



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., April 7, 2021

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

Commissioners absent: Rob Ross (excused absence)

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 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 9:06 a.m. Chairman Woodard called to order the regularly scheduled meeting with appropriate prior public notice having been given. He invited Rev. Spottswood Graves to share a prayer and 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:

- Board held a long retreat in March to provide the County Manager and Finance Director with direction for the coming year’s budget.
- The SPCA ribbon cutting was held March 31st with a tour of the new facility. He thanked Commissioner Ross, for spearheading this project, along with his fellow Commissioners.
- That same day a meeting with the 5 on 5 Committee meeting was held where they discussed with the Board of Education moving forward with their budget.
- In light of the recent hate crimes and violence against all nationalities across the country, he stated the Dare County Board stands for inclusion and kindness amongst all its citizens and would not tolerate cruel behavior and violence against any citizen.
- Thanked both the Heron Pond Montessori and The All Saints Schools who had provided a wonderful banner of thanks for the Dare County COVID grant program for childcare providers.
- Carl Classen of First Flight Rotary Club brought a resolution entitled “Thanks, Outer Banks!” to thank everyone for their courage and help during the pandemic and declaring “Thanks Outer Banks” as a week of gratitude (May 15, 2021) for consideration. **(Att. #1.0)**

MOTION

Commissioner House motioned to adopt the resolution declaring May 9-15, 2021 as "Thanks, Outer Banks!" a Week of Gratitude.

Commissioner Bateman seconded the motion

VOTE: unanimous

- Chairman showed a video which showcased the Dare County COVID childcare grant which proactively aided in the continuation of the many daycare centers in the area.

ITEM 2 – PUBLIC COMMENTS

At 9:29 a.m. the Manager outlined the procedure for making public comments via email or pre-registration to the link made available through updated notice. A summary of all citizen remarks, which can be viewed in their entirety in a video on the County website follows:

1. Spottswood Graves noted April 14, 2021 would mark 156 years since the assassination of Abraham Lincoln. He shared portions of President Lincoln's second inaugural address given in 1865 to heal the nation weeks before the Civil War ended. He stated in part, "both read the same Bible and pray(ed) to the same God.." "The Almighty has His own purposes"... "With malice toward none with charity for all... as God gives us to see the right let us strive on to finish the work we are in to bind up the nation's wounds..."
2. Ann Maratellos stated she had been a registered nurse for 25 years and was concerned about the vulnerable that have need of hospice care. She wants the care to remain local and felt it was made difficult for the community to view the proposals. She stated the County sought attractive investment returns from BrightSpring Health, who were driven for profit and a return for their investors. She was also concerned about job losses.
3. Alexy Maratellos spoke as a social worker caring for low-income adults and stated she believed in the benefits of caring for those at home. Compassionate in-home care should not be changed with the ability to pay or whether there was insurance available. She stated BrightSpring is a for-profit company and she preferred the proposal from Chesapeake Regional.
4. Danielle Stein who spoke with a virtual connection. He stated BrightSpring was for profit over people and was of the opinion the County was not concerned about the care of its residents and were willing to cut corners to make money. She stated currently home health nursing was \$129 per day and would rise to \$180 per day with BrightSpring.

The County Manager closed Public Comments at 9:48 a.m.

ITEM 3 – PRESENTATION OF COUNTY SERVICE PINS – APRIL

The following employees were recognized for their continued service to the County: Laura Guyer 20-year pin, Margaret Dennis 25-year pin, and Charlotte Midgett-Winstead with a 25-year pin. Mr. Outten thanked them for their continued service to the community.

ITEM 4 – ECONOMIC IMPROVEMENT COUNCIL COMMUNITY ACTION AGENCY

Dr. Landon B. Mason, Sr. as the Executive Director of EIC Community Action Agency thanked the Board and Commissioners for the opportunity to share the mission of the EIC to serve the Dare County economically disenfranchised. There were estimated 8.24 percent in poverty or below poverty guidelines. The EIC presented five programs in Dare: 1) Head Start with 37 children, 2) Early Head Start with 8 children, 3) Section 8 with 39 customers in 2019-20, 4) CSBG [Community Service Block Grant] served 6 Dare citizens with self-sufficiency services, and 5) the Weatherization program had served three. The total revenues for these services totaled \$699,781.97.

He announced the “Pop Up Truck” event in Perquimans County set for May 25, 2021. Participates would be able to drive by and have their trucks filled with water, food bank offerings, household product and be eligible to receive a COVID vaccine. This event was sponsored by the North Carolina Community Action Assoc.

ITEM 5 – DARE COUNTY HOME HEALTH AND DARE HOSPICE (Att. #1.1)

The County Manager explained the County had received proposals to purchase the assets of Dare Home Health and Dare Hospice. He gave a brief history of how the county had stepped in many years ago to provide the care because there was no other service available. The program operated with a large deficient in most years, a high staff turnover rate and difficulties in recruiting. An attorney and consultant had been brought in who specialize in this area to figure out what a sale would mean. Mr. Outten stated first and foremost the county wanted an agency to provide services throughout the County with sensitivity to the impact on our current employees. Twelve entities had shown an interest. Four proposals were submitted from Chesapeake Regional, MSA, HealthView and BrightSpring. He asked the Board to review the matrix provided in order to compare the initial criteria provided by each proposal and noted for the most part they all offered the same thing. BrightSpring was the highest offer but all the proposals met the initial criteria expectations. In order to know if a company was right to take care of the service area with a commitment to employees, more information would be needed. The Letter of Intent would allow for a more detailed exchange of information and due diligence by both parties. If the information was unfavorable, there was no requirement to sell the home health hospice service to them. The County would have an opportunity to vet any issues and have a public hearing. If the process was slower than anticipated, the April 19th public hearing would be rescheduled. Mr. Outten stated the County cared about the employees and the first priority was the service to our community to include Medicare and charity care. Vice-Chairman Overman asked how many counties had gone to a privatized system. Mr. Outten explained there were only five or six counties that had not privatized to include Dare. BrightSpring had acquired a number of the agencies owned by hospitals in North Carolina and the consultants reported no issues and each had smooth transitions. All four proposals would accept Medicaid, retain the current staff and provide charity care. Employees would be tenured for benefits subject to their hiring practice guidelines. Dr. Davies stated one reason to move forward was it had been difficult to hire adequate staff in the past years. The current staff does an incredible job she stated but there are problems keeping nursing staff. In the past two years it had been necessary to deny additional patients care due to staffing challenges. Recently LPNs were hired but they could not provide the same scope of service as a RN. Commissioner Bateman thanked everyone for their comments but assured the welfare of the patients and the treatment of employees

was paramount. Commissioner Tobin reiterated the LOI was non-binding and would provide an opportunity for negotiations to begin with a company and to set forth our needs and demands. Commissioner House stated with his thirty-five years of service in EMS he took offense to anyone who stated he did not care about the community. He added the Board wanted to make sure both patients and current staff were treated well no matter which company may be chosen. Commissioner Couch commented the status quo count not continue, as it was not sustainable. Chairman Woodard stated if we were not able to serve everyone with a need in this area then the Board was not doing their part.

MOTION

Vice-Chairman Overman moved to enter into a Letter of Intent with BrightSpring and to set a Public Hearing for April 19, 2021, with the ability for staff to reschedule the hearing if it were found necessary in order to exchange adequate information.

Commissioner Tobin seconded the motion.

VOTE: AYES unanimous

ITEM 6 – AVON BEACH NOURISHMENT – SERVICE DISTRICT (Att. #2)

Mr. Outten advised the statistical information provided to them in this meeting was required for their review and consideration, which included population breakdown, property values and tax rates throughout the county. He explained there were five items for consideration from the information provided today and in other meetings. The Board must find a need for the project; determine it would be impossible or impracticable to provide without the establishment of a service district; ascertain whether the project was economically feasible, access the demand on those upon whom the tax would be levied and any other information which would have relevance. He summarized the area weather events had closed the roads, caused erosion and disrupted service to Avon's residents and visitors which posed an immediate threat to the infrastructure. He reviewed that seventy percent of the funding for the Avon project would come from the beach nourishment fund and the remaining thirty would originate from the tax service district. The demand for the project to move forward was evident from public comment, emails and phone calls after multiple meetings. The special meeting held on February 24, 2021 received good participation and responses, with most understanding the need even though they may disagree with the institution of a tax district.

Mr. Outten explained to move forward after this meeting a report would be prepared which would be open for public inspection. There would be a public hearing conducted after a mailing to all Avon property owners with a map outlining the districts. Afterward, at a future board meeting the service district could be adopted and the tax rate for the current year would be established.

MOTION

Commissioner Tobin motioned to move forward with establishing a tax service district for the properties in the Avon project area based upon the information and evidence by the Board:

A) There is a need for providing one or more of the services in the district for beach nourishment; B) It is impossible or impracticable to provide those services on a countywide basis; C) It is economically feasible to provide the proposed services in the district without unreasonable or burdensome annual tax levies and D) There is a demonstrable demand for the proposed services by the persons residing in the district.

Vice-Chairman Overman and Commissioner Couch seconded the motion.

VOTE: AYES unanimous

ITEM 7 – PROCLAMATION – “WEEK OF THE YOUNG CHILD”

A short video was presented with childhood program staff reading the proposed proclamation. As the Board had recently provided funding to assist in sustaining the area’s childcare centers through the economic hardships brought about by the pandemic, the Children & Youth Partnership for Dare County also presented a letter of appreciation.

MOTION

Commissioner Couch motioned to approve the “Week of the Young Child” proclamation. Vice-Chairman Overman and Commissioner Bateman seconded the motion.

VOTE: AYES unanimous

ITEM 8 – PROCLAMATION – CHILD ABUSE PREVENTION MONTH, APRIL 2021

A proclamation to recognize April 2021 as Child Abuse Prevention Month was presented by Children & Youth Partnership for Dare County.

MOTION

Commissioner House motioned to approve the proclamation for Child Abuse Prevention Month.

Commissioner Bateman seconded the motion.

VOTE: AYES unanimous

ITEM 9 – ROAD REQUEST – WIND OVER WAVES, PHASE 1 AND 2, SALVO

The homeowners’ association for Wind Over Waves subdivision presented the Board with a petition to have the roads known as Otter Way, N. Sand Dollar and Turtle Court added to the North Carolina Department of Transportation secondary road maintenance system.

MOTION

Vice-Chairman Overman motioned to approve the petition and adopt the resolution.

Commissioner Bateman seconded the motion.

VOTE: AYES unanimous

It was the consensus of the Board to have future road maintenance petitions placed on the Consent Agenda.

ITEM 10 – CONSENT AGENDA

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

MOTION

Commissioner House motioned to approve the Consent Agenda:

- 1) Approval of Minutes (03.15.21) **(Att. #3)**
- 2) Amendment to Grant Project Ordinance for Coronavirus Relief Fund
- 3) Juvenile Crime Prevention Council – Dare County Funding Plan Fiscal Year 2021-22
- 4) Transportation Program – Additional Grant Award/Change Order from NCDOT CARES Act Round 3
- 5) Dare County Tourism Board Request Consent Expenditure from Short Term Restricted Fund Line Item 5160

Commissioner Tobin seconded the motion.

VOTE: AYES unanimous

ITEM 11 – BOARD APPOINTMENTS

1) Juvenile Crime Prevention Council

Commissioner House motioned to appoint Jamie Koch to complete the term of Todd Heineche.

Commissioner Tobin seconded the motion.

VOTE: AYES unanimous

2) Upcoming Board Appointments

The upcoming Board appointments for May, June and July, 2021 were announced.

ITEM 12 – 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:

Commissioner House

- There had been many bills and actions in Raleigh recently and a few affect the fishing industry such as HB181, Senate Bill 279 and Senate Bill 317.
- Cobia fishing had opened up with some changed fishing regulations.
- For “day in history” highlights: He noted there was no consensus for the exact day of the crucifixion but it was believed to be on a Friday with scholars providing estimates of 30-33 A.D. The birth of the internet was April 7, 1969.
- Provided a Pet of the Week video which featured a 5-year old tripod dog named Warren.

Vice-Chairman Overman

- He thanked the service pin recipients representing 70 years of service.

Commissioner Bateman

- Recovery Court continued with eighteen participants with good success stories.
- Shot out to The Coastal Federation – did the
- Remembered Bill Walker, who had passed away, and was always an encouragement to others, especially children.
- He noted last year it unclear how businesses would fair with shutdowns and this year so far there was plenty of business with a large shortage of staff.
- He commended the Dare EMS for running a successful Dare to Scare race virtually.

Commissioner Couch

- Remembered Bill Walker as a great guy and a true public servant.
- He also recognized the county employees who had received service pins.
- The OBX Safe Spot program had been cancelled. He saluted the Health and Human Services Department for what was presented as an upbeat and good natured venture.
- He shared memories of Libby Midgett in Hatteras who had recently passed away.

Commissioner Tobin

- A Greensboro couple he knew; who had difficulty obtaining their COVID vaccines, received their shots in Dare and praised the efficient government operation here.
- Reported they had begun to weld frame pieces for the new dredge.
- A friend of his with COVID was now off a ventilator and in recovery.

MANAGER’S/ATTORNEY’S BUSINESS

County Manager Outten shared fond memories of Bill Walker who had helped many a Dare County child play baseball and said he would be sorely missed.

A small stipend had been approved for the Board of Elections a year ago. The application of a county policy required the attendance of meetings to receive the stipend. The Board of Elections had many meetings, to include their regular meetings, the stipend was small and he suggested the policy be changed for the monthly stipend to be paid every month.

MOTION

Commissioner Bateman motioned to allow the stipend to be paid as suggested by the County Manager.

Commissioners Tobin and House seconded the motion.

VOTE: AYES unanimous

Mr. Outten mentioned the County’s health insurance plan was doing well and would realize no increases this year during open enrollment.

Mr. Clawson advised there should be some resolution on the design of the Professional Arts building soon and the COA project was on schedule.

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

MOTION

Commissioner House motioned to adjourn the meeting.

Commissioner Tobin seconded the motion.

VOTE: AYES unanimous

At 11:24 a.m., the Board of Commissioners adjourned until 5:00 p.m., April 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. Public comment speakers’ positions have been summarized. Attempts have been made to accurately reflect the spelling of each name as spoken at the podium or based on the legibility of the sign-in sheet.