

Subcommittee Sessions
Monday, August 10, 2015, 8:00 a.m.
Second Floor Meeting Room, Government Center

Finance and Personnel Subcommittee
Commissioners Beatty and Hunsucker

1. Appropriation of \$60,130 in Existing Fund Balance to Sherrills Ford-Terrell Fire-Rescue. *Presented by Assistant Emergency Services Director Mark Pettit.*

Policy and Public Works Subcommittee
Commissioners Barnes and Butler

1. Resolution in Support of the Stepping Up Initiative – a National Initiative to Reduce the Number of People with Mental Illnesses in Jails. *Presented by County Manager J. Thomas Lundy.*

Other items for Monday, August 17, 2015, 7:00 p.m. Meeting

1. Rock Barn Solar Farm Rezoning Request

Distribution

Board of Commissioners
County Attorney
County Manager
Finance Director
Assistant County Manager Dewey Harris
Assistant County Manager Mary Furtado
County Clerk
Director of Planning, Parks & Development
Emergency Services Director
Human Resources Director
Director of Utilities and Engineering
Budget Manager
PIO



**PREVIEW OF COUNTY COMMISSION AGENDA
MONDAY, AUGUST 17, 2015, 7 P.M.
AGRICULTURAL RESOURCES CENTER
1175 SOUTH BRADY AVENUE, NEWTON, NC 28658**



The Catawba County Board of Commissioners will hold a public hearing on a request by RB Solar LLC, to rezone approximately 54 acres of a 127 acre tract, located at 3682 North Oxford Street in the St. Stephens/Oxford Small Area Planning District, from R-30 Residential to R-80-CD Conditional District for a solar farm, when the Board meets at 7 p.m. on Monday, August 17, 2015, in the David L. Stewart Meeting Room of the Catawba County Agricultural Resources Center at 1175 South Brady Avenue in Newton.

The Board will also consider a request to appropriate existing fund balance to Sherrills Ford-Terrell Fire-Rescue in the amount of \$60,130. If approved, the department would use these funds to replace rescue equipment. And the Board will consider a resolution supporting the Stepping Up Initiative being led by the National Association of Counties (NACo), which calls for a national effort to reduce the number of people with mental illnesses in county jails. The Board will consider a customized resolution that outlines Catawba County's exiting long history of programs designed to reduce the number of people with mental illnesses in the County jail facility.

Please note the change in the Board's normal meeting location due to Soldiers Reunion activities around the 1924 Courthouse Square on the evening of August 17.

PUBLIC HEARING

The Board will hold a public hearing to receive citizen comments and consider an application to rezone 54 acres from R-30 Residential to R-80-CD Conditional District, specifically for a solar farm. The property is located at 3682 North Oxford Street in the St. Stephens/Oxford Small Area Planning District. The current R-30 Residential district requires a minimum lot size of 30,000 square feet (.68 acres per dwelling) and is considered a medium density "general use" district. Predominant uses in this district include single-family homes and agriculture. The R-80 Residential district requires a minimum lot size of 80,000 square feet (2 acres per dwelling) and is considered a low density "general use" district. Predominant uses in this district include single-family homes and agriculture in a more rural surrounding. In contrast, conditional district zoning is based on a "specific use" such as the requested solar farm being proposed. It would be bound by a set of regulations specific to the request accompanied by a site plan. If approved, the base zoning district would be R-80-CD.

The subject property is the location of the Rock Barn Equestrian Center. RB Solar LLC is proposing to rezone 54 acres located in the northern portion of the 127 acre tract for a solar farm. Parcels surrounding the subject property are zoned both R-30 and R-20 Residential. The R-30 parcels contain single family homes, pastures, agriculture, a pole barn and woodlands. The R-20 properties are part of the Rock Barn Development and occupied by single family homes.

The subject property is located within the Floodplain Management and WS-IV Watershed Protected Area - Overlay Districts. Electrical equipment would be required to be elevated two feet above the base flood elevation. The site plan and decommissioning plan illustrate and/or state how the applicant will meet the solar farm standards found in Section 44-633 of the County's Unified Development Ordinance (UDO). All standards of Section 44-633 must be met prior to the issuance of a Zoning Authorization Permit (required before construction) and a Zoning Compliance Certificate (required before operation).

The proposed use does not require wastewater or potable water services. The proposed solar facility will connect to the utility grid in the northeast portion of the property. Rock Barn Road (State Road 1709) is designated as a minor thoroughfare in the 2035 Greater Hickory Urban Area Long Range Transportation Plan. This section of Rock Barn Road is generally designed and constructed to carry between 12,000 and 15,000 vehicles per day. Traffic counts taken in 2013 along Rock Barn Road measured 2,300 and 4,200 average trips per day north and south of the site, respectively. No road improvements are recommended for this section of Rock Barn Road. Development of the property will consist of temporary construction traffic and will not overburden the existing roadway.

North Oxford Street (State Road 1715) is also designated as a minor thoroughfare in the 2035 Greater Hickory Urban Area Long Range Transportation Plan. This section of North Oxford Street is generally designed and constructed to carry

between 12,000 and 15,000 vehicles per day. Traffic counts taken in 2013 along North Oxford Street measured 3,000 average trips per day southeast of the site. No road improvements are recommended for this section of North Oxford Street. Development of the property will consist of temporary construction traffic and will not overburden the existing roadway.

The St. Stephens/Oxford Small Area Plan, adopted on April 21, 2003, serves as the current land use plan for this area. The Plan depicts the property as being located in an area recommended for medium density (1.34 dwellings per acre) residential development. The use and size of the land area associated with the request for a solar farm at this location is inconsistent with the uses and density recommendations of the plan. There are a number of sizable (5 plus acres) adjacent properties that contain agricultural activities and/or woodlands to the north and east.

Although inconsistent with the accepted small area plan, staff finds the request reasonable and recommends the 54 acres be rezoned from R-30 Residential to R-80-CD Conditional District subject to the conditions listed and illustrated on the conceptual site plan based upon: the relatively low density pattern of the surrounding community; the proposed development being consistent with density required in the R-80 district (80,000 square feet, 2 acres), combined with conditional zoning designating a solar farm as the exclusive use; the proposed development meeting the standards of Section 44-633 of the UDO as identified on the site plan; the topography of the site, existing vegetation, and additional vegetation to be planted would combine to offer minimal visibility of the site; and the UDO allowing for the consideration of solar farms as a permitted use in the R-80-CD Conditional District.

The Planning Board held a public hearing on July 27, 2015, to consider the request. One citizen spoke in favor of solar farms because they provide renewable energy and asked that the applicant consider planting a cover crop to assist the bee population. Five area residents spoke in opposition to the request. Their general concerns included the following: visibility of the solar farm and glare from equipment; decreased property values and/or resale value; traffic safety along Rock Barn Road; location of the solar array relative to any wetlands/floodplain; benefit to the County; and removal of site vegetation.

The Planning Board asked if Rock Barn had considered other development possibilities for the property and how the request was inconsistent with the small area plan regarding density. Mr. Bill Parrish, Executive Vice President of Rock Barn Properties spoke on behalf of the applicant sharing the following: Rock Barn does not have any other development intentions for the property because of the location of the floodplain; Rock Barn has a vested interest in the community and would not jeopardize their investment by constructing a solar farm that would be easily visible or detrimental to surrounding property values; the proposed positioning or direction of the panels would not face Rock Barn Road; a study was conducted elsewhere of a high-end golf course community adjacent to a solar farm and found no degradation of property values; the applicant will supply a reclamation plan, required by the County, to return the property to its original state if or when the lifecycle of the solar farm is concluded, and additional evergreen vegetation will be combined with the existing mature vegetation to ensure screening of the site.

The Planning Board voted 6- 2 to submit an unfavorable recommendation to the Board of Commissioners to rezone 54 acres from R-30 Residential to R-80-CD Conditional District subject to the conditions listed and illustrated on the conceptual site plan and based upon the plan seeming rushed and incomplete in an attempt to beat what's going on in Raleigh with the legislature and the sunset provision for state tax credits; they don't have an erosion and sedimentation control plan; they don't have the wetland delineation; the property can be used for other purposes more compatible with the community; the R-80 Residential district (2 acre minimum lot size) is inconsistent with the surrounding R-20 Residential (minimum ½ acre lot size) and R-30 (minimum ¾ acre lot size) Residential districts; Rock Barn Properties has already sold property to a substantial number of land owners that will have views of a solar farm; in the future, notification of property owners should be based on visual line of sight and not just adjacent property owners; and this is a bad plan and bad location.

CONSENT AGENDA

A. The Board will consider adopting a resolution supporting the Stepping Up Initiative being led by the National Association of Counties (NACo). This customized resolution outlines Catawba County's efforts to reduce the number of people with mental illnesses in the County jail. The North Carolina Association of County Commissioners (NCACC) Board of Directors approved a sample resolution supporting the NACo Stepping Up Initiative on June 24th. The sample resolution was sent to all 100 counties, with encouragement to adopt customized resolutions as appropriate to individual County needs and existing efforts, in support of the initiative. NACo is one of several partners in this effort, which also includes the National Sheriffs Association and the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI). Stepping Up is a national

effort to reduce the number of people with mental illnesses in county jails – an estimated 2 million people with serious mental illnesses are admitted to jails across the nation each year. North Carolina and Catawba County have seen this problem grow since mental health reform began in the mid 2000s as in-patient treatment options for these individuals have decreased.

Catawba County has a long history of funding mental health and substance abuse services in the jail – beginning when Mental Health was a County department and continuing through State-mandated reform which shifted responsibility for mental health to the County’s managed care organization, Partners Behavioral Health Management (BHM). All inmates booked into the Catawba County Detention Center (6,266 last year) are screened by jail classification officers for mental health and substance abuse issues using the Brief Jail Mental Health Screening tool. The mental health/substance abuse liaison in the jail, contracted with Catawba Valley Behavioral Healthcare (CVBH) through Partners (BHM), identifies inmates in need of services through the intake tool, reviewing jail intake logs for inmates with a history of mental health and substance abuse issues, and through medical and/or jail staff referrals. The liaison interviews and conducts clinical assessments of inmates to determine needs. The following services are included: short-term supportive counseling; anger management; counseling; alcohol and drug detoxification; referrals to mental health/substance abuse treatment providers when inmates are released from jail; unplanned or emergency assistance; referrals for suicide/special watch; assistance with obtaining involuntary commitments; and assistance to the medical services provider in the jail to gather treatment history on inmates with disabilities which assists with appropriate referral for services while incarcerated.

This year, the County also contracted for a mental health/substance liaison to facilitate structured groups for individuals with substance use disorders and to offer training to jail personnel to help recognize signals of mental illness and other disabilities. The County also contracts with Repay, Inc. for Pretrial Services and Court Improvement Coordination services. Repay staff works with the contracted mental health staff worker and court officials to divert inmates with mental health and substance abuse problems into treatment instead of incarceration. In Fiscal Year 2014/15 alone, 63 inmates were successfully diverted from the jail saving a projected 1,073 bed days or \$80,475, based on the average daily housing cost of \$75 per day.

In adopting this resolution, Catawba County commits to continue and expand its efforts as needed to reduce the number of people with mental illness and substance abuse issues in the County jail. The Board’s Policy and Public Works Subcommittee recommends the adoption of this resolution.

B. The Board will consider the appropriation of existing fund balance in the amount of \$60,130 to Sherrills Ford-Terrell Fire-Rescue. The department will use these funds to replace rescue equipment. Sherrills Ford-Terrell Fire-Rescue is certified as a Heavy Rescue provider and the County contracts with them to provide that service. The department is replacing its Rescue Power Unit and Air Bag system, which are both 20 years old, have reached the end of their useful life and have become a safety concern. Additionally, the department will be upgrading its stabilization strut system which will enhance its ability to provide rescue and vehicle stabilization capabilities.

Historically, each department has its own fund balance which is carried from year to year unless the department makes a request to appropriate it. The fund balance is created when tax revenue collections exceed the projections established by the Budget Department prior to each fiscal year. Fire departments have been allowed to utilize ninety percent of existing fund balance to address major projects such as buildings, building additions, truck replacement and other non-recurring needs such as equipment items. Ten percent of each department’s fund balance is held for unforeseen expenditures during the budget year. Ninety percent of Sherrills Ford-Terrell Fire-Rescue’s fund balance is \$60,130. The Board’s Finance and Personnel Subcommittee recommends the appropriation of the existing fund balance in the requested amount.

CONTACT: DAVE HARDIN, PUBLIC INFORMATION OFFICER 465-8464

MEMORANDUM

TO: Finance and Personnel Subcommittee

FROM: Mark V. Pettit, Assistant Emergency Services Director

DATE: August 10, 2015

SUBJECT: Appropriation of \$60,130 in Existing Fund Balance to Sherrills Ford-Terrell Fire-Rescue.

Request:

Staff requests the Finance and Personnel Subcommittee recommends to the Board of Commissioners approval of the appropriation of existing fund balance in the amount of \$60,130 to Sherrills Ford-Terrell Fire-Rescue. The department will use these funds to replace rescue equipment.

Background:

Sherrills Ford-Terrell Fire-Rescue is certified as a Heavy Rescue provider and the County contracts with them to provide that service. The department is replacing its Rescue Power Unit and Air Bag system which are both 20 years old and have reached the end of their useful life and have become a safety concern. Additionally, the department will be upgrading their stabilization strut system which will enhance their ability to provide rescue and vehicle stabilization capabilities.

Historically, each department has their own fund balance which is carried from year to year unless the department makes a request to appropriate it. The fund balance is created when tax revenue collections exceed the projections established by the Budget Department prior to each fiscal year. Fire departments have been allowed to utilize ninety percent of existing fund balance to address major projects such as buildings, building additions, truck replacement and other non-recurring needs such as equipment items. Ten percent of each department's fund balance is held for unforeseen expenditures during the budget year. Ninety percent of Sherrills Ford-Terrell Fire-Rescue's fund balance is \$60,130.00.

Recommendation:

Staff recommends the Finance and Personnel Subcommittee recommends to the Board of Commissioners approval of the appropriation of existing fund balance in the amount of \$60,130 to Sherrills Ford-Terrell Fire-Rescue.

<u>Appropriation of Existing Fund Balance</u>		<u>Expense</u>	
357-260010-690100	\$60,130	357-260010-849010	\$60,130
Fund Balance		Fire Protection	

To: Policy and Public Works Subcommittee
From: J. Thomas Lundy, County Manager
Date: August 10, 2015
Subject: Resolution in Support of the Stepping Up Initiative: a National Initiative to Reduce the Number of People with Mental Illnesses in Jails

REQUEST

Staff requests the Policy and Public Works Subcommittee recommends the Board of Commissioners adopt the attached resolution supporting the Stepping Up Initiative being led by the National Association of Counties (NACo). This customized resolution outlines Catawba County's efforts to reduce the number of people with mental illnesses in our jail.

BACKGROUND

The NC Association of County Commissioners (NCACC) Board of Directors approved a sample resolution supporting the Stepping Up Initiative being led by the National Association of Counties (NACo) on June 24th. The sample resolution was sent to all 100 counties with encouragement to adopt customized resolutions, as appropriate to individual County needs and existing efforts, in support of the initiative. NACo is one of several partners in this effort, which also includes the National Sheriffs Association and the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI). Stepping Up is a national effort to reduce the number of people with mental illnesses in county jails--an estimated 2 million people with serious mental illnesses are admitted to jails across the nation each year. North Carolina and Catawba County have seen this problem grow since mental health reform began in the mid 2000s as in-patient treatment options for these individuals have decreased.

Catawba County has a long history of funding mental health and substance abuse services in the jail--beginning when Mental Health was a County department and continuing through state mandated reform which shifted responsibility for mental health to the County's managed care organization, Partners Behavioral Health Management (BHM). All inmates booked into the Catawba County Detention Center (6,266 last year) are screened by jail classification officers for mental health and substance abuse issues using the Brief Jail Mental Health Screening tool. The mental health/substance abuse liaison in the jail, contracted with Catawba Valley Behavioral Healthcare (CVBH) through Partners (BHM), identifies inmates in need of services through: the intake tool, reviewing jail intake logs for inmates with a history of mental health and substance abuse issues, and through medical and/or jail staff referrals. The liaison interviews and conducts clinical assessments of inmates to determine needs. The following services are included:

- Short-term supportive counseling,
- Anger management counseling,
- Alcohol and drug detoxification,
- Referrals to mental health/substance abuse treatment providers when inmates are released from jail,
- Unplanned or emergency assistance,
- Referrals for suicide/special watch
- Assistance with obtaining involuntary commitments,
- Assistance to the medical services provider in the jail to gather treatment history on inmates with disabilities which assists with appropriate referral for services while incarcerated.

The table below provides a summary of the services provided to inmates last year:

Mental Health/Substance Abuse Services	Total
Mental Health Liaison Interviews & Assessments	332
Weekly Mental Health Clinic - Medication Management	119
Unscheduled or Emergency Visits	186
Suicide/Special Watch	289
Alcohol Detox	302
Opioid Detox	1,124
Benzo Detox	734
Involuntary Commitments	7

This year, the County also contracted for the mental health/substance liaison to facilitate structured groups for individuals with substance use disorders and to offer training to jail personnel to help recognize signals of mental illness and other disabilities.

The County also contracts with Repay, Inc. for Pretrial Services and Court Improvement Coordination services. Repay staff works with the contracted mental health staff worker and court officials to divert inmates with mental health and substance abuse problems into treatment instead of incarceration. In Fiscal Year 2014/15 alone, 63 inmates were successfully diverted from the jail saving a projected 1,073 bed days or \$80,475 based on the average daily housing cost of \$75 per day.

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends the Policy and Public Works Subcommittee recommends the Board of Commissioners adopt the attached resolution supporting the Stepping Up Initiative being led by the National Association of Counties (NACo). This customized resolution outlines Catawba County's efforts to reduce the number of people with mental illnesses in our jail.

In adopting this resolution, Catawba County commits to continue and expand its efforts as needed to reduce the number of people with mental illness and substance abuse issues in the county jail.

“Stepping Up Initiative to Reduce the Number of People with Mental Illnesses in Jails”

WHEREAS, counties routinely provide treatment services to the estimated 2 million people with serious mental illnesses booked into jails each year; and

WHEREAS, prevalence rates of serious mental illnesses in confinement facilities are three to six times higher than for the general population, with statistics showing that almost 13% of North Carolina’s prison population requires some type of intervention due to mental health issues; and

WHEREAS, almost three-quarters of adults with serious mental illnesses in jails have co-occurring substance use disorders; and

WHEREAS, adults with mental illnesses tend to stay longer in jail and upon release are at a higher risk of recidivism than people without these disorders; and

WHEREAS, county jails spend two to three times more on adults with mental illnesses that require interventions compared to those without these treatment needs; and

WHEREAS, without the appropriate treatment and services, people with mental illnesses can continue to cycle through the criminal justice system, often resulting in tragic outcomes for these individuals, their families, and their communities; and

WHEREAS, county jails are generally an unsafe environment for those with mental health treatment needs; and

WHEREAS, the North Carolina Association of County Commissioners has undertaken a serious effort to address the local service needs of those with mental illnesses through the appointment of a special Task Force; and

WHEREAS, Catawba County, like all counties, takes pride in its responsibility to protect and enhance the health, welfare and safety of our residents in efficient, safe, and socially just ways; and

WHEREAS, through the Stepping Up Initiative, the National Association of Counties, the Council of State Governments Justice Center and the American Psychiatric Foundation are encouraging counties to reduce the number of people with mental illnesses in county jails; and

WHEREAS, Catawba County has a long history of working to identify, assist, treat, and/or divert inmates with mental health and substance abuse issues in its jail; and

WHEREAS, Jail classification staff use the Brief Jail Mental Health Screening tool to screen all inmates entering the jail for mental health and substance abuse issues; and

WHEREAS, Mental health staff contracted with Catawba Valley Behavioral Health through Partners Behavioral Health Management work with inmates identified through the tool as well as inmates with a history of mental health and substance abuse issues to provide short-term supportive and anger management counseling while in jail, connect inmates to mental health/substance abuse treatment providers when released from jail, assist with involuntary commitments, refer inmates for suicide/special watch, assisting with alcohol and drug detoxification, provide unscheduled or emergency assistance, assist with gathering treatment histories which assists with medical treatment while incarcerated, facilitate structured groups for

individuals with substance use disorders, and assist court officials to divert inmates from jail as appropriate; and

WHEREAS, Repay, Inc. through its contract with Catawba County for Pretrial Services and Court Improvement Coordination works with jail staff, contracted mental health staff, and court officials to divert inmates with mental health and substance abuse issues from the jail and into appropriate treatment.

NOW THEREFORE, be it resolved by the Board of Commissioners, Catawba County,

1. That the Board of Commissioners does hereby sign on to the Call to Action to address the number of people with mental illnesses in its county jail and commits to sharing lessons learned with other counties in North Carolina and across the country to support the Stepping Up Initiative; and
2. The Board of Commissioners will continue its long-standing local efforts and partnership as well as use resources available through the Stepping Up Initiative and other resources provided by the Council of State Governments Justice Center to continue and expand efforts as deemed appropriate to safely reduce the number of people with mental illnesses in jails, and
3. That an update on efforts and recommendations to further reduce the number of people with mental illness in the county jail between 2016-2020, consistent with the Council of State Governments Justice Center report and recommendations, will be presented to the Board of Commissioners prior to June 30, 2016.

This _____ day of _____, 2015.

Randy Isenhower, Chair
Catawba County Board of Commissioners

Attest