

Regular Session, October 15, 2012, 7:00 p.m.
Catawba County Board of Commissioners

Appointments

Catawba Valley Medical Center Board of Trustees	640	10/15/12
Parks Advisory Board	640	10/15/12

Board of Commissioners

Performance Report on FY2011/12 Goals	644	10/15/12
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Board of Elections

Appropriation for Hickory Referendum Election	640	10/15/12
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Emergency Services

Resolution designating Primary and Secondary Agents for Regional Multi Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Planning Grant	641	10/15/12
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Litigation

Settlement of two condemnation cases	647	10/15/12
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Presentations

Badge and sidearm to Retiring Deputy Larry Hendrix	640	10/15/12
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Purchasing

Preferred Alternates for Southeast Catawba County Wastewater Collection System	641	10/15/12
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Resolutions

Designating Primary and Secondary Agents for Regional Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Planning Grant	641	10/15/12
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Sheriff's Office

Presenting Retiring Deputy Larry Hendrix with badge and sidearm	640	10/15/12
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Utilities and Engineering

Preferred alternates for Southeast Catawba County Wastewater Collection System	641	10/15/12
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The Catawba County Board of Commissioners met in regular session on Monday, October 15, 2012 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 Katherine W. Barnes, Vice-Chair Lynn M. Lail and Commissioners Dan A. Hunsucker, Barbara G. Beatty and Randy Isenhower.

Also present were Assistant County Managers Dewey Harris and Mary Furtado, County Attorney Debra Bechtel and County Clerk Barbara Morris. County Manager J. Thomas Lundy was absent.

1. Chair Katherine W. Barnes called the meeting to order 7:00 p.m. She noted she had attended the Emergency Management Conference which was taking place in Hickory and thanked Emergency Services Director Bryan Blanton and Emergency Management Coordinator Karyn Yaussy for their efforts in the success of both the conference and emergency services in the County.
2. Commissioner Randy Isenhower led the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.
3. Chair Barnes offered the invocation.
4. Commissioner Dan Hunsucker made a motion to approve the minutes of the Board's Regular Meeting of October 1, 2012. The motion carried unanimously.

- 5. Recognition of Special Guests: Chair Barnes welcomed all and welcomed Assistant County Manager Mary Furtado back from maternity leave.
- 6. Public Comments for Items Not on the Agenda: None.
- 7. Presentation:
The Board honored Sheriff's Deputy Larry D. Hendrix, who retired effective September 30, 2012, after thirty years in law enforcement. After declaring Deputy Hendrix's service sidearm and badge as surplus, pursuant to North Carolina General Statute 20-187.2 and by a motion by Commissioner Barbara Beatty which unanimously carried, Major C.K. Day presented those items to him.
- 8. Appointments:
Commissioner Beatty recommended the appointment of Douglas Howard for a first term to succeed Robert Hibbitts on the Catawba Valley Medical Center Board of Trustees. Mr. Howard's term will be effective on January 1, 2013 and will expire on December 31, 2016. Chair Barnes recommended the reappointment of Andrea Bruns, Robert Crouch and Sara Scherr to the Parks Advisory Board. Chair Barnes also recommended the appointment of Erin Seiling to this Committee. These terms will expire on October 6, 2015. These appointments came in the form of a motion which carried unanimously.
- 9. Departmental Reports:
1. Board of Elections:
Board of Elections Director Larry Brewer requested the Board appropriate \$40,283 for the September 18, 2012, City of Hickory Referendum Election. The cost of the election has been reimbursed by the City of Hickory. On July 6, 2011, a citizen group, Citizens for Equity in Government, initiated a petition drive to compel a referendum to amend the City of Hickory Charter. The City Charter now mandates that each of the aldermen live in the ward they represent. If a primary is required, only the voters in that ward may vote, but during the general election all city voters vote for all the wards that are up for election. This referendum, if passed by the voters in the City of Hickory, would have mandated that each alderman live in the ward and also require that only the voters of that ward could vote for the candidate(s) running in a primary and general election.

On July 3, 2012, the Catawba County Board of Elections certified the petition. North Carolina General Statute 160A-104 requires that the City of Hickory, upon receipt of a valid initiative petition, call a special election on the question of adopting the charter amendment proposed. The statute also states the City of Hickory shall specify the date of the special election and it shall be fixed at not more than 120 nor fewer than 60 days after receipt of the petition. The City of Hickory received the petition from the Board of Elections on July 3, which prevented the election from being conducted on the next scheduled election date of November 6. The City scheduled and the Board of Elections conducted the election on September 18, 2012, which was only open to the registered voters in the City of Hickory that live in Catawba and Burke Counties. The final cost of the election billed to the City was \$40,283. Vice-Chair Lynn Lail made a motion to appropriate these funds. The motion carried unanimously. Chair Barnes had Mr. Brewer clarify where and when early voting would take place. The following appropriation applies:

SUPPLEMENTAL APPROPRIATION:

Revenue:

110-140050-675405	City of Hickory	\$ 40,283
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Appropriation:

110-140050-812600	Temporary Wages	\$ 22,830
110-140050-841010	Travel and Transportation	\$ 300
110-140050-841030	Printing and Binding	\$ 7,530
110-140050-841505	Telephones	\$ 35
110-140050-841510	Postage	\$ 100
110-140050-841515	Advertising	\$ 1,784
110-140050-843520	Rent	\$ 1,225
110-140050-843590	Other Rentals	\$ 3,135

110-140050-849090	Miscellaneous	\$ 1,273
110-140050-857900	Other Contractual Services	\$ 1,571
110-140050-858100	Per Diem	\$ 500

2. Purchasing/Utilities and Engineering:

Purchasing Manager Debbie Anderson presented a request for Board approval of alternates for the Southeastern Catawba County Wastewater Collection System. North Carolina General Statute §133-3 provides for free and open competition on public contracts. It states that specifications shall contain a performance specification or name at least three brands of equal or equivalent design characteristics. If the owner prefers a particular brand or product or material then such brand shall be bid as an alternate to the three items or equivalent design in the base bid, one of which may be the preferred brand. The specifications for the preferred brand must also identify the performance standards that support the preference.

Catawba County has contracted with the City of Hickory to provide management, maintenance, and operations of both the water and wastewater systems that are in the Southeastern Catawba County Service Area. Through this contract, the County has agreed that all water and wastewater system improvements in that service area will be designed and installed in accordance with City of Hickory specifications. In its design specifications, the City of Hickory has established Fairbanks Morse Pumps as its preferred pump manufacturer, as Fairbanks Morse Pumps have been in operation in Hickory's system for over 30 years for applications in any location in which the city operates and maintains lines, due to their proven history with the City; local sales, services, and support; commonality in spare/repair parts, and the reduction in inventory, which is a cost savings, as required by North Carolina General Statutes.

The City has an excellent relationship with the local Fairbanks Morse vendor, which provides in-house support for the City's operations for both field support, trouble shooting and start-up, and records on pumps currently in service. The Highway 150 Sewer Project schedule is as follows: October 9, 2012, pre-bid meeting; October 25, 2012, open bids; November 12, 2012, subcommittee meeting bid award; November 19, 2012, Board of Commissioners bid award. Vice-Chair Lail made a motion to approve these preferred alternates. The motion carried unanimously.

3. Emergency Services:

Emergency Management Coordinator Karyn Yaussy presented a request for the Board to adopt a resolution designating Primary and Secondary Agents for a Regional Multi Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Planning Grant from the State of North Carolina's Division of Emergency Management Hazard Mitigation Section. Hazard mitigation actions are taken to reduce or eliminate the long-term risk to life and property from a variety of hazards. Mitigation can occur before, during and after a disaster, but it has been shown that mitigation is most effective when based on a comprehensive, long-term plan that is developed before a disaster occurs.

Catawba County and each of the municipalities in the County, along with Alexander, Caldwell, and Burke Counties, plan to participate in a regional multi-jurisdictional hazard mitigation planning effort. The State of North Carolina has been awarded federal Department of Homeland Security Pre-Disaster Mitigation grant monies which will fund development of the plan for the four counties, with a 75%/25% cost share. It is anticipated that the entire county/city cost share will be covered through staff time and other in-kind services and materials. The State has requested that Catawba County serve as the host county for the regional grant, resulting in the need to designate County Primary and Secondary agents. Designation of County Primary and Secondary agents assures prompt and efficient filing of applications and documents for federal or state assistance related to natural hazard mitigation planning and projects under the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (Public Law 93-288 as amended).

This is the first of two requests Emergency Services will make before the formal planning process begins. In a few weeks, a supplemental appropriation will be requested for hazard mitigation planning to be funded by Department of Homeland Security Pre-Disaster Mitigation Grant funds.

The hazard mitigation planning process will incorporate meetings of planners and emergency management staff from the County and each municipality, working with a paid consultant. Information and feedback

from citizens and non-government organizations will be sought through town hall meetings and surveys to create a comprehensive plan. Alexander, Burke and Caldwell Counties and their municipalities will work simultaneously on their pieces of the regional plan before it is compiled into one document. FEMA has identified criteria that allow for multi-jurisdictional plans, as many issues are better resolved by evaluating hazards more comprehensively by coordinating at the county, regional or watershed level. The completed plan will contain evidence of each jurisdiction's participation in the planning process, risks where they differ from the general planning area and jurisdiction specific mitigation actions, and mitigation strategies related to all four counties and their municipalities. Each county and municipality will need formal adoption by their respective governing body after FEMA approves the plan. Completion and approval is expected by June 2014.

Commissioner Isenhower asked how funds were distributed and Ms. Yaussy indicated an outside contractor managed the funds but Catawba County was the lead agency for the planning grant. Commissioner Beatty made a motion to adopt the resolution. The motion carried unanimously. The following resolution applies:

**RESOLUTION
DESIGNATION OF APPLICANT'S AGENT
North Carolina Division of Emergency Management**

Organization Name (hereafter named Organization)	Disaster Number	
Catawba County Emergency Services		
Applicant's State Cognizant Agency for Single Audit purposes (If Cognizant Agency is not assigned please indicate)		
North Carolina Department of Public Safety		
Applicant's Fiscal Year (FY) Start	Month	Day
	July	1st
Applicant's Federal Employer's Identification Number		
6001814		
Applicant's Federal Information Processing Standards (FIPS) Number		
035		

PRIMARY AGENT	SECONDARY AGENT
Agent's Name	Agent's Name
Alan D. Blanton	Karyn L. Yaussy
Organization	Organization
Catawba County Emergency Services	Catawba County Emergency Services
Official Position	Official Position
Director	Emergency Management Coordinator
Mailing Address	Mailing Address
PO Box 389 100 A Southwest Blvd	PO Box 389 100 A Southwest Blvd
City State Zip	City State Zip
Newton NC 28658	Newton NC 28658
Daytime Telephone	Daytime Telephone
828 465 8230	828 465 8230
Facsimile Number	Facsimile Number
828 464 4820	828 464 4820
Pager or Cellular Number	Pager or Cellular Number
828 302 5141	828 446 4108

BE IT RESOLVED BY the governing body of the Organization (a public entity duly organized under the laws of the State of North Carolina) that the above named Primary and Secondary Agents are hereby authorized to execute and file applications for federal and/or state assistance on behalf of the Organization for the purpose of obtaining certain state and federal financial assistance under the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief & Emergency Assistance Act (Public Law 93 288 as amended) or as otherwise available. BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the above named agents are authorized to represent and act for the Organization in all dealings with the State of North Carolina and the Federal Emergency Management Agency for all matters pertaining to such disaster assistance required by the grant agreements and **the assurances printed on the reverse side hereof**. BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED THAT the above named agents are authorized to act severally.

PASSED AND APPROVED this _____ day of _____, 20

GOVERNING BODY	CERTIFYING OFFICIAL
Name and Title	Name
Name and Title	Official Position
Name and Title	Daytime Telephone

CERTIFICATION

I, _____ (Name) duly appointed and _____ (Title) of the Governing Body do hereby certify that the above is a true and correct copy of a resolution passed and approved by the Governing Body of _____ (Organization) on the _____ day of _____, 20

Date _____ Signature _____

10. Other Items of Business:

Board Chair Katherine W. Barnes summarized the actions taken to achieve the Board's goals for Fiscal Year 2011/2012, which were as follows:

1) Prepare a Fiscal Year 2011/2012 budget which maintains services and momentum as much as possible in light of economic uncertainty and no property tax increase. Examine planned investments and expenditures to ensure it is both a good time to build and a good time to borrow funds for building, and make sure we have the necessary funds to run required services such as health, safety and education. Plan for flat growth in tax revenues. Look at ways to be more efficient and see if the County could perform some services for the smaller municipalities in payroll, purchasing, etc., which could generate some revenue for the County and save money for the smaller municipalities. Continue to examine ways to reduce expenses in each department and ways to conserve energy where possible. Based on no to low growth in ad valorem and sales taxes, develop a priority list of capital improvement projects.

The Fiscal Year 2011/12 budget was adopted with no countywide property tax increase. This is the fifth year without a property tax increase. The 2011/12 budget reduced expenses in County departments by \$1.75 million, with public school and community college operating funds and current expense funding maintained at the same per pupil level. Public safety departments overall were reduced less than other county departments in an effort to maintain public safety service levels as much as possible. Over the last four years, County reductions total \$10.5 million and have impacted 100 positions, or 9% of the workforce.

Financing opportunities allowed Catawba Valley Medical Center to re-fund the Center's 1999 bond issue and resulted in approximately \$534,000 in net present value savings. Additionally, refinancing opportunities identified by the County's Finance Department and utilized by the Board to refinance existing debt resulted in more than \$2 million in savings for the County over the next 17 years.

In its continuing effort to partner and support municipalities, the Board took action which assisted community partners in various ways. Oxford Fire Protection Association is constructing an addition to the existing fire station in Claremont, with a total project cost of approximately \$700,000. Financing up to \$400,000 is needed for this project, and with a resolution of approval from the Board, the Association was able to obtain an interest rate of 5.33%, compared to the 5.67% without the Board's resolution. In keeping with this effort to partner and support, the County committed staff time and expertise to assist the Catawba County Historical Association with the bid process and acted as the pass-through agency for receiving and distributing grant funds awarded to the Association for enhanced security at the Bunker Hill Covered Bridge. Further, the County's Technology Department worked with several municipalities to provide technology services.

By its adoption of a resolution approving the consolidation of the Catawba County Alcoholic Beverage Control (ABC) Board and the ABC Board of the Town of Taylorsville, the Board of Commissioners paved the way for State approval of this merger. This consolidation will increase profitability for both parties and improve efficiencies and product selection for the Taylorsville store. This is one example of the Board's goal to perform services that generate revenue for the County, save money for smaller municipalities and act as a pilot for such mergers and cooperation across the State.

In cost savings measures, during the first half of FY 2012, the lighting at the Main Library was changed by in-house staff from fluorescent lighting to T-8 bulbs, creating a savings of 30% on the power bill. In addition, a new boiler was installed at the Justice Center, which has fixed issues with the heating and cooling and is also energy efficient.

With State of North Carolina budget cuts affecting numerous programs throughout the state, the County's Drug Treatment Court Coordinator position was eliminated in July 2011. The County's Supervision, Treatment, Accountability and Recovery (S.T.A.R.) Team continued to operate this successful program with voluntary assistance from the Cognitive Connections staff while applying for grant funds to sustain the program. When it was determined that no grant funds would come available until July 1, 2012, the

Board committed to funding one-half of the coordinator position through the end of this fiscal year. Mental Health Partners agreed to fund the other half of this expense.

2) Continue strategies to create jobs through educational opportunities to make sure the workforce is trained for tomorrow's jobs, and invest in infrastructure and development of the county's quality of life. Remain aggressive in recruiting most favored industries to the area, and add an additional multi-jurisdictional business park. Look for out of the box ideas that others are not doing. Recruit industries that are related to existing industries and work with municipalities on economic development;

While the Board has continued its efforts to recruit new industry to the area, it has also maintained its commitment to support existing businesses with incentives for growth and expansion. In addition to the incentive agreements for existing businesses that were initiated at the end of Fiscal Year 2010/11 and finalized in early Fiscal Year 2011/12, such as Sarstedt and Dalco Nonwovens, the Board had a new industry success in bringing another German company to Catawba County. Punker LLC will lease an existing industrial property in the County (the former Turbotec Building) and invest \$4,584,100 in machinery and equipment. A minimum of 62 jobs will be created over five years (with a potential of 80 jobs) which will exceed Catawba County's average wage of \$35,216. Punker LLC is a Most Favored Industry-Fabricated Metal Products and currently employs over 360 people. Hickory will be the company's first US manufacturing operation.

Beyond incentive agreements, the Board has worked to create an atmosphere for new development and business opportunities. The adoption of a waiver program for certain landfill fees and erosion control permit fees will encourage the development of pre-graded sites, demolition and removal of dilapidated buildings and the rehabilitation of historic buildings to facilitate economic development.

The County continued to work with Hickory, Conover, Catawba and Maiden on development of a multi-jurisdictional park, and while this did not come to fruition in FY2011/12, this interlocal partnership was realized at the start of FY2012/13.

The Board accepted a Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) NC Tomorrow Initiative grant to fund a project wherein Catawba County would serve as the regional lead to work with all communities across North Carolina to build a statewide economic development strategy. With its goal to invest in infrastructure and development of the County's quality of life, the Board approved Unified Development Ordinance amendments which deleted the requirement for sidewalk installation (or "fee in-lieu of") for isolated non-residential properties which are surrounded by established residential development and not identified within a plan for pedestrian connectivity or "walkable" neighborhood. This amendment provides some relief for developers where future connectivity has a low probability. Nine homeowners with severe water needs along Old Shelby Road had their quality of life improved with installation of municipal water through the Board's approval of an amendment to the 2009 CDBG Royal Heights Circle Water Project. At the completion of the Royal Heights Project, excess grant funds were utilized to provide this additional 2,550 linear feet of twelve inch municipal water line, including taps and connections.

The County's Emergency Services has ensured that Catawba County citizens have the highest level of support and services in the event of severe weather. In June 2012, Catawba County was designated as "StormReady" by the National Weather Service. The County has met stringent criteria for this designation which focuses on both internal and external communication, alert systems, reception and understanding of hazardous weather, community outreach and a comprehensive all-hazards emergency operations plan.

3) Continue customer service emphasis in all departments. Focus on communications efforts with citizens so citizens know what is going on in County government;

Effective July 1, 2011, one of the mandatory performance factors on the employee performance evaluation is "Customer Service/Working Relationships/Cultural Competency." The expectation in the area of customer service is that employees are to be consistently responsive and helpful to customers and coworkers. In addition, the Utilities and Engineering Department requires all of its employees to

participate in a customer service training class at least once a year. Positive customer service comments, in the way of letters, phone calls and emails are

received on a consistent basis, placed on the employee Intranet site and shared with the Board monthly. Also, a database of presentations and speaking engagements to civic organizations, etc. is being maintained to monitor citizen touch points.

Social Services and the Western Piedmont Council of Governments (Area Agency on Aging) received Board support and approval of the Catawba County Aging Plan which includes objectives, recommendations and strategies to promote a livable and senior-friendly community for the county. The purpose of the Plan was to determine the County's "aging readiness" and provide programs, policies and services that meet the needs of a growing older population, families and caregivers.

Household Hazardous Waste and Electronics One-Day Collection events were held by the County on August 5, 2011, November 5, 2011, February 4, 2012, and May 5, 2012. These events are organized to provide citizens with a means to dispose of general household hazardous waste such as paints; automotive products; insecticides and electronics.

The Catawba County Public Information Office continues to provide a program of public information, to keep citizens informed of important county government initiatives and action.

The Office sent out 234 releases to media and directly to the public between July 1, 2011, and June 30, 2012. Those releases reported on such stories as Catawba County ranking first in the State of North Carolina in recycling, per person; the start of new, twice yearly collections of electronics for recycling; the opening of a new Biodiesel Research Facility at the Catawba County EcoComplex; awards won by the County for innovative use of QR Codes on building permits; the start of a plan to study ways to support farming and agriculture in the county by asking citizens for their advice; changes to voting districts resulting from the 2011 redistricting; the start of a new cable television program, "Catawba Communities" featuring programs and services provided by local governments, school systems and related agencies; an update to the County GIS Real Estate website to take advantage of new technology and offer enhanced services; a new routine cleaning of the animal shelter performed twice a year in an effort to prevent an outbreak of disease such as occurred in 2010; the many things the County does to promote good health and healthy activities as a part of National County Government Month; an expansion of the annual Open House for veterans on Veterans Day; a new Aging Plan created by a team of citizens and Social Services staff to foster a more senior-friendly and livable community; the naming of Mary Furtado, former Executive Director of Strategic Operations in Sarasota County, Florida, as an Assistant County Manager; and the County earning the "Storm Ready" designation from the National Weather Service.

The Public Information Office received 81 additional releases from various County departments, and placed them on the County's internet site, and in its E-newsletter and RSS feeds, during the same time frame. Many of the subjects noted above and other major issues were relayed to the public through the County's radio program and newspaper column.

The Public Information Office continues to use the Government Access Cable Television Channel on Charter Communications Channel 3. The channel provides text "Public Service Announcements" on such things as Cooperative Extension classes, the County's web site, meeting agendas and more; as well as a video detailing County services.

A significant new tool for informing the public about Catawba County began with the premiere of "Catawba Communities" in August 2011, a monthly thirty minute television show aired by Charter Communications and placed on the County's YouTube Channel. Segments on the shows produced in FY 2011/2012 included reports on economic development and job creation in Catawba County; the County's Veterans

Service Office; the Community Alert System to which citizens may sign up to receive notice of emergency and potentially disastrous situations; the Social Services' Aging Plan; the Sheriff's Office's Operation

Pillstopper, which provides the public with a place to bring unused and unwanted medications and over the counter drugs for proper recycling; how the Economic Development Corporation assists existing business and industries; Public

Health's work to keep teenagers from starting the use of tobacco products; twice a year Household Hazardous Waste collections; and programs for children and on genealogy offered at the County Library.

During Fiscal Year 2011/12, the Public Information Office gave a group of citizens an in-depth overview of all County services via Catawba County University. This two night, eight hour session included information on how the Board of Commissioners works, County management and budget, public safety, job creation and assistance for those in need.

4) Work with the North Carolina Department of Transportation toward completion of North Carolina Highway 16.

Commissioner Beatty and Planning staff has been in contact with the North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) about the status of the design for the Highway 16 widening project. Several meetings with NCDOT were held to inform them of the County's concerns over the four-lane divided median cross section and its potential impacts on emergency response times and access to the new Bandys fire station and commercial/church properties. NCDOT staff indicated they met internally to review the comments and make decisions on where the County's concerns could be accommodated without jeopardizing the safety and travel efficiency of the roadway. As a result of these discussions, NCDOT decided it will be retaining the four-lane divided median cross section throughout the project but will construct a depressed median in front of the new Bandys fire station to accommodate fire trucks exiting to make a left turn going north towards Newton. NCDOT will be including additional left over turns, which create a shorter driving distance for the travelling public to go back in their desired direction of travel.

This includes additional turnovers to address concerns from businesses, such as Burke Christian Tours and churches. Planning staff reiterated its desire to continue to be engaged in the design process as it develops. NCDOT staff will be hiring a private consultant to quicken the design phase. It is anticipated that this firm will be in place by the end of 2012 and then scoping meetings will begin. NCDOT informed staff that there will be a series of scoping meetings, which includes submittal of design drawings to the County, before construction of the roadway is begun. Assistant Planning Director Mary George requested to be the point person for the County to receive information which will then be shared with the Board, management and interested department staff. A newsletter is being developed by NCDOT to inform the general public about the status and schedule for the road project. County staff will make this newsletter available to the public through the internet and other distribution means. The Board adopted changes to the Unified Development Ordinance, which transferred a portion of the Rural Preservation Overlay (100-foot setback) from old Highway 16 South to align with the new NC 16 Bypass. This change was identified as a strategy in the NC 16 South Corridor Development Plan adopted by the Board in 2011 and serves to protect the rural viewshed along the new bypass. If this transfer had not been made, it would have been challenging to develop scattered vacant lots, and inconsistencies in development patterns would have been created due to differences in set-back requirements from parcel to parcel.

Chair Barnes thanked staff for their efforts in assisting the Board in reaching these goals. Commissioner Hunsucker said he was pleased this report showed citizens the effort Board members made to keep their promises.

11. Attorney's Report:

County Attorney Debra Bechtel requested Board approval on the resolution of two condemnation cases: Catawba County v. Johnny Lee and Elaine W. Wyant (settlement amount \$20,550.00) and Catawba County V. Farrell C. Johnson, et al. (settlement amount \$102,205.00). Commissioner Hunsucker made a motion to approve these settlements.

12. Manager's Report: Chair Barnes thanked Assistant County Manager Dewey Harris for sitting in for County Manager Lundy.
13. Adjournment. Commissioner Hunsucker made a motion to adjourn at 7:40 p.m. The motion carried unanimously.

Katherine W. Barnes, Chair
Catawba County Board of Commissioners

Barbara E. Morris
County Clerk