



County of Dare

P.O. Box 1000 | Manteo, NC 27954

MINUTES

DARE COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS MEETING

Dare County Administration Building, Manteo, NC

5:00 p.m., August 17, 2020

Commissioners present: Chairman Robert Woodard, Sr., Vice-Chairman Wally Overman
Rob Ross, Steve House, Jim Tobin, Danny Couch, Ervin Bateman

Commissioners absent: None

Others present: County Manager/Attorney, Robert Outten
Deputy County Manager/Finance Director, David Clawson
Master Public Information Officer, Dorothy Hester
Clerk to the Board, Cheryl C. Anby

A full and complete account of the entire Board of Commissioners meeting is archived on a video that is available for viewing on the Dare County website www.darenc.com.

At 5:04 p.m. Chairman Woodard called to order the regularly scheduled meeting with appropriate prior public notice having been given. Rev. Spottswood Graves provided an invocation which was shared by Chairman Woodard. The Chairman then led the Pledge of Allegiance to the flag.

ITEM 1 – OPENING REMARKS – CHAIRMAN’S UPDATE

Following is a brief outline of the items mentioned by Chairman Woodard during his opening remarks, which can be viewed in their entirety in a video on the Dare County website:

- Rev. Tom Murphy passed away yesterday at the age of 85. He lived a truly remarkable life always serving others. He made a difference and noted “the church must make a difference where it is...and must serve it’s community not just it’s own members”. In addition to his ministry, which provided childcare for toddlers and infants for high school-age parents, he served for over twenty-five years as the pastoral representative on a Permanency Planning Team for Child Protective Services. He chaired the Board of Directors of the Outer Banks Hotline for many years. He also served the community on the Citizens Advisory Council, Co-chaired the Task Force on Higher Education and the Emergency Food and Shelter Board. He lived a remarkable life always serving others and made a difference in “a broken world”. He spoke his mind yet was always respectful and will be sorely missed.

- He provided an overview of his recent video message which included five steps to help manage stress during Covid-19 restrictions. These were: (1) take a break from the news (2) connect with others (3) exercise (4) maintain a healthy diet and (5) get enough sleep.

ITEM 2 – APPOINTMENT OF TAX ASSESSOR AND REAPPOINTMENT OF TAX COLLECTOR (Att. #1, #2 & #3)

Greta Skeen had retired as Dare County Tax Assessor last month. Hosea E. Wilson, III applied for the position and currently served as Assistant County Tax Assessor. Chairman Woodard announced the Board could not be more pleased with the expertise and experience he brings to the position.

MOTION

Vice-Chairman Overman motioned to appoint Hosea E. Wilson, III, as Tax Assessor, for a four-year term expiring July, 2024.

Commissioner Bateman seconded the motion.

VOTE: AYES unanimous

MOTION

Commissioner Bateman motioned to reappoint Becky Huff as Tax Collector for a four-year term expiring July, 2024.

Commissioner Tobin seconded the motion.

VOTE: AYES unanimous

Chairman Woodard added the County could not be more fortunate to have her talents.

Following a unanimous Board vote, oaths were administered by the Clerk to both the newly appointed Tax Assessor and reappointed Tax Collector.

County Manager Outten announced the State had appointed Jacqueline J. Tillett as Director of the Dare County Board of Elections. Chairman Woodard noted she had thirty-five years of service with the County and the County Manager voiced the County's delight in her appointment. A motion was not needed by the Board. The Clerk administered the oath of office to her as Board of Elections Director, with a four-year term expiring July, 2024.

ITEM 3 – PRESENTATION OF COUNTY SERVICE PINS

The County Manager announced the following service pin recipients, whose employment anniversaries took place in August, 2020:

1. Edward Cottrell, Deputy Sheriff Master Officer (10 yrs.)
2. Brianne Anderson, Emergency Med Tech Paramedic (10 yrs.)
3. Evelyn Berry, Social Worker III (10 yrs.)
4. Jonathan Deweese, Landfill/Transfer Supervisor (10 yrs.)
5. Ray Owens, Detention Asst. Shift Leader (15 yrs.)
6. Constance Daniels, Custodian – Health Dept. (15 yrs.)
7. Jeffrey Mitchell, Emergency Med Tech Captain (20 yrs.)
8. Elizabeth Fiedler, Library Assistant (20 yrs.)
9. Barry Peele, WTP Operator (20 yrs.)
10. Walter Duprey, Deputy Sheriff Captain (25 yrs.)
11. Katharina Bracey, Technical Services Superintendent (30 yrs.)

ITEM 4 – PUBLIC COMMENTS

At 5:43 p.m. the Manager outlined the procedure for making public comments via email to dcboc@darenc.com to the Board. No one responded to the invitation to address the Board. The County Manager closed Public Comments at 5:44 p.m.

ITEM 5 – ANNUAL SETTLEMENT

Becky Huff, Tax Collector, presented the County Settlement for the 2019 tax year. With the onset of Covid-19, the department had suspended enforced collections for approximately eight weeks. The total collection rate at June, 2020 was 99.24%. Last year's collection rate had been 99.48%. She added tax bills were now available online along with the occupancy and food and beverage monthly tax reporting. Ms. Huff also reported an electronic check option program had been initialized at a cost of only 35 cents to the taxpayer. Due to the Covid-19 pandemic and the extension of deadline, the Board was asked to approve the report, as the 2020 tax bills would not be generated until late August, 2020. These new tax bills would include a breakdown of personal property. Mrs. Huff advised that Airbnb and VRBO (rental online marketplace companies) were now paying occupancy taxes directly to Dare County. She advised the Charge to the Collector by the Board would be requested at the September 8, 2020 Board meeting on the Consent Agenda.

ITEM 6 – DOMINION ENERGY PROPOSED NEW TRANSMISSION LINE

Winnie Wiseman, External Affairs, for Dominion Energy North Carolina, along with Robert Richardson, Craig Hurd and William Barrett provided a presentation for a proposed new transmission line from Dominion's Colington Substation to the Nags Head Substation. Dominion was currently in the early stages of the feasibility of several routes for a new electric transmission line with survey work done to determine what utilities were above and underground on both sides of Route 158. Currently circuits ran parallel to the Wright Memorial Bridge. Those lines entered Kitty Hawk substation and two lines come out of Kitty Hawk substation. From the Colington Tap to the Oregon Inlet Delivery Point, there remained only one radial line of transmission with no alternative feed in the event of an outage. Research thus far projects that in 2024 the area's growth would increase substantially. The Colington area to the Oregon Inlet was expected to have an estimated growth of 30% over the next decade. That estimated growth in megawatts by 2024 indicates a second transmission line may be necessary to reduce the risk of outages. In the event one transmission line is lost from a storm event Dominion would have the ability to switch customers to the second circuit. Mr. Richardson explained it could take up to five years or more to build a transmission line from feasibility, planning to construction phase. Dominion's representatives offered patience would be required while they continued their critical evaluation needed for a potential circuit and routes. They had not selected a preferred route at this time and are expecting some reportable results in April or May of next year. When asked why areas with underground service still exhibited above-ground power poles, Mr. Richardson explained it was quite possible the existing lines belonged to Comcast, Verizon or other communication services where underground service had not been used. Mr. Richardson noted during Dominion feasibility studies NCDOT was consulted to take into consideration any current or future roadway projects. Obtaining easements for the stretch of the potential new transmission line would be an added concern. Commissioner Couch inquired as to the expense for the project and Mr. Richardson explained the cost would be distributed amongst the current 2.5 million Dominion customers, as with all other projects.

ITEM 7 – 2020 CENSUS UPDATE

Derek A. Dorazio, the regional representative for ten counties of the Albemarle Region, provided a virtual update on the status of the 2020 Census. He provided Dare County's ranking among the other counties as 96 (lowest) and noted in the 2010 census our area had a 45.6% response rate. The Census Bureau would begin follow-up response requests in person across the area after September 30, 2020 with the focus on our year-round residents. The data from the 2000 Census reflected a 37% response from Dare County. The County had passed a resolution in September 2019 and appointed a Dare County Complete Count Committee to disseminate information. He applauded the efforts in our area thus far to impress upon the public the importance of the 2020 Census. There would be an effort to make one household visit to each non-responsive residence to determine whether it was vacation home or that of a full-time resident. He commented that an expected response rate goal for all of North Carolina was 60%. Each counted North Carolinian resident could equal an approximate value of \$2,000 for yearly government funding projects, which included Medicare, Medicaid and other per capita programs for the next ten years. He explained the Count Question Resolution Program would provide all jurisdictions an opportunity to request a review and/or challenge the official final census count. Dorothy Hester provided some follow-up guidance with the report. She explained the reported current percentage response rate of 34% included homes that are known to be vacant or occupied by vacationers. Dare County has reported with a 79-80% response rate based on reported occupied homes of year-round residents. Commissioner Tobin commented there were many Hispanic residents who were wary of responding to the census. Ms. Hester added there were "trusted sources" in the tutors who work with many of the children in their homes each week and she acknowledged perhaps more could be organized in that area.

ITEM 8 – GRANT PROJECT ORDINANCE FOR CORONAVIRUS RELIEF FUND CARES ACT HAVA ELECTIONS GRANT

Board of Elections presented the Board with the initial budget for a CARES Act HAVA (Help America Vote Act) Elections Grant through the State which makes available \$76,351.00. Eligible expenditures must be incurred during March 1, 2020 through December 30, 2020.

MOTION

Commissioner House motioned to adopt the Grant Project Ordinance to establish the initial budget for a CARES Act HAVA Elections Grant.

Commissioner Tobin seconded the motion.

VOTE: AYES unanimous

ITEM 9 – 2020 ROADMAP OF NEED

Commissioner Rob Ross provided the Board with a presentation regarding a whole child needs assessment for North Carolinian youth. The Public School Forum of North Carolina's Center for Afterschool Programs provided in their annual report twenty indicators of wellness across four domains: (1) Health, (2) Youth Behavior and Safety, (3) Education and (4) Economic Development. Commissioner Ross provided details for Dare County in each of these areas and noted Dare's ranking among the 100 state counties. He applauded the various agencies, educators, community organizations, charities, religious and faith-based organizations, as well as parents who had garnered Dare's current rankings.

ITEM 10 – RESOLUTION RECOGNIZING THE 100TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE RATIFICATION OF THE 19TH AMENDMENT (Att. #4)

Chairman introduced a resolution to the Board to commemorate the 100th anniversary of the ratification of the 19th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, which granted women the right to vote on August 18, 1920.

MOTION:

Vice-Chairman Overman motioned to adopt the resolution to recognize the 100th anniversary of the ratification of the 19th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution.

Commissioner Bateman seconded the motion

VOTE: AYES unanimous.

ITEM 11 – CONSENT AGENDA

The Manager announced the items as they were visually displayed in the meeting room.

MOTION

Commissioner Tobin motioned to approve the Consent Agenda:

- 1) Approval of Minutes (07.20.20) **(Att. #5)**
- 2) Retirement of Deputy Sheriff K9 Bady
- 3) Southern Albemarle Association, Annual Meeting Invitation List
- 4) Disaster Debris Monitoring – Kill Devil Hills
- 5) Disaster Debris Monitoring – Southern Shores
- 6) Disaster Debris Monitoring – Kitty Hawk
- 7) Disaster Debris Monitoring – Manteo
- 8) Disaster Debris Monitoring – Duck
- 9) Dare County Comprehensive Disaster Recovery Management Services Contract **
- 10) MOU Between Dare County and Kill Devil Hills – Relocation of the Public Water Supply Emergency Interconnection
- 11) Interlocal Agreements with Municipalities per the Dare County Plan for the NC Covid-19 Relief Fund
- 12) Tax Collector's Report
- 13) Amendment to Architectural Contract for Animal Shelter Construction
- 14) Dare County Department of Health and Human Services Public Health Division Covid-19 Funding
- 15) GEM – Gentle Expert Memorycare

Commissioners Ross and House seconded the motion.

VOTE: AYES unanimous

ITEM 12 – BOARD APPOINTMENTS

1) Dare County Center Advisory Board

Vice-Chairman Overman motioned to reappoint Rob Ross, Emily Hall, Mitchell Bateman and Samantha Brown to another term and appointed Pamela Zafra to fill the vacancy of John D. Sibunka.

Commissioner House seconded the motion.

VOTE: AYES unanimous

2) Health and Human Services Board

Commissioner Bateman motioned to reappoint Dr. Mark Grossman, Wally Overman and Alexis Hodges to another term and to appoint Janine Sewell to fill vacancy of Frank Hester.

Commissioner Couch seconded the motion.

VOTE: AYES unanimous

3) Upcoming Board Appointments

The upcoming Board appointments for September, October and November, 2020 were announced.

ITEM 13 – COMMISSIONERS’ BUSINESS & MANAGER’S/ATTORNEY’S BUSINESS

Commissioners and the County Manager frequently make extensive remarks, which can be viewed in their entirety in a video on the Dare County website. Following is a brief summary outline of the items mentioned by Commissioners during this segment:

Commissioner Tobin

- He met with ten fishermen from Dare along with Donald Trump Jr. recently and discussed ocean accessibility. Mr. Trump agreed to coordinate a meeting with Mark Meadows, White House Chief of Staff, for further discussion. It is hoped this will aid in getting Hatteras Inlet identified as a federal channel along with other dredging issues.
- He provided a dredge update and noted a new Coast Guard requirement had been discovered which necessitated another auxiliary generator on the dredge. The contract bid is being readjusted by Conrad with a response expected this week.
- Requested Sheriff Jeff Abrose be remembered in prayer, as he was currently in Norfolk Hospital’s ICU with some heart issues.

Commissioner Ross

- He announced the Audit Committee would be meeting in October 5, 2020. An updated report to the Board would be provided after that meeting.
- Extended condolences to the loss of a long-time Nags Head resident, Ward Moore, who passed over the weekend.
- He shared his letter sent earlier to The Virginian-Pilot with the Board, entitled “Our Police are Essential to a Civilized Society”. He added nationally there are leaders who agree with a defunding or removal of police programs. The actions by elected officials against police will have very severe long term effects. His position was “no civilized society will survive without professional law enforcement” with an unqualified position of support to the dedicated men and women in our police force.

Commissioner House

- He reported Senator Tillis had been instrumental in blocking Senate Bill No. 908, “Fluke Fairness Act” a quota relocation of summer flounder from passing. The bill would have reduced a large quota of flounder from North Carolina and move it to the northern state.
- He reminded everyone to visit the SPCA to consider adopting or fostering a pet, which would certainly ease some stress many are now experiencing.
- Today in history: On August 17, 1565, the first group of colonist under Ralph Lane landed in the new world to create the Roanoke Colony on Roanoke Island. The second colony, led by John White landed in 1587 and became known as the Lost Colony.

Vice-Chairman Overman

- He offered his congratulations to the eleven service pin recipients, whose cumulative employment totaled 185 years of service to the County. He noted the County was truly blessed to have each of them.

Commissioner Bateman

- He thanked Chairman Woodard for the review on relieving stress during Covid-19. He offered that pressures was certainly being felt by many of his employees, who were now becoming teachers to their children, all while balancing their work responsibilities, along with childcare decisions and exorbitant expenses.

Commissioner Couch

- He would be attending the Children Youth Partnership meeting in September and felt the very talented group served the community well. He added hearing from the Children Youth Partnership about the current “state of our children” was a timely topic.
- He noted Mary Anne Wetzel, a skilled education professional, had passed last week and her expert handling of the schools’ social dynamics would be sorely missed.
- He remembered Rev. Jeromie Woolard, who had begun a church ministry twenty years ago on Hatteras Island, had relocated to New Smyrna Beach, Florida, and recently died.

Chairman Woodard

- Explained there was a vacancy on the Jennette’s Pier Advisory Committee. One Board appointee, Mr. Tauber currently served on the committee; however, there remains a vacancy to be filled with a Board appointment.

MOTION

Chairman Woodard motioned to appoint Commissioner Steve House to serve on the Jennette’s Pier Advisory Committee.

Commissioner Tobin seconded the motion.

VOTE: AYES unanimous

- He attended Superintendent Farley’s department head meeting today and gave an overview of the many ways teachers and school staffs were slated to help both parents and students adjust to the new online teaching practices, which include after-hour instruction.

MANAGER’S/ATTORNEY’S BUSINESS

County Manager recognized Darren Hager, Paramedic with Dare County Emergency Medical Services. He had received the EMT of the Year award from the VFW (Veterans of Foreign Wars). Darren has been employed with Dare County for two years and “has excelled...with excellent patient care” according to Chief Collins.

The County Manager advised he had continued follow-up communication with Sarah O’Doio from UNC DFI regarding workforce housing. Though their staff was still prohibited travel due to Covid-19, the group continued to seek suitable properties, which had been challenging. They were engaged with the local Chamber of Commerce, and as suggested earlier, they had also included the parcel search to areas in Currituck County. There was a survey that would be launched to the business community after Labor Day, as an additional research tool, with an expected update from UNC Development Finance Initiative in September.

Finance Director David Clawson:

Advised there would be contract amendments for Barnhill Construction for the COA project demolition at the next Board agenda.

Dorothy Hester:

This afternoon the newsletters for the three divisions of Parks and Recreation were released with some program offerings for safe youth activities, which had been coordinated with Health & Human Services. Noting the many planned events for the County's 150th anniversary had been cancelled due to Covid concerns, her department would revisit the possibility of some alternative plans to commemorate the event.

ITEM 14 – CLOSED SESSION

The County Manager advised the Board the scheduled Closed Session would not be needed at this time.

At the conclusion of the meeting, Chairman Woodard asked for a motion to adjourn.

MOTION

Commissioner Tobin motioned to adjourn the meeting.

Commissioner House seconded the motion.

VOTE: AYES unanimous

At 8:08 p.m., the Board of Commissioners adjourned until 9:00 a.m., September 8, 2020.



Respectfully submitted,

By: *Cheryl C. Anby*
Cheryl C. Anby, Clerk to the Board

APPROVED: By: *Robert Woodard, Sr.*
Robert Woodard, Sr., Chairman
Dare County Board of Commissioners

Note: Copies of attachments (Att.), ordinances, resolutions, contracts, presentations, and supporting material considered by the Board of Commissioners at this meeting are on file in the office of the Clerk to the Board.