

Minutes
Richmond County Board of Commissioners
1401 Fayetteville Road, Conference Room, Rockingham, NC
REGULAR MEETING - VIRTUAL
Tuesday, October 6, 2020 5:30PM

The Richmond County Board of Commissioners met for a Regular Meeting on Tuesday, October 6, 2020 at 5:30 P.M. with the following present: Chairman Kenneth R. Robinette; Vice-Chairman John B. Garner; Commissioners Don M. Bryant, Jimmy L. Capps, Ben T. Moss, Jr., Tavares Bostic and Rick Watkins.

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Robinette at 5:30 P.M.

ITEM NO. 1 Invocation by Commissioner Rick Watkins

Invocation was given by Commissioner Rick Watkins

ITEM NO. 2 Approval of Agenda - Decision

By a motion of Vice Chairman John Garner, seconded by Commissioner Jimmy Capps and by unanimous vote. Motion carried

Commissioner Don Bryant voted yes; Commissioner Ben Moss voted yes; Commissioner Rick Watkins voted yes; Commissioner Tavares Bostic voted yes; Chairman Kenneth Robinette voted yes and by unanimous vote. Motion carried.

ITEM NO. 3 Open Forum for Public Comments - 5:30 - 6:00 PM

No one signed up to speak

ITEM NO. 4 Public Hearing on Richmond County's Application for Community Development Block Grant Funds - Dr. Tommy Jarrell, Director of Health and Human Services - Discussion

Chairman Robinette opened the Public Hearing at 5:32PM

Dr. Tommy Jarrell stated this was the second public hearing for this request to put in an application for the Community Development Block Grant Funds.

No emails or letters were sent in to the Clerk to read at this public hearing

Chairman Robinette closed the Public Hearing at 5:34PM

Thursday, October 8th the Board will meet to vote on this request. Emails and/or letters will be read if received by the Clerk before 5:34PM on Wednesday, October 7th.

ITEM NO. 5 Public Hearing on Proposed Text and/or Map Amendment(s) to the Richmond County Zoning Ordinance RZM 2020-3 - Tracy Parris, Planning Director - Discussion

Chairman Robinette opened the Public Hearing at 5:34PM

RZM 2020-3-

Rezoning of parcel on Marks Creek Church Road from Rural-Residential /Agricultural Residential to Heavy Industrial Tax ID# 840200970265

The following emails and/or letters were read by Tracy Parris, Planning Director and Dena R Cook, Clerk to the Board of Commissioners

W. Bryan and Elizabeth (Beth) Holzbach I

Mr. and Mrs., Holzbach submitted an email stating they are not in favor of the rezoning of the parcel

Mr. and Mrs. Lonnie Norton
473 Marks Creek Church Road
Hamlet, NC 28345

Mr. and Mrs. Norton submitted a letter stating that they are not in favor of the rezoning of the parcel

Four letters from the residents was signed by 19 individuals
Letters stated that they were not in favor of the rezoning of the parcel

Mr. Donald Chappell
120 Chappell Lane
Hamlet, NC 28345

Mr. Chappell submitted a letter stating that he is not in favor of the rezoning of the parcel

Marks Creek Presbyterian Church
Elders, Deacons and Other Members

Marks Creek Presbyterian Church submitted a letter stating that the Elders, Deacons, and other members are not in favor of the rezoning. 72 names were submitted

Shannon Chappell

Mrs. Chappell and 25 individuals submitted a letter stating that they are not in favor of the rezoning.

Martie Butler, Economic Developer/Management Analyst
County of Richmond
Submitted a letter from Richmond County Economic Development

John W. Dillard
Director of State Government Affairs
1201 Main Street, Suite 1980
Columbia, SC 29201
Submitted a letter from CSX

Chairman Robinette closed the Public Hearing at 6:15PM

Thursday, October 8th the Board will meet to vote on the rezoning request. Emails and/or letters will be read if received by the Clerk before 6:15PM on Wednesday, October 7th.

ITEM NO. 6 Request for Board Consideration of Approval of Resolution to Designate Additional Review Officer - Tracy Parris, Planning Director - Decision

By a motion of Commissioner Don Bryant, seconded by Commissioner Jimmy Capps

Vice Chairman John Garner voted yes; Commissioner Ben Moss voted yes; Commissioner Rick Watkins voted yes; Commissioner Tavares Bostic voted yes; Chairman Kenneth Robinette voted yes and by unanimous vote. Motion carried.

ITEM NO. 7 Request for Board Consideration of Approval of Appointment to the Sandhills Center Board of Directors - Bryan Land, County Manager- Decision

By a motion of Commissioner Don Bryant, seconded by Commissioner Tavares Bostic

Commissioner Jimmy Capps voted yes; Commissioner Ben Moss voted yes; Commissioner Rick Watkins voted yes; Vice Chairman John Garner voted yes; Chairman Kenneth Robinette voted yes and by unanimous vote. Motion carried.

ITEM NO. 8 Request for Board Consideration of Approval of Proclamation for Alzheimer's Awareness Month - Bryan Land, County Manager - Decision

By a motion of Commissioner Ben Moss, seconded by Commissioner Jimmy Capps

Commissioner Don Bryant voted yes; Commissioner Tavares Bostic voted yes; Commissioner Rick Watkins voted yes; Vice Chairman John Garner voted yes; Chairman Kenneth Robinette voted yes and by unanimous vote. Motion carried.

ITEM NO. 9 Monthly Report by County Manager Bryan Land

This month has been very challenging for us concerning Covid. Within the last week we have lost two long term County employees to the pandemic. Joey Keane, who was our Parks and Rec Director for 16 years. Joey still worked in a part time capacity at the park. Also Ana Ponds who worked with Social Services for 24 years. Additionally, Ms. Shirley Fuller passed away over the weekend as well. She was a Health and Human Services Advisory Board member, RCC board member and a member of Rockingham City Council. From what we have gathered Ms. Fullers passing was not Covid related. Our thoughts and prayers go out to all of their families.,

As of today our County Covid numbers are as follows, we currently have 1118 positive cases for Covid 19 . . To date we have tested 11,743 and of those 10,625 have come back negative or inconclusive. 992 individuals have recovered. We currently have 104 active cases. We have had 22 deaths.

We all must continue to not become complacent and remember to practice our 3 W's. (wear, wait 6', wash) as you are aware, Governor Cooper relaxed restrictions last Friday, entering phase 3. This allows for some outside dining and a reduced capacity level as well as bars, theaters and other restricted businesses at the 30 % capacity level. We will all be listening for guidance from Governor Cooper.

Our solid waste report is as follows: we picked up 634 bags for a total of approximately 5 tons. Additionally, 25 tires were removed; we cleaned up 25 different roadways with Richmond County Staff and DOT forces. Our Solid Waste Enforcement Officer investigated 2 illegal dump sites and issued 3 citations or notices.

I am glad to announce, we will be hosting another surplus property auction starting next Thursday, October 15th and ending on Thursday, October 22nd. Iron horse auction will be conducting the sale for us and we have 50 properties to sell.

On the economic development front, if you haven't ridden down Hwy 177 S in Hamlet lately you definitely need to, the Tarlton Boat Plant Demo project is progressing well. Myrick Construction advises they will be completed by the end of the month. Shortly after the demo portion is completed; Global plans to construct a new warehouse on the site.

The 50k building expansion at Direct Pack that Southern Builders is constructing is complete. The finished product is a great addition for Richmond County!. Final jobs numbers have not been released yet but an official press released will be released soon. Martie Butler and I have been busy lately working a few active projects hopefully some will come to fruition.

Staying on the construction topic, NCDOT has advised that the Boyd Lake Road Bridge will be repaired soon. A project date has been scheduled for October 27th and the work will be completed from November 15th thru February 15th. This is a project that has been put on the back burner due to lack of available DOT funding.

We did receive some disturbing news at the end of September, our annual valuation for Duke Energy dropped by \$64 million dollars. Our County Tax department is not involved with valuing Duke or any other public utilities in Richmond County. These numbers are gathered by the Department of Revenue and the state. We lost approximately 600k in revenue with this new value being tagged to Duke. We are disputing the value and are looking forward to their response.

Connie Kelly and our Board of Elections staff will be extremely busy over the next month. Early voting begins Thursday, October 15th the dates and times for each individual pooling location are listed on our County Board of Elections website and also on our social media outlets. To date, we have had 2,166 request for absentee ballots and 760 have been returned and accepted. I would also like to mention Connie was awarded \$82,229 in cares funding and also \$30,000 from The NC Community Foundation.

I wanted to update the board on our census figures, as of yesterday Richmond County was 70th out of 100 with completion percentages. We are currently hovering around 54%. This is a decrease of one spot compared to last month. I urge all of our citizens to please complete your census questionnaire, as it is an extremely important tool that is utilized with gauging the amount of funding we will receive in Richmond County.. Currently NC stands to lose 1.5 trillion in federal dollars based on our states census completion rates. The deadline to complete your census is being discussed on being extended to the end of the month. The original deadline was September 30th. The website is 2020census.gov or you can call 844 330 2020 to complete.

And last but not least, please mark you calendars. Our December Commissioners meeting will be moved to Tuesday, December 8th at 5:30 pm.

ITEM NO.10 Sandhills AGInnovation Center Update - Davon Goodwin, Facility Manager - Discussion

This has been an exciting and challenging year for agriculture in our region.

The SAIC has served in many roles during Covid-19. During this pandemic we realize that are community would be in need of fresh fruit and vegetables due to loss of jobs and income. We partnered with Cooperative Extension and many community partners in and around the county to help us administer the different programs.

The first program we established was Richmond Fresh. Richmond Fresh was a 13 week CSA(Community Supported Agriculture) where participant's were given 6-8 produce items, 1 dozen eggs and 2 pounds of meat. Over the 13 week program, we distributed 520 boxes to Dobbins Height, Ellerbe Grove, Mineral Springs and the Norman Community.

We were awarded a \$ 10,000 grant from Resourceful Communities to help us buy local produce for the program.

While we were distributing Richmond Fresh, we received an invitation to be apart of FarmShare CSA program, which was funded through Carolina Farm Stewardship Association. Over the 16 week program, we pack and delivered 2,410 boxes to Richmond and the surrounding counties. These boxes were given to hospitality workers and faith base organization. In total we distributed over 2,900 boxes since April. During this time we were able to buy \$45,000 of local produce for these programs. I would like to thank Paige Burns and her amazing staff for helping me with these programs. I would also like to thank our funders Gods Garden, Rafi, Resourceful Communities and CFSA.

During this Pandemic, the SAIC has served as a gathering place and partner for many other agriculture agencies and groups in the county. These groups included FSA, Sandhills Prescribe Burn Association, extension and 4-H. The SAIC is an instrumental asset we have in Richmond County. I would like to say thank you for your ongoing support and guidance on this project.

ITEM NO.11 Request for Board Consideration of Approval of Date for the Board of Equalization and Review - Vagas Jackson, Tax Administrator - Decision

By a motion of Commissioner Don Bryant, seconded by Vice-Chairman John Garner

Commissioner Rick Watkins voted yes; Commissioner Ben Moss voted yes; Commissioner Tavares Bostic voted yes; Commissioner Jimmy Capps voted yes; Chairman Kenneth Robinette voted yes and by unanimous vote. Motion carried.

ITEM NO.12 Request for Board Consideration of Approval to Auction the Surplus Properties - Vagas Jackson, Tax Administrator - Decision

By a motion of Commissioner Don Bryant, seconded by Commissioner Jimmy Capps

Vice Chairman John Garner voted yes; Commissioner Ben Moss voted yes; Commissioner Rick Watkins voted yes; Commissioner Tavares Bostic voted yes; Chairman Kenneth Robinette voted yes and by unanimous vote. Motion carried.

ITEM NO.13 Closed Session

A motion was made by Commissioner Ben Moss to go into Closed Session, seconded by Vice Chairman John Garner

Commissioner Don Bryant voted yes; Commissioner Jimmy Capps voted yes; Commissioner Rick Watkins voted yes; Commissioner Tavares Bostic voted yes; Chairman Kenneth Robinette voted yes and by unanimous vote. Motion carried.

Chairman Kenneth Robinette opened the Closed Session at 6:41PM

A motion was made by Commissioner Don Bryant to go back to Open Session, seconded by Commissioner Ben Moss

Vice Chairman John Garner voted yes; Commissioner Jimmy Capps voted yes; Commissioner Rick Watkins voted yes; Commissioner Tavares Bostic voted yes; Chairman Kenneth Robinette voted yes and by unanimous vote. Motion carried.

Chairman Kenneth Robinette ended the Closed Session at 6:53PM

ITEM NO.14 Consent Agenda - Decision

A) Approval of Draft Minutes of Regular Meeting on August 4, 2020 as Submitted by the Clerk For Review

B) Approval of Tax Releases And Tax Refunds for the Month of August, 2020

C) Approval of North Carolina Vehicle Tax System Refund Report for the Month of August 2020

D) Approval of Budget Amendment for WIC Client Services

E) Approval of Budget Amendment for COVID-19 CARES Activities

F) Approval of 2019-2020 Home and Community Care Block Grant Budget -Closeout

G) Approval of Budget Amendment for Infant Mortality Reduction

By a motion of Vice Chairman John Garner, seconded by Commissioner Tavares Bostic

Commissioner Don Bryant voted yes; Commissioner Ben Moss voted yes; Commissioner Rick Watkins voted yes; Commissioner Jimmy Capps voted yes; Chairman Kenneth Robinette voted yes and by unanimous vote. Motion carried.

ITEM NO.15 Adjournment - Decision

By a motion of Commissioner Ben Moss, seconded by Commissioner Don Bryant

Commissioner Tavares Bostic voted yes; Commissioner Rick Watkins voted yes; Commissioner Jimmy Capps voted yes; Vice Chairman John Garner voted yes; Chairman Kenneth Robinette voted yes and by unanimous vote. Motion carried.

Meeting adjourned at 6:54 P.M.

Respectfully Submitted by the Clerk

Dena R. Cook, NCCCC

Clerk to the Board

Richmond County Board of Commissioners