



County of Dare

P.O. Box 1000 | Manteo, NC 27954

MINUTES

DARE COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS MEETING

Dare County Administration Building, Manteo, NC

9:00 a.m., January 4, 2021

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

Commissioners absent: Jim Tobin Others absent: Dave Clawson, Finance Director

Also present: County Manager/Attorney, Robert L. Outten
Master Public Information Officer, Dorothy Hester
Clerk to the Board, Cheryl C. Anby

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

At 9:03 a.m. Chairman Woodard called to order the regularly scheduled meeting with appropriate prior public notice having been given. The prayer offered by Rev. Thomas Wilson was shared by the Chairman and then he led the Pledge of Allegiance to the flag.

ITEM 1 – OPENING REMARKS – CHAIRMAN’S UPDATE

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

- Chairman Woodard celebrated the many life achievements of former Senator Marc Basnight, who had passed away one week ago. The Outer Banks Democrat had served a record eighteen years as Senate Leader and a total of twenty-six years. With a reputation for ferociousness in defending his causes, he was the longest serving head of a legislative body in North Carolina history. He loved his constituents and was always approachable. He had once stated he “never wanted to be a leader” and challenged people to think big. In a statewide referendum, he passed a \$3.1 Billion higher education package in 2000. He had entered politics because of isolation and wanted to change that for the Outer Banks. He specialized in helping the “little man” and people without political connections, whose needs he believed were ignored in Raleigh. The people of Dare County would always remember Marc Basnight as a highly respected and a true native son of Dare.

ITEM 2 – PUBLIC COMMENTS

At 9:20 a.m. the Manager opened the floor for public comments via email to dcboc@darenc.com. The Board received twenty-six email comments which concerned vandalism in several Avon hunting blinds. The County Manager closed Public Comments at 9:22 a.m.

ITEM 3 – PRESENTATION OF COUNTY SERVICE PINS- January 2021

Service pins were awarded to Phillip Merrill (10 year), Paula Rodriguez (10 year), Crystal Ambrose (15 year) and Jessica Davenport (15 year). The County Manager presented the segment while a photograph of each employee was displayed.

Note: Agenda Items 4 and 5 were quasi-judicial proceedings. Before these items were considered by the Board, each applicant, along with the Planning Director and any others who might offer testimony, were duly sworn by the Clerk to the Board.

ITEM 4 – OUTER BANKS DARE CHALLENGE GROUP DEVELOPMENT CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT

Donna Creef, Planning Director, explained the Outer Banks Dare Challenge building was proposed to be incorporated into the project with four new structures which would include a multi-purpose building, two dormitories that could house a total of thirty-two residents and another structure for staff. Parking improvements would also be made for the multipurpose facility. Since the buildings would be built in phases, based upon funding, the approval of the conditional use permit would be five years.

The County Manager asked Doug Henriott and David Deel, on behalf of Outer Banks Dare Challenge, if they agreed to the admission into evidence of the material submitted by the Planning Director, and the presentation of the file in the Planning Department, the facts presented by the Planner, and the terms and conditions outlined in the CUP. Mr. Henriott indicated his agreement.

MOTION

Vice Chairman Overman and Commissioner Bateman motioned to approve the site plan and draft conditional use permit for the Outer Banks Dare Challenge Group as recommended by the Planning Board.

Commissioner House seconded the motion.

VOTE: AYES unanimous

ITEM 5 – RODANTHE SUNSET RESORT – CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT

Donna Creef presented this item and gave an overview of the submitted revised site plan and conditional use permit amendment for the property of Jeff Fabricant and John Harris, known as the Rodanthe Sunset Resort located at 24280 NC 12. The County had approved a conditional use permit in 2008 for a project on the parcel, which had expired. The revised conditional use request would eliminate two commercial structures and transition to all residential structures. There would still be eight multi-family units in one structure. The two single-family structures would have ten bedrooms each with a gross floor area of 8,924 square feet now being proposed.

Chairman Woodard advised he needed to recuse himself from voting on this item, as the applicants were his clients.

Commissioner Couch motioned to recuse Chairman Woodard.

Commissioner House seconded the motion.

VOTE: AYES unanimous

After voting on the recusal motion, Chairman Woodard exited the room and did not reenter until the agenda item was completed. Vice-Chairman Overman led the Board. The Board had no additional questions for the Director or Mike Robinson, the project engineer and representative for the applicants.

Mr. Outten asked Mr. Robinson, on behalf of the applicants, if he agreed to the admission into evidence of the material submitted by the Planning Director, which was on file in the Planning Department, the facts presented by the Planner and the terms and conditions outlined in the CUP. Mr. Robinson, on behalf of the applicants, indicated his agreement.

MOTION

Commissioner Couch motioned to approve the site plan and draft conditional use permit for the Rodanthe Sunset Resort as recommended by the Planning Board.

Commissioner House seconded the motion.

VOTE: AYES unanimous

ITEM 6 – AMENDMENT TO THE CAPITAL PROJECT ORDINANCE FOR DHHS AND ANIMAL SHELTER PROJECTS (Att. #1)

Mr. Outten presented a summary of the change orders for both the Animal Shelter and Department of Health and Human Services projects. He explained, as authorized, he had already executed all change orders less than \$25,000.

MOTION

Commissioner House motioned to adopt the amendment to the Capital Project Ordinance and authorize the County Manager to execute Change Order #PC06 to the AR Chesson Construction contract for the DHHS project.

Commissioner Bateman seconded the motion.

VOTE: AYES unanimous

ITEM 7 – THE COLLEGE OF THE ALBEMARLE LEASE WITH COUNTY OF DARE

The County Manager introduced this item and gave an overview of the thirty-year lease to the Board. This was one of two leases to be approved. The presented lease was for the new building and the other would be on the Twiford location. The County Manager advised in his review of the lease the term was not clearly noted as thirty years and he would have the term clarified before having it signed. He also explained the lease would not begin until the issuance of the certificate of occupancy for the new campus.

MOTION

Vice-Chairman Overman motioned to approve and execute the lease with The College of the Albemarle with the lease term clarified.

Commissioner House seconded the motion.

VOTE: AYES unanimous

ITEM 8 – EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION AND CHILDCARE ASSISTANCE GRANT (Att. #2)

County Manager explained he had been meeting with Chuck Lycett, Commissioners Overman, Ross, Couch and members of the Children & Youth Partnership for several months to discuss the growing problems of daycare. Some issues included the higher demand for daycare than availability, the impact on the various centers due to COVID and whether some facilities could remain open due to vacancies post COVID. Chuck Lycett presented additional

overview details to the Board. The proposal would provide a grant from Dare County to licensed childcare facilities and homes which experienced vacancies due to COVID or had to close due to an outbreak. The budgeted amount would be \$350,000 and the suggested guidelines for eligibility would be: \$400 per vacancy for a maximum of \$10,000 per month for facilities; \$100 per vacancy for a maximum of \$600 per month for homes and a one-time grant for closures due to a COVID outbreak with a maximum of \$5,000 for facilities and \$600 for homes. The monthly grants would be overseen by the DHHS and available for six months or until funds were exhausted. Commissioner Ross concurred in discussion that the assessment of costs and exposure was accurate and the program would be able to assist the facilities through the end of June, with a final payment in July. The Board discussed the proposal and agreed they could consider an extension of the program after July 2021, dependent upon the pandemic and how childcare centers fared in the coming months.

MOTION

Commissioner House motioned to approve the \$350,000.00 proposed grant for distribution to childcare facilities and homes per the provided guidelines.

Commissioners Ross and Bateman seconded the motion.

VOTE: AYES unanimous

Commissioner Ross felt the need was urgent and he suggested flexibility with the first month of reporting in order to process some immediate grant relief to the facilities. After further Board discussion, it was the consensus to include the retroactive vacancy reporting beginning December 1, 2020 to the grant.

AMENDED MOTION

Commissioner House motioned to amend the motion to approve the proposed grant and begin the reporting process with December, 2020 vacancies for childcare licensed providers.

Commissioner Bateman seconded the motion.

VOTE: AYES unanimous

ITEM 9 – CONSENT AGENDA

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

MOTION

Commissioner House motioned to approve the Consent Agenda:

- 1) Approval of Minutes (12.21.20) **(Att. #3)**
- 2) Grants & Waterways – Financial Assistance Award – Oregon Inlet Dredging
- 3) Transportation – NC Association of County Commissioners – Wheelchair Lift Grant

Commissioner Couch seconded the motion.

VOTE: AYES unanimous

ITEM 10 – BOARD APPOINTMENTS

- 1) Tourism Board – Outer Banks Chamber of Commerce

Commissioner Bateman motioned to appoint Bambos Charalambous for the Chamber's seat on the Tourism Board.

Vice-Chairman Overman seconded the motion.

VOTE: AYES unanimous

- 2) Upcoming Board Appointments

The upcoming Board appointments for February, March and April 2021 were announced.

ITEM 11 – COMMISSIONERS’ BUSINESS & MANAGER’S/ATTORNEY’S BUSINESS

Commissioners and the County Manager frequently make extensive remarks, which can be viewed in their entirety on the Dare County website. Following is a brief summary outline of their comments:

Commissioner Couch

- He reported Hatteras Island was busy with many traditional dining places keeping open. The real estate market may have reached a plateau but was still steady.

Commissioner Bateman

- Reminded everyone to continue wearing masks when social distancing was not possible.
- He thanked Chairman Woodard for his reflections on the life of Marc Basnight and shared one of his own stories about him.

Commissioner Overman

- Congratulated January’s service pin recipients and thanked them for their collective fifty years of service.
- He noted the word “champion” had been used in many remembrances of the life of Senator Marc Basnight and was hopeful another like him would someday serve Eastern North Carolina.

Commissioner House

- He offered his condolences to the Basnight family and remarked everyone who had a relationship with him was always made to feel their concerns mattered.
- Today in history was the birthday of Jane Wyman, actress and first wife of Ronald Regan. Their daughter, Maureen, was born January 4, 1941.

Commissioner Ross

- Echoed the reflection of contributions, humility and statesmanship of Sen. Marc Basnight.
- Reported the new Animal Shelter Project would be turned over to the County in 90 days.
- Advised everyone to visit the NCDHHS site and review the “You have a Spot Take Your Shot”, which identifies the sequence of when residents could register for the COVID vaccinations.
- He reported Gail and Angelo Sonnesso, who worked tirelessly with those who suffered with dementia-related illness through GEM Adult Day Services, had been nominated for the Governor’s Volunteer Service Awards.

MANAGER’S/ATTORNEY’S BUSINESS

County Manager Outten added his condolences to the Basnight family and shared a memory.

Mr. Outten explained the federal mandate for COVID leave expired on December 31, 2020 without extension. In an effort to continue to offer Dare County employees this leave, he suggested extending the leave policies and explained there would be no budget implications for this action. He also noted the leave could only be granted to an employee once.

MOTION

Vice-Chairman Overman motioned to extend the COVID leave policy for County employees.

Commissioner House seconded the motion

VOTE: AYES unanimous

Chairman Woodard gave a reminder he would be presenting the State of the County address on January 20, 2021 at 2:00 p.m. in the Board Chamber. The presentation would be made available online, as gathering restrictions prevented the typical public venue.

Dorothy Hester added there would be a method for Q and A after the presentation.

Commissioner House mentioned Stephen Murphy, Director of Division of Marine Fisheries, had retired and Secretary of N.C. Dept. of Environmental Quality, Michael Regan, had been chosen by President-Elect Biden to head up the Environmental Protection Agency. He would keep the Board abreast of who would be filling these two major vacancies.

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

MOTION

Commissioner House motioned to adjourn the meeting.

Commissioner Bateman seconded the motion.

VOTE: AYES unanimous

At 10:24 a.m., the Board of Commissioners adjourned until 5:00 p.m., January 19, 2021.



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.