

Regular Session, August 18, 2014 7:00 p.m.
Catawba County Board of Commissioners

Appointments

Catawba County Board of Adjustment 335 08/18/14

Awards

NACo 2014 Achievement Award to Social Services' Children and Youth Investment Team (CAY-IT) 333 08/18/14

Catawba Valley Medical Center

Property Purchase 335 08/18/14

Public Comments for Items not on the Agenda

Ed Ide 333 08/18/14
Drs. Wiley and Paspas 333 08/18/14
Tony Rose 333 08/18/14

Public Hearing

Federal 5310 Grant Application for Enhanced Mobility of Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities Program (Urban) 333 08/18/14

Resolutions

Federal 5310 Grant Application for Enhanced Mobility of Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities Program (Urban) 333 08/18/14

Social Services

Federal 5310 Grant Application for Enhanced Mobility of Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities Program (Urban) 333 08/18/14

Utilities and Engineering

Water and Sewer Capital Fees Adjustment 336 08/18/14

The Catawba County Board of Commissioners met in regular session on Monday, August 18, 2014 at 7:00 p.m. in the 2nd Floor Conference Room of the Government Center, 100-A South West Blvd., 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, and County Clerk Barbara Morris.

1. Chair Katherine W. Barnes called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.
2. Chair Barnes led the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.
3. Commissioner Barbara G. Beatty offered the invocation.
4. Commissioner Lynn M. Lail made a motion to approve the minutes from the Board's Regular and Closed Session Meetings of August 4, 2014. The motion carried unanimously.
5. Recognition of Special Guests: Chair Barnes recognized Commissioner Candidates Sherry Butler and Ed Ide and noted that both she and Randy Isenhower were incumbents in the upcoming election.

6. Public Comments for Items Not on the Agenda:

A. Mr. Ed Ide – Wanted to comment on the Board’s July 21, 2014 meeting regarding Park 1764. He stated this was an excellent opportunity to see democracy at work. Mr. Ide told the Board he had talked with Scott Millar, President of the Catawba County Economic Development Corporation, about the concept of a campus park to be presented as a package with Park 1764 which he now viewed as favorable.

B. Dr. Thomas Wiley of Hickory Cardiology and Dr. Philip Paspas of Piedmont Cardiology – concerned about Catawba Valley Medical Center’s Board of Trustees (CVMC) decision to have an exclusive agreement with Catawba Cardiology to provide cardiology services at CVMC. They believe that the patient should have the right to choose their cardiology practice and that patients will be put at risk. They also stated they thought this decision would impact other specialty practices and it would make it more difficult to keep medical specialties in the area.

C. Mr. Tony Rose, President of Catawba Valley Medical Center – responded to the above stated concerns of Drs. Wiley and Paspas. Stated the CVMC Board of Trustees took a long time and much consideration on deciding on an exclusive agreement with Catawba Cardiology and that exclusive agreements had been common place in healthcare for the last ten years. The Board of Trustees believed the exclusive agreement would be a commitment to common goals, scheduling and to the Medical Center – there would be no divided loyalties as well as being beneficial to patients by reducing costs.

Chair Barnes thanked all for their comments and indicated that decades ago, when Catawba Memorial Hospital was formed, which became Catawba Valley Medical Center, the then sitting Board of Commissioners adopted an ordinance which gave the Hospital Board of Trustees the full authority to make decisions regarding the management and operation of the hospital. Based on that ordinance, it was the right of CVMC Board of Trustees to make such decisions discussed at this meeting.

7. Presentations:

Chair Barnes was joined at the podium by Social Services Director John Eller, Assistant Social Services Director Karen Harrington and Social Worker III Regina Arrowood who accepted a National Association of Counties Achievement Award presented to Catawba County Social Services for its Children and Youth Investment Team (CAY-IT) program, which seeks to streamline the process for finding permanent placements for children in foster care, resulting in less trauma for the child and faster decisions. CAY-IT brings together professionals from several different governmental units to work together in planning for permanent placements for foster children who have been in care longer than average.

8. Public Hearing:

Social Service Director John Eller presented a request for the Board to hold a public hearing to receive citizen comments and approve a 2015 Elderly Individuals and Individuals with Disabilities Grant application to be submitted to the Greater Hickory Metropolitan Planning Organization, regarding funds to meet the transportation needs of the elderly and disabled for whom mass transportation services are not available. The goal of the Section 5310 program is to improve mobility for seniors and individuals with disabilities by removing barriers to transportation services. Catawba County received a 5310 transportation grant in the amount of \$500,000 (in federal, state and local funds) for a two year grant ending on June 30, 2015. The grant included transportation in both urban and rural areas.

The Section 5310 program now requires two grant applications, one for trips originating in urban areas and one for trips originating in rural areas. The request for urban funds will be submitted to the Greater Hickory Metropolitan Planning Organization and is due no later than August 27, 2014. The grant application for trips originating in rural areas will be available in the fall of 2014.

Catawba County will continue to contract with the Western Piedmont Regional Transit Authority to provide transportation funded by Section 5310. The funds will allow seniors and individuals with disabilities to attend the congregate nutrition program, have access to essential shopping, medical appointments, pharmacy, banking and other essential services. Additionally, transportation will be provided for individuals to access education and employment opportunities, volunteer activities, senior centers and Adult Day Care/Day Health programs when no other transportation is available. A total of \$150,000 will be requested for trips originating in urban areas in FY 2015/16. The grant requires a 20% local match. There is no State match available. Social Services will provide the match utilizing current local funding allocated for senior transportation. There will be no increased cost to the County. (Note: the prior 5310 transportation grant in the amount of \$500,000 was for a two year period covering both urban and rural areas, while the current grant application presented at this meeting is for only one year and for only urban funds, in the amount of \$150,000.)

Approximately 100-180 individuals will receive transportation for the period of the grant (July 2015-June 30, 2016). Many of the seniors will utilize transportation for multiple purposes and a large percentage of the target population will utilize transportation daily. Providing transportation will allow older adults the opportunity and the choice to remain active and involved in the community. Mr. Eller acknowledged all the work and effort that Social Work Program Manager Tami Hefner did to complete the submission of this grant.

Chair Barnes opened the public hearing, noting it has been duly advertised. No one came forward to speak and Chair Barnes closed the public hearing. Vice-Chair Isenhower made a motion to authorize the submission of the grant, adopt the Public Transportation Program Resolution regarding the grant and authorize John Eller, Director of Catawba County Social Services, to submit the grant application as outlined in the Resolution. The motion carried unanimously. The following resolution applies:

PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION PROGRAM RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, Article 2B of Chapter 136 of the North Carolina General Status and the Governor of North Carolina have designated the North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) as the agency responsible for administering federal and state public transportation funds; and

WHEREAS, the North Carolina Department of Transportation will apply for a grant from the US Department of Transportation, Federal Transit Administration and receives funds from the North Carolina General Assembly to provide assistance for public transportation projects; and

WHEREAS, the purpose of the Section 5310 program is to improve mobility for seniors and individuals with disabilities throughout the country, by removing barriers to transportation services and expanding the transportation mobility options available. Toward this goal, FTA provides financial assistance for transportation services planned, designed, and carried out to meet the special transportation needs of seniors and individuals with disabilities in all area.

WHEREAS, WPRTA has been designated as the agency with principle authority and responsibility for administering the Section 5310 Program for the Hickory Urbanized area; and

WHEREAS, Catawba County hereby assures and certifies that it will comply with the federal and state statutes, regulations, executive orders, and all small administrative requirements related to the applications made to and grants received from the Federal Transit Administration, as well as the provisions of Section 1001 of Title 18, U.S.C.

NOW, THEREFORE, be it resolved that John Eller, Director, Catawba County Department of Social Services, on behalf of Catawba County Board of Commissioners, is hereby authorized to submit a grant for federal and state funding, provide the required local match, make the necessary assurances and certifications and be empowered to enter into an agreement with the NCDOT to provide public transportation services.

I (Certifying Official's Name)*Barbara Morris, (Certifying Official's Title) County Clerk do hereby certify that the above is true and correct copy of an excerpt from the minutes of a meeting of the (Name of Applicant's Governing Board) Catawba County Board of Commissioners duly held on the 18th day of August, 2014.

Signature of Authorizing Official Date

Signature of Certifying Official Date

***Note that the authorized official, certifying official, and notary public should be three separate individuals.**

Seal Subscribed and sworn to me (date) _____

Notary Public Signature _____

Printed Name and Address

My commission expires (date) _____

9. Appointments:
Commissioner Beatty recommended the appointment of Kim Wallace Repaire to an unexpired term on the Catawba County Board of Adjustment to succeed Donna Herman who resigned from this Board. Ms. Repaire’s term will expire November 30, 2014. Chair Barnes stated that this recommendation for appointment came in the form of a motion, which carried unanimously.

10. Departmental Reports:
A. Catawba Valley Medical Center:
David Boone, Chief Financial Officer, Catawba Valley Medical Center, presented a request for the Board to approve the purchase of property located at 1985 Startown Road for the benefit of Catawba Valley Medical Center (CVMC). The property is currently owned by Startown Investors, LLC (the Seller) and occupied by Fairbrook Medical Clinic, P.A., a medical practice operated by Dr. John Kessell, and a related pharmacy operation. CVMC is paying for all costs associated with the purchase of this property and there is no cost to the County.

This facility includes 12,096 square feet of physician office space and approximately 3,000 square feet of retail pharmacy space. Dr. Kessel is leaving his practice and the pharmacy, and has offered CVMC the opportunity to purchase them. CVMC has agreed in principal to purchase the property pursuant to the terms and conditions of an offer to purchase and contract. CVMC anticipates operating a primary care clinic on the property through the Catawba Valley Medical Group, Inc., an affiliated entity which operates most of CVMC’s medical clinics. CVMC also contemplates leasing a portion of the property to third parties for use as a pharmacy.

Because of certain timing issues, the CVMC Board of Trustees and the Seller hope to close this transaction by the end of August, and as a result are bringing it to the Board of Commissioners for approval now. There may not, however, be time to complete the standard real estate due diligence prior to the August 18th meeting. As such, the real estate contract signed by CVMC is not only subject to the Board of Commissioners approval but also includes deadlines for termination on September 30, 2014, and closing on October 10, 2014. The CVMC Board of Trustees requested that the Board of Commissioners approve the purchase, subject to the discretion of CVMC’s officers to terminate the purchase within those time frames so that, if any issues arise as due diligence is completed, CVMC may either delay closing or terminate the transaction entirely without returning to the Board of Commissioners for action.

Mr. Boone clarified that the property was being purchased at 23% below the tax value and at the appraised price. Commissioner Beatty made a motion to approve this purchase. The motion carried unanimously.

B. Utilities and Engineering:

Utilities and Engineering Director Barry Edwards presented a request for the Board to amend the County's Water and Sewer Capital Fee Schedule. After a periodic review of regional water and sewer connection fees, staff determined that the County's water and sewer connection fees were not as competitive as they needed to be to stimulate economic development in the county.

County Water and Sewer Capital Fees are reviewed annually and the water and sewer connection fees in the unincorporated areas of the County are a combination of Catawba County Capital Fees and municipal connection fees. The combined fees, when compared to those of other jurisdictions in the region, are not competitive, particularly with regard to Charlotte-Mecklenburg, Iredell County, and Lincoln County.

Ensuring that water and sewer fees are competitive when compared to other jurisdictions in the region has been discussed at length by staff, including the need to re-energize development across all of Catawba County. These staff discussions have produced the following proposed revisions to the County's existing fee schedule:

- Capital fees for existing and new property improvements (i.e. domicile, business, industry, etc.) after the construction of County water and sewer utility (construction time period includes 12 month warranty period) are:
 - Capital fees for 1" or less water meter/tap: \$1,250 for water and \$1,500 for sewer;
 - Capital fees for 2": \$2,250 for water and \$3,500 for sewer;
 - Capital fees for 3": \$3,250 for water and \$5,500 for sewer.
- To entice the connection of existing buildings that exist at the onset of construction of County-funded water and sewer utilities to municipal services, capital fees for existing property improvements shall be reduced by 50% during the utility construction period. Existing property improvements include, for example: residences, businesses, industries, etc., that rely on existing non-municipal water and sewer provisions and are adjacent to the utility under construction.
- Each connection has a \$1,250 minimum capital fee for water and \$1,500 minimum capital fee for sewer. For every ¼" increment increase in connection size above 1", \$250 is added to the water capital fee and \$500 is added to the sewer capital fee. Sewer infrastructure is more expensive to construct versus water infrastructure.

During major water and sewer line project development and installation, Catawba County staff will provide public meetings to inform those property owners affected by the project about what to expect during construction and how to connect to infrastructure. For example, within the area serviced by the Southeastern Catawba County Water and Sewer System, staff held an initial public meeting at Sherrills Ford Elementary School on Thursday, August 4, 2011. Currently, staff and consultants are contacting businesses along the sewer route individually to ascertain their needs and desire to connect. With the County's capital fees now adjusted, County staff will hold an additional public meeting for residents and businesses along the project route to receive the updated fee schedule and discuss connection steps. In addition, the Utilities and Engineering Department will dedicate staff to respond to follow-up questions from the aforementioned public meetings, as well as calls resulting from media outreach identified below.

Staff will also use the following methods for informing the community about public meetings, updated fee schedule, and steps for water and sewer hookup:

- Traditional news releases to newspapers, TV, and radio;

- Placement of news releases on the County's website;
- Placement of a shorter (more social media-friendly) version in Facebook and Twitter;
- Prominent placement of the story in at least one issue of Catawba County E-News;
- Direct postal mailers will be used to further promote water and sewer hookups.

Staff envisions the aforementioned opportunities will create significant interest within communities. In addition, in the southeastern part of the County, staff plans to ask to be placed on the agendas of the Catawba County Chamber of Commerce, Southeast Chamber of Commerce and Sherrills Ford Rotary Club to talk about expanded water and sewer services. Staff will also follow up on leads referred by the Board of Commissioners. In other areas of the County, similar tactics will be used, drawing upon civic organizations, etc.

Commissioner Lail made a motion to amend the Water and Sewer Capital Fees as recommended. The motion carried unanimously.

11. Other Items of Business: None.
12. Attorney's Report: None.
13. Manager's Report: None.
14. Adjournment. Commissioner Hunsucker made a motion to adjourn at 7:45 p.m. The motion carried unanimously and the meeting adjourned.

Katherine W. Barnes, Chair
Catawba County Board of Commissioners

Barbara E. Morris
County Clerk