide after school programming to meet families' opportunities for access.
5. Fund Adult Outreach / Programming Librarian to bring library resources to where people are, including non-traditional locations and targeting underserved audiences.
6. Explore provision of materials and services to satellite spaces – “Redbox” model at laundromats, soup kitchens, courthouse, YMCAs, community centers, malls, other public spaces.
7. Fund Teen Librarian to increase teen engagement with highly interactive creative programs, spaces, and resources.
8. Develop and maintain relevant and inspiring collections that meet the community's evolving needs and expectations, ensuring equal access to underserved populations.
9. Create welcoming, vibrant, comfortable, and secure library spaces to position branches as a desirable place for citizens to spend time.
10. Ensure robust library resources that support job seekers and economic advancement to align the library's programs with local economic recovery efforts.

Even with a focus on leveraging outside funding, several critical initiatives are not eligible for funding through existing grants, as they require ongoing operational and personnel resources not sustainably funded through grants. As a result, the Library requested that the Board consider funding the top priority – a Digital Services Librarian position – to implement the top priority identified through the community needs assessment at an estimated cost of \$66,728. The Digital Services Librarian will help create a better informed citizenry able to seek and evaluate information online for e-government, health, education, and job seeking; improve career readiness skills of the community; improve quality of life for individuals as they are able to connect to friends and family using library technology; strengthen partnerships with organizations including NCWorks and the Manufacturing Solutions Center to provide relevant programming to an expanded audience; promote a culture of lifelong learning where it's common practice for individuals to take advantage of the many technology classes and programs at the library; and other needs.

Board members commended Ms, White, Mr. Chow, the library staff and the Friends of the Library and the Strategic Planning Group for their commitment and efforts in developing this plan. They commented on the number of hours of computer usage by citizens and the assistance library staff provided in this use of technology. They expressed appreciation for the effort to encourage the love of reading and the partnering with other entities to provide the best possible opportunities for Catawba County citizens.

Chair Isenhower asked for a motion to adopt the Catawba County Library Strategic Plan, 2016-2019. Commissioner Barnes made that motion, which carried unanimously.

Chair Isenhower asked for a motion to fund one Digital Services Librarian position at a total cost of \$66,728. Commissioner Butler made that motion, which carried unanimously.

The following appropriations apply:

Transfer From:

110-190100-994000 (Special Contingency)	\$66,728
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Transfer To:

110-810050-812100 (Regular Wages)	\$50,000
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110-810050-821100 (FICA)	\$3,825
110-810050-822100 (Local Government Employees Retirement)	\$3,375
110-810050-823100 (Group Health)	\$6,032
110-810050-823300 (Group Dental)	\$338
110-810050-823600 (Disability – Long-Term)	\$85
110-810050-825500 (Disability-Short Term)	\$73
110-810050-849160 (Personnel Indirect Cost)	\$3,000

10. Other Items of Business:
 Budget Transfers: Pursuant to Board authority granted to the County Manager, the following budget transfers have been completed:

Fiscal Year 2014/15

Project Budget Transfer:

From:

410-460100-988000-18019 St. Stephens Park \$1,348.31

To:

410-460100-842580-18016 Park Improvements \$1,348.31

6/29/15 – The St. Stephens Park project is complete and remaining funds were transferred to the Park Improvements project as noted during the budget process.

Fiscal Year 2015/16

Special Contingency Transfer:

From:

110-190100-691500 Special Contingency Revenue \$6,000
 110-190100-994200 Special Contingency Expense \$6,000

To:

110-420030-662360 Eligible Facilities/Sub Mod \$6,000
 110-420030-857260 Co-Location Cell Tower Services \$6,000

7/1/15 – The County will receive \$11,000 for a new telecommunication tower. A maximum of \$6,000 will be needed from these funds to pay a consultant for professional services related to the new tower. It has been several years since a new tower application has been received so no funds were budgeted.

11. Attorney's Report: None.
12. Manager's Report: None.
13. Adjournment. Commissioner Hunsucker made a motion to adjourn at 8:10 p.m. The motion carried unanimously and the meeting adjourned.

 Randy Isenhower, Chair
 Catawba County Board of Commissioners

 Barbara E. Morris
 County Clerk