

PLANNING BOARD PRESENT: Antoine (A.J.) Moore, Chai Lewis Smith, Vice Chair
 Teressa Blanchard

PLANNING BOARD ABSENT: A.O. Roberts John Skinner

OTHERS PRESENT: Frank Heath, County Manager/Deputy Clerk to the Board
 Rhonda Repanshek, Planner
 Dale Holland, Insight Planning & Development
 Cindy Anderson, Insight Planning & Development

Chairman Nelson called the meeting to order. Commissioner Jones gave the invocation and the Chairman led the Pledge of Allegiance.

The Boards heard the proposed changes and discussed how the NC General Statutes Chapter 160-D would affect our Manufactured Home Park Ordinance, Subdivision Regulations, and Zoning Ordinance.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further comments or business to discuss, the Joint Work Session was adjourned.

Wallace E. Nelson, Chairman

Deputy Clerk to the Board

WORK SESSION

July 19, 2021
7:00 p.m.

The Perquimans County Board of Commissioners Work Session on July 19, 2021 was cancelled.

REGULAR MEETING

August 2, 2021
7:00 p.m.

The Perquimans County Board of Commissioners met in a regular meeting on Monday, August 2, 2021 at 7:00 p.m. in the Meeting Room of the Perquimans County Library located at 514 S. Church Street, Hertford, NC 27944.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Wallace E. Nelson, Chairman Joseph W. Hoffler
 T. Kyle Jones Alan Lennon
 Charles Woodard

MEMBERS ABSENT: Fondella A. Leigh, Vice Chair

OTHERS PRESENT: Frank Heath, County Manager Mary Hunnicutt, Clerk to the Board
 Hackney High, County Attorney

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Nelson. Commissioner Woodard gave the invocation and the Chairman led the Pledge of Allegiance.

AGENDA

Chairman Nelson stated that a copy of the amended Agenda was at their seats tonight. Joseph W. Hoffler made a motion to approve the Agenda, as amended. The motion was seconded by Charles Woodard and unanimously approved by the Board.

CONSENT AGENDA

Chairman Nelson asked if there were any items that the Board wished to remove from the Consent Agenda to discuss. There being none, the following items were considered to be routine and were unanimously approved on motion made by Charles Woodard, seconded by Joseph W. Hoffler.

- Approval of Minutes:** July 6, 2021 Regular Meeting, July 13, 2021 Joint Meeting with Planning Board, and July 19, 2021 Work Session (cancelled) were approved.
- Tax Refund Approvals:**

Christensen, John Darden ----- \$100.18
 Vehicle sold; 8-month refund. Account No. 52448317

Salvo, Jr., Edgar Earle ----- \$113.52
 Sold vehicle; tag turned in to transfer handicapped plate from a different vehicle. 12-month refund. Account No. 59923391

Easterwood, Joseph Anthony ----- \$638.50
 Sold vehicle to dealership; 10-month refund. Account No.: 54611935

3. Personnel Matters:

Employee Name	Employee Job Title	Action Required	Grade/ Step	New Salary	Effective Date
Casey Forward	Business Personal Property Tax Clerk	Appointment	61/3	\$31,380.	08/01/2021
Lacy Robeson, III	Investigator	Promotion	68/5	\$44,839	08/01/2021
Meredith Wood	4-H Extension Agent	Resignation			07/30/2021
Sharell Kennedy	IMC II – Family & Children’s Medicaid	Resignation			07/30/2021
Jewel Winslow	Extension Director	Retirement			08/31/2021
Jennifer Ayers	Certified Part-Time/Fill-in Telecommunicator	Certification	62/1	\$14.02/hr.	11/01/2020
Kelly Johnson	Non-Certified Part-Time/Fill-in Telecommunicator	Appointment	60/1	\$13.75/hr.	0701/2021
William Ward	Non-Certified Part-Time/Fill-in Telecommunicator	Appointment	60/1	\$13.75/hr.	0701/2021

4. **Step/Merit Increases:**

Employee Name	Employee Job Title	Grade/Step	New Salary	Effective Date
Sonia Davenport	AEMT	66/9	\$45,269	08/01/2021
Nettie Gordon	Secretary - Senior Center	56/6	\$13,01/hr.	08/01/2021
Leroya Banks	Certified Deputy/SRO Officer	65/2	\$36,531	08/01/2021
Brian Gregory	Deputy Sheriff	65/5	\$18.89/hr.	08/01/2021
Damon Sizemore	Deputy Sheriff (Certified)	65/4	\$38,358	08/01/2021

5. **Budget Amendment:**

**BUDGET AMENDMENT NO. 2
GENERAL FUNDS**

CODE NUMBER	DESCRIPTION OF CODE	AMOUNT	
		INCREASE	DECREASE
10-348-014	EMS Foundation Grant	6,050	
10-592-742	EMS Foundation Grant Expense	6,050	
EXPLANATION: To amend FY 21/22 budget to include Vidant Health Foundation Grant.			

**BUDGET AMENDMENT NO. 3
GENERAL FUNDS**

CODE NUMBER	DESCRIPTION OF CODE	AMOUNT	
		INCREASE	DECREASE
10-360-003	ARHS Community Response	6,400	
10-592-743	ARHS Community Response	6,400	
EXPLANATION: To amend FY 21/22 budget to include ARHS Community Response Funds to be used to off-set EMS salary lines as they relate to PORT calls.			

6. **Enclosures:** The following miscellaneous documents were approved by the Board:

- a. **Resolution – Authorizing the Removal of Certain Public Record Books:** The following Resolution to authorize the removal of certain public record books from the Register of Deeds’ Office was unanimously approved by the Board:

**RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING
REMOVAL OF CERTAIN PUBLIC RECORD BOOKS
KEPT BY THE REGISTER OF DEEDS FOR
THE PURPOSE OF REPAIR, RESTORATION
AND REBINDING**

WHEREAS, NCGS 132-7 provides that books of public records should be copied or repaired, renovated or rebound if worn, mutilated, damaged or difficult to read; and

WHEREAS, there is identified certain books of public records maintained by the Register of Deeds in need of repair, restoration and rebinding; and

WHEREAS, Kofile Technologies is under contract to provide repair, restoration and rebinding of those certain books of public records.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS FOR PERQUIMANS COUNTY, NORTH CAROLINA, that:

Section 1. The Register of Deeds is authorized to remove or cause to be removed to the care and custody of Kofile Technologies for repair, restoration and rebinding the following books of public records:

Vital Statistics Marriage Licenses 1899-1902

Section 2. The books of public records listed in Section 1 of this resolution may remain in the care and custody of Kofile Technologies for the length of time required to repair, restore and rebind them.

Section 3. This resolution is effective upon its adoption.

ADOPTED the 2nd day of August, 2021.

Wallace Nelson, Chairman
Board of Commissioners

ATTEST:

Mary P. Hunnicutt, Clerk to the Board

- b. **NC Division of Aging & Adult Services:** The County received additional funding for provisions of home delivered meals. There is no county match for this award. The Board authorized the Chairman and county staff to sign their documentation to receive these additional funds.
- c. **County Cooperative Agreement with the N.C. Forest Service:** The Board unanimously approved the County Cooperative Agreement with Division of Forest Resources for FY 2021-2022 and authorized the Chairman and County Staff to sign the Agreement. The costs will be \$169,315 being divided between the State at \$110,055 (65%) and the County at \$59,260 (35%).

7. **Board Resignation:** The following Board resignation was approved by the Board:

Name	Board/Committee	Action Taken	Term	Effective Date
Sandi Sheehan	Tourism Development Authority – Industrial Representative	Resignation		08/31/2021

INTRODUCTION OF NEW EMPLOYEES

The following employees were introduced to the Board:

1. **Susan Chaney:** Ms. Chaney, Social Services Director, introduced Marquitia Foreman, Public Information Assistant IV (hired 6/21/2021), and Marleny Garcia, Public Information Assistant IV (hired on 7/1/2021).
2. **Jonathan Nixon:** Jonathan Nixon, Emergency Services Director, introduced Wayne Jordan who was promoted to EMS Shift Supervisor (Paramedic) on 7/1/2021.
3. **Sheriff Shelby White:** Mr. White introduced Dean Pumbo, Jr. & Jacob Sikes, Certified Deputies, who were hired on July 1, 2021.

After each introduction, the new employee made a few comments. On behalf of the Commissioners, Chairman Nelson welcomed the new employees to Perquimans County.

ATLANTIC TELEPHONE MEMBERSHIP CORPORATION (ATMC)

Jody Huestess & Jeremy Noble, representatives from Atlantic Telephone Membership Corporation (ATMC) presented information on their plan to seek grant funds to bring fiber-optic broadband to the rural areas in Perquimans and Chowan Counties. Mr. Huestess explained that they need a partnership with a government entity to apply for a \$28,865,500 project which will provide broadband services to 5,515 addresses. Of those 5,515 addresses, there are 5,099 unserved homes, 62 businesses, and a few 100 homes that would have the service available and would possibly change from their current service to this service. ATMC will be the primary applicant and the counties will be the secondary applicant. Even though it is not required for this grant, ATMC is providing a 10% match (\$2,886,550) which, they hope, will help secure this grant for the counties. The funds will be split between Perquimans (2,300 households) and Chowan (2,200 households). Mr. Heath asked Mr. Huestess to provide information about their programs that they will be offering and their costs for each program. Mr. Huestess provided the following information:

ATMC will bury fiber optics along the highway and to the homes.

\$77.95 – GB \$67.95 – 500/500 Meg \$57.95 – 250/250 Meg \$49.95 – 50/50 Meg
People who qualify for the federal Lifeline program for low income homes will be eligible for discounts which can be used on their phone service, cell phone service, or broadband service. If they chose to use the lifeline program for their broadband service, they will provide a \$9.25 monthly discount. In addition, ATMC will match this discount making a total discount of \$18.50 each month.

Mr. Huestess explained that this is **only a proposal** and what they have done so far are some environmental studies and are preparing the application for this grant. What they will do is establish a presence here in the county. They will open up an office, hire some local people, and operate a state of the art fiber optic network for decades in the future. County Manager Heath explained that the following areas will be where they will be working with Perquimans County: Durants Neck, Chapanoke, and the western part of Bethel and Belvidere. What they are requesting tonight is for Perquimans County to approve a letter of support for them to apply for the grant. County Manager Heath explained that Chowan County had approved the letter of support and that there is no financial assistance required from the counties. Mr. Huestess further explained that, if the grant is approved, ATMC has asked the county to provide a 60 x 60 parcel out in the rural area so that they can place an OLC site. This is not a requirement but it would be beneficial to ATMC if the County would donate it. Chairman Nelson thanked them for their presentation and asked if there were any questions from the Board. The following questions were asked:

- **Commissioner Woodard:** Mr. Woodard asked how long does it take if the grant is approved. Mr. Huestess said that the grantee gives them twelve months but there is no way ATMC could lay 77 miles of fiber in twelve months. Therefore, they would have to request extensions. One cause for a delay would be the shortage in fiber optic supplies. He anticipates that it will take about three years and that an announcement of the grant award should start around Thanksgiving.
- **Chairman Nelson:** Mr. Nelson asked that, once the work has started, how much involvement will be required by the counties. He also said that the school systems would be good partners with them.

There being no further questions or comments from the Board, T. Kyle Jones made a motion to approve the following letter of support to have ATMC apply for the grant to bring fiber-optic broadband to Perquimans County rural areas. The motion was seconded by Alan Lennon and unanimously approved by the Board:



PERQUIMANS COUNTY
Office of the Manager
P.O. BOX 45
HERTFORD, NORTH CAROLINA 27944
TELEPHONE: 252-426-8484
www.perquimanscountync.gov

W. FRANK HEATH, III
COUNTY MANAGER

NTIA Broadband Infrastructure Grant Program Letter of Commitment
Perquimans County

August 2, 2021

To Whom it May Concern:

This letter of commitment is to formalize a partnership between the Perquimans County Government, Chowan County Government and Atlantic Telephone Membership Corporation (ATMC) for the purpose of bringing high-speed broadband internet to unserved and underserved areas of rural Perquimans and Chowan Counties.

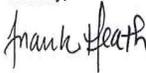
The Chowan-Perquimans Broadband Partnership (CPBP) is comprised of three entities, each a political subdivision of the State of North Carolina. These are: Perquimans County Government, Chowan County Government, and ATMC. ATMC is a cooperative and a provider of fixed broadband service. ATMC is serving as the lead applicant in this partnership.

Perquimans County agrees to partner as a secondary applicant in the Chowan-Perquimans Broadband Partnership (CPBP) with ATMC acting as the lead applicant and Chowan County Government acting as an additional secondary applicant.

ATMC will be responsible for all costs associated with the grant application, as well as design work and constructing and maintaining the fiber optic network, if funded. Perquimans County Government will assist in providing support to help advance ATMC's fiber optic project, if funded.

Residents and businesses in rural areas of Perquimans County have very limited access to high-speed internet, putting them at a great disadvantage. Access to high-speed internet, through this grant opportunity, would open the door of possibility for communication, education, commerce and more.

Thank you for your acknowledgement and recognition of this letter of commitment.

Sincerely,

 Frank Heath
 County Manager
 Perquimans County

Perquimans County's Vision:
To be a community of opportunity in which to live, learn, work, prosper and play.

COMMISSIONER'S CONCERNS/COMMITTEE REPORTS

The following commissioner concerns/committee report was given:

- **Chairman Nelson:** Chairman Nelson explained that the public hearing for the Monument to the Confederate Dead has been scheduled for Monday, August 16, 2021 at 7:00 p.m. in the meeting room of the Perquimans County Library. He further provided the following ground rules for the meeting:
 - The comments will focus on the following two recommendations of the Work Group:
 1. Recommend that the Commissioners add signage which contextualizes the monument to provide the whole story of that era.
 2. Recommend that the Commissioners approach the private owners of the King Street Memorial for relocation to the Courthouse green in a location of equal stature and prominence.
 - Each individual will be given three minutes to speak.
 - Written comments are welcomed.
 - He asked that the participants be respectful to the opposing comments.

There being no further comments or reports, Mr. Nelson proceeded with the rest of the meeting.

UPDATES FROM COUNTY MANAGER

County Manager Heath presented the following updates:

- **National Night Out:** Mr. Heath invited the public to attend the National Night Out tomorrow night from 5:00 – 8:00 p.m.
- **CDC New Mask Mandates:** Mr. Heath explained that the CDC has issued new recommendations for wearing masks in County facilities. Albemarle Regional Health Services has provided recommendations for the counties to follow should they elect to do so. After researching the matter, Mr. Heath recommends that no masks will be required for those individuals coming into the County facilities that have been vaccinated.
- **Vivian Long Retirement:** Mr. Heath presented a picture of the presentation to Vivian Long who retired after 29 years of service in the Perquimans County Communications Center on July 31, 2021.
- **Catfish Hunter Museum Contents:** Mr. Heath notified that Board that the Perquimans County Chamber of Commerce will surrender all the old contents of the Catfish Hunter's Museum to the Tourism Development Authority prior to August 22nd to store until we find a relocation for it. Commissioner Lennon asked if it was a climate control location. Mr. Heath said that it was.
- **Woodville Road Project:** Mr. Heath reported that he had received notification from NCDOT today that they will begin the Woodville Road Project on August 16, 2021. The road will be closed from August 16th through December 14th. Commissioner Lennon asked if that was the time that the Water Department would be making improvements to the waterlines. Mr. Heath said that it was.
- **Chamber of Commerce Building:** Commissioner Woodard asked Mr. Heath if the County could purchase the Chamber of Commerce Building. Commissioner Hoffer also asked about pursuing this purchase. Commissioner Lennon feels that it would be good for new offices, especially if we appoint another Tourism Director. Commissioner Jones asked if any other the surrounding counties have done this and what was the condition of the building. After some discussion, it was the recommendation of the Board to have County Manager Heath make inquiries about the potential purchase of the building.

BOARD APPOINTMENT: TRILLIUM NORTHERN REGION ADVISORY BOARD

Chairman Nelson explained that the Board needed to appoint a replacement for Freida Bonner for the Trillium Northern Region Advisory Board. Since the Board had no recommendations and Mary Hunnicutt said that she had received no applications for this vacancy, Chairman Nelson asked Ms. Hunnicutt to place a notice on the County's Website and Facebook page to see if we get any response. At this time, no action was necessary.

BOARD OF ADJUSTMENT

County Manager Heath explained that, due to the 160D changes discussed at the July 13th Joint Work Session with the Planning Board, the Board discussed the reconfiguration of the Board of Adjustment. The consultant that was appointed to handle these changes recommends that the Board dissolve the current Board of Adjustment and make the Board of Commissioners the new Board of Adjustment. On motion made by T. Kyle Jones, seconded by Alan Lennon, the Board unanimously approved to dissolve the current Board of Adjustment and make the Board of Commissioners the new Board of Adjustment.

PERSONNEL MATTER – APPOINTMENT OF HOUSEKEEPING ASSISTANT

County Manager Heath reported that this matter was received after the Agenda Packets were distributed so they are adding it to tonight's new business. On motion made by Alan Lennon, seconded by Charles Woodard, the Board unanimously appointed Virginia White as the Housekeeping Assistant at Grade 54/Step 3 at a salary of \$23,060 effective August 1, 2021.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

The following public comments were made:

- **Marla Colson:** Ms. Colson read the following petition for the Board's consideration:

PETITION AGAINST REMOVAL OF COURTHOUSE MONUMENT

This petition is in response to the discussion concerning the removal of the Monument on the Perquimans County Courthouse grounds. The Monument commemorates those who died in the war Between the States, 1861 - 1865. Those brothers, sons, fathers, grandfathers, husbands and loved ones who never came back, who were buried in mass graves. It has honored the dead for well over one-hundred years without objection from one-hundred fifty previous County Commissioners. This monument serves as a grave marker also symbolizing the war is over. Therefore, we the undersigned strongly oppose the removal of the Monument.

After reading the petition, Ms. Colson explained that 1,283 people had signed the petition. She then made several personal remarks about why we needed to keep the monument as is on the courthouse lawn.

- **Pete Perry:** Mr. Perry yielded his time.
- **Terry Swope:** Mr. Swope read the following statement (go to next page):

The balance of this page was intentionally left blank.

I was actively involved in the Petition Mrs. Colson just submitted. Of paramount importance is that these 1200 plus names were all collected FACE TO FACE right here in Perquimans County. Every name on there either lives, works or plays in Perquimans County and has an economic interest here, they spend money here!

I personally have knocked on hundreds of doors and been invited into scores of homes. As a relative newcomer to the County, 90% of these are the homes of folks I never met, complete strangers to me. They are a random sampling of the people of Perquimans. **ALMOST ALL OF THEM signed my Petition.**

I began my portion of the drive in mid April, but by late April when I saw all the various forms of desecration the "Work Group" was considering, I quickly made it known to any potential signatory that I was requesting their signature as opposition to ANY CHANGE to the Monument or where it currently stands. While certainly not all, MOST of the signatures you have been presented with are persons **opposed to any change of any kind to the Monument and its surroundings including new signs around it.**

After seeking permission, I have stood in parking lots, visited swap meets, but mostly bicycled or walked door to door and the overwhelming majority feel changes are unnecessary and an overreach by a Board considering action on a non-existent problem. In fact, most of these folks feel the Board's actions ARE FUELING divisiveness in the County as the Board searches for ways to explain away their history and rob locals of their heritage.

Having walked many miles and spoken to hundreds of residents I say this with an extremely high level of confidence, this Monument, that so few even give a thought to in day to day life, has a very strong popularity when threatened by folks like you. The people do NOT want you messing with it!

As a military veteran myself, I take great offense to those that cast aside the ones that made the ultimate sacrifice when asked to do their duty. This State, this County, asked these men to do their duty and they responded as requested. Many of these men never came home and some forty years after the war ended, as the last survivors of that costly war died off, the UDC raised the funds necessary to build a Memorial to "Our Soldiers".

They asked the County for a place of honor on the Courthouse lot so it would prominently displayed, and on 4 March 1912, as recorded in the minute's book " On motion, the Board of County Commissioners grant unto the Daughters of Confederacy the right to erect a Monument to Confederate dead upon the Court House lot, ..."

The so-called "Confederate Monument" is not a monument to the Confederacy, it is a Monument to soldiers, men we would normally call "Heroes" or "First responders" in today's vernacular.

Myself, and most of the folks that signed that Petition don't feel comfortable with you "Modernizing" their sacrifice.

Terry

- **John Long:** Mr. Long supported the petition that was just presented. He further explained the process and how they obtained the signatures. He supports the petition and requests that the Board consider what the residents of Perquimans County truly feel about this matter. He further explained that this is a monument not a statute. It is a place where people can go to remember those who sacrificed their lives.
- **Koz Jackson:** Mr. Jackson stated that he supports the monument and does not want to have it moved or changed in any way. He talked about his Indian heritage and the struggles that his ancestors went through. He also served in the U.S. Army.
- **Edna Sidwell:** Ms. Sidwell stated that she is a citizen of the United States and she has history. She supports the petition and wishes no changes to the monument.
- Angela Burket & Janet Owens did not want to speak.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further comments or business to discuss, the Regular Meeting was adjourned at 8:15 p.m. on motion made by Charles Woodard, seconded by Joseph W. Hoffler.

Wallace E. Nelson, Chairman

Clerk to the Board

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