

**STANLY COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
FEBRUARY 19, 2015**

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT:

Janet K. Lowder, Chairman
Tony Dennis, Vice Chairman
Peter Ascitutto
Joseph Burleson
T. Scott Efird
Bill Lawhon

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT:

Gene McIntyre

STAFF PRESENT:

Andy Lucas, County Manager
Jenny Furr, County Attorney
Tyler Brummitt, Clerk

CALL TO ORDER

The Stanly County Board of Commissioners (the "Board") met in regular session on Thursday, February 16, 2015 at 7:00 p.m. in the Commissioners Meeting Room, Stanly Commons. Chairman Lowder called the meeting to order and Commissioner Efird gave the invocation and led the pledge of allegiance.

APPROVAL/ADJUSTMENTS TO THE AGENDA

With no adjustments to the agenda requested, Vice Chairman Dennis moved to approve it as presented. His motion was seconded by Commissioner Efird and the motion passed by unanimous vote.

ITEM # 1 – PROCLAMATION RECOGNIZING BETHANY WOODS NURSING & REHABILITATION CENTER, INC. ON THEIR FORTY YEAR ANNIVERSARY

EDC Director Paul Stratos provided a brief history of the Bethany Woods facility and introduced Tim Cornelison, current administrator. Mr. Cornelison took a moment to recognize several employees that were in attendance and commended them on a job well done. Commissioner Lawhon then read and presented the proclamation on behalf of the Board.

No action was required of the Board.

ITEM # 2 – RESOLUTION TO SUPPORT THE DISPLAY OF THE NATIONAL MOTTO “IN GOD WE TRUST” ON THE EXTERIOR OF THE STANLY COUNTY COURTHOUSE

Presenter: Rick Lanier, Co-Founder of the U. S. Motto Action Committee

Mr. Lanier invited the County to join other cities and counties in North Carolina by having the national motto ‘In God We Trust’ permanently displayed in a prominent location on the courthouse building exterior.

By motion, Vice Chairman Dennis moved to approve the resolution of support and was seconded by Commissioner Lawhon. Motion passed by unanimous vote.

See Exhibit A

**RESOLUTION TO SUPPORT THE DISPLAY OF THE NATIONAL MOTTO
“IN GOD WE TRUST” ON THE EXTERIOR OF THE STANLY COUNTY COURTHOUSE**

ITEM # 3 – BOARD & COMMITTEE APPOINTMENTS

Presenter: Andy Lucas, County Manager

A. Airport Authority Board

The Airport Authority Board submitted a request to have Mr. Scott Booth and Mr. Michael Harwood both reappointed to a four (4) year term to expire on March 31, 2019.

Vice Chairman Dennis moved to approve both reappointments and was seconded by Commissioner Burluson. Motion carried with a 6 – 0 vote.

B. STANLY COUNTY COMMUNITY ADVISORY BOARD

The Community Advisory Board requested that Ms. Johnnie Harris and Mr. John Bell be reappointed to serve a three (3) year term to expire on February 28, 2018.

Commissioner Lawhon moved to approve both reappointments and was seconded by Vice Chairman Dennis. The motion passed by unanimous vote.

ITEM # 4 – NCACC FEBRUARY BOARD UPDATE VIDEO

Presenter: Andy Lucas, County Manager

The video provided an overview of the recent Legislative Goals Conference held in Moore County. Seventy (70) counties were represented with more than three hundred (300) proposals submitted with forty-five (45) goals approved for fiscal year 2015-16. Of these, five (5) were selected as the top priorities by the NCACC which included:

- H-1: Support continued state funding of Medicaid and support efforts by the state to provide healthcare access for all citizens.

- PE-1: Seek legislation to restore the statutory requirement that 40% of the net lottery proceeds be allocated to counties for school capital needs and increase the annual appropriation of lottery funds until the 40% allocation is restored.
- PE-4: Seek legislation to repeal the statutory authority under N.C. G.S. 115C-431(c) that allows local school boards to file suit against a county board of commissioners over county appropriations for education.
- GG-1: Oppose any shift of state transportation responsibilities to counties.
- TF-1: Oppose unfunded mandates and shifts of state responsibilities to counties.

The video was provided for information only and required no action.

ITEM # 5 – CONSENT AGENDA

- A.** Minutes – Special and regular meetings of February 2, 2015
- B.** Finance – Request approval of the attached vehicle tax refunds
- C.** Health Dept. – Request approval of budget amendment # 2015-33

By motion, Commissioner Dennis moved to approve the above items as presented. His motion was seconded by Commissioner Ascitutto and passed by unanimous vote.

PUBLIC COMMENT

During public comment, the following individuals addressed the Board with concerns related to the School Board’s proposed plans for the coming school year.

- John Mullis of Norwood spoke against the plans noting that closing community schools would have significant impact on the county’s community-based school system and the economic future of the county. He requested the Board’s support in pressuring the School Board to delay a vote on the school consolidation until more information can be provided to the public.
- Alex Laws of Oakboro spoke against the proposed plans requesting the Board consider increasing per pupil funding for next year and address the maintenance issues with the various schools by giving \$5 million dollars in funding to the schools over the next two (2) years.
- Melvin Poole, a former School Board member, stated his concerns with closing East Albemarle, Norwood and Oakboro elementary schools noting that community schools outperform larger schools due to more parent involvement. He also stated that if closing schools is the only option, then the Board should consider increasing the property tax rate to generate additional revenue to keep them open.
- John Edwards of Oakboro stated that he would like to see alternative proposals made to keep the schools open and the cost to do so. He reiterated Mr. Poole’s comments

stating that he would be willing to pay more in property taxes if it will allow community schools to remain open and provide better educational opportunities.

- Shannon Byrd spoke against the School Board's proposed plans as well and recognized students from South Stanly High School that were in attendance.
- Brenda James-Stanback stated her concerns with the recent school report cards and the need to provide a better education for children in the community.

GENERAL COMMENTS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

Commissioner Burleson thanked everyone for coming and for providing feedback to the Board and that they continue to do so.

Commissioner Efird asked everyone to check on the elderly and pets during the extremely cold weather and to continue to remember each other in prayer.

Commissioner Ascitutto stated that in recent years, taxpayers have not supported any new taxes in the county. He noted the sales tax referendum which failed in November, a portion of which would have been used to support the schools. He also mentioned that the County has lost over \$500,000 in funding over the past few years due to the state's reduction and redirection of lottery funding that would have been used to fund capital projects for the schools.

Commissioner Lawhon echoed earlier commissioners' comments and encouraged citizens to continue to attend the meetings and have their voices heard.

Vice Chairman Dennis agreed with previous comments adding that he would like to know the cost to keep the schools open rather than have community schools closed.

Chairman Lowder acknowledged Representative Justin Burr who was in attendance and thanked those who spoke for their comments.

ADJOURN

There being no further discussion, Vice Chairman Dennis moved to adjourn the meeting and was seconded by Commissioner Efird. Motion carried with a 6 – 0 vote at 8:03 p.m.

Janet K. Lowder, Chairman

Tyler Brummitt, Clerk