

**STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
COUNTY OF AVERY**

The Avery County Board of Commissioners met in Regular Session on Monday, December 3, 2018 at 3:30 p.m. in the Commissioners Board Room, Avery County Administrative Complex, 175 Linville Street, Newland, NC 28657.

Members Present: Martha Hicks, Chair; Blake Vance, Vice-Chair; Dennis Aldridge; Tim Phillips; Wood Hall Young, Jr.

Members Absent: None

Call To Order

Chair Hicks called the meeting to order at 3:30 p.m.
Chair Hicks welcomed new Commissioner Dennis Aldridge.
Dennis Aldridge led prayer.
Wood Hall Young, Jr. led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Organizational Meeting

Chair Hicks turned the meeting over to Phillip Barrier, County Manager.

Election of Chair

Mr. Barrier opened the floor for nominations for Chair of the Avery County Board of Commissioners.

Tim Phillips nominated Martha Hicks for Chair. Wood Hall Young, Jr. seconded the nomination. Motion unanimously approved (5-0).

Mr. Barrier then turned the meeting back over to Martha Hicks, Chair.

Election of Vice-Chair

Chair Hicks opened the floor for nominations for Vice-Chair of the Avery County Board of Commissioners.

Tim Phillips nominated Blake Vance for Vice-Chair; Wood Hall Young, Jr. seconded the nomination. Motion unanimously approved (5-0).

Appointment of Officers

County Manager

Chair Hicks opened the floor for nominations for County Manager.

Wood Hall Young, Jr. nominated Phillip Barrier, Jr. for County Manager. Blake Vance seconded the nomination. Motion unanimously approved (5-0).

County Attorney

Chair Hicks opened the floor for nominations for County Attorney.

Wood Hall Young, Jr. nominated Michaelle Poore for County Attorney. Tim Phillips seconded the nomination. Motion unanimously approved (5-0).

Finance Officer

Chair Hicks opened the floor for nominations for Finance Officer.

Blake Vance nominated Tim Greene for Finance Officer. Tim Phillips seconded the nomination. Motion unanimously approved (5-0).

Clerk/Assistant County Manager

Chair Hicks opened the floor for nominations for Clerk to the Board/Assistant County Manager.

Wood Hall Young, Jr. nominated Cindy Turbyfill for Clerk to the Board/Assistant County Manager. Tim Phillips seconded the nomination. Motion unanimously approved (5-0).

Public Comment

Dr. John Boyd invited the Board to his Annual Christmas Social on December 4, 2018 at 5:30 p.m.

There were no more public comments.

Board Appointments

Juvenile Crime Prevention Council

Motion by Blake Vance and second by Tim Phillips to appoint Dennis Aldridge to the Juvenile Crime Prevention Council. Motion unanimously approved (5-0).

High Country Council of Government Executive Board

Motion by Tim Phillips and second by Blake Vance to appoint Dennis Aldridge to the High Country Council of Government Executive Board. Motion unanimously approved (5-0).

Blue Ridge Partnership for Children

Motion by Wood Hall Young, Jr. and second by Tim Phillips to appoint Blake Vance to the Blue Ridge Partnership for Children Committee. Motion unanimously approved (5-0).

Avery County Transportation Advisory Board (Finance Officer Appointment)

Motion by Blake Vance and second by Tim Phillips to appoint Tim Greene to the Avery County Transportation Advisory Board. Motion unanimously approved (5-0).

Review of Applicant for JCPC

The Board will review the applicant for the JCPC for appointment at the next regular meeting.

Medicaid Transformation—VAYA Health—Brian Shuping

The Chief of Community Affairs, Christina Labuse, explained that VAYA Health is the local management entity that is managing the Medicaid and state funded dollars for people who receive money from the state who meet one of the criteria to be diagnosed with a mental illness, substance abuse disorder, or have intellectual and developmental disabilities. The NC General Assembly has made a huge decision on Medicaid. What we are about to embark on is the largest transformation of Medicaid ever in North Carolina. I want to believe at the end of the day it is going to be good for the citizens. The General Assembly has revised HB403 and this is the one that builds the whole policy framework of what is going to happen to Medicaid in North Carolina. Last year VAYA health served 23,000 people in 23 counties who were either uninsured or underinsured who didn't have Medicaid.

Ms. Labuse stated that there is this big umbrella called Medicaid Transformation. What NC did is they have developed two basic Medicaid plans one called Standard Plan and one called Tailored Plan. With the Standard Plan, North Carolina opened the door for commercial insurance companies to come in to manage the Medicaid. As of October 19, 2018, the commercial insurance companies have submitted their bids. With the Standard Plan, the companies will come in and manage Medicaid. There will be four commercial insurance companies that will be doing this. The Standard Plan is geared towards mild to moderate behavioral health and substance abuse. What the system is doing is creating the concept of integrated care so there is a group of people that look at all of the medical and behavioral issues together.

In early May or June, a notice will go out to Medicaid individuals that explain what is going to be happening with Medicaid Transformation. The Medicaid individuals will be choosing the commercial company. A year from now this program will be initiated. This will be done in phases. The Western counties will probably go last but by early 2020 anyone that is going to be in this plan will be moved over. The general population in our 23 county catchment area is a little over 1 million people. Of that million people, we have 192,000+ that are eligible for Medicaid. Of the 192,000, VAYA health has served 34,694. Not all of the 192,000 have one of the disabilities that we manage. We will go to managing 8900 people instead of 192,000 people. For Avery County, the average population is a little over 17,000 and we have 2900 people that have a Medicaid card. Of that 2900, we served 432 people who needed services in the last year. In the future we are looking at 232 people that VAYA health will be responsible for. There is a lot more things that need to be explained about this Medicaid Transformation that we don't have time for today so we would like to come back and meet with the Board of Commissioners along with the health department director, DSS director and hospital administration.

Wood Hall Young, Jr. questioned if there would be any interruption in providing service to people having Medicaid with this transformation. Ms. Labuse stated that there would not be any interruption in the service.

Avery County Airport Authority Presentation

Dean Harris, Avery County Airport Authority member presented a power point regarding the Avery County Airport.

The Avery County Airport (ACA) was started as a small grass landing field in the 1950's by local businessmen on land donated by the Morrison family. In the mid 1960's the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) agreed to fund the airport and made it a public use Airport. Until the late 1980's, the ACA was maintained by Brad Ragan Inc. and the Feldspar Corporation. In the 1990's the state legislature formed the Avery County Airport Authority (ACAA). The Authority has continued to develop the airport over the last twenty years through the use of grants in the Airport Improvement Program (AIP). The ACA has a Fixed Base Operator (FBO) and is used by private and corporate pilots, the military, missionary organizations, medical flights, emergency response, fire fighters, NC Highway Patrol and other law enforcement agencies and disaster response teams.

The Avery County Airport has several strengths that include the following:

- Location – Avery County Airport (ACA) is the ONLY Public Use Airport serving the Avery/Mitchell/Yancey (mountainous) area.
- Potential – Ongoing improvements funded by Federal and State Programs will attract more ACA users.
- Access – Lack of near-term and long-term plans for rail and highway improvements leave the ACA the only alternative for increasing access to our area.
- ACA averages approximately 1,500 landings and takeoffs a year. These are people who live in or are doing business in the area as well as visitors/tourists.
- Before the economic downturn ACA was averaging over 3,000 landings and takeoffs per year. Current projections have the numbers increasing.
- Topographical features make ACA an ideal training facility for mountainous operations.
- Lighted Helipad for night helicopter operations.

The Avery County Airport is used by many organizations including:

- Mission Memorial (based in Asheville NC), WINGS(based in Johnson City TN), and Med Center (based in Hickory NC)medical flights
- The Army, Air Force, Navy, Marines and Coast Guard use the airport for training. Prime hours are after dark when the airport is closed and they can do night operations. They survey the airport every two years for use.
- CAP(Civil Air Patrol). Search and Rescue

- Missionary Pilot organizations such as JAARS for pilot training for humanitarian flights overseas.
- During disasters the airport is a major hub where all emergency organizations meet to coordinate efforts
- Forest Service use for training and as a base when needed in the area
- Mayland Community College uses ACA for training in the Nurse programs for familiarization with medical helicopter operations.
- Local law enforcement, Sheriff department, Highway Patrol, and Police use it for a hub to survey suspicious activity. Aerial views of accidents or disasters are sometimes necessary.
- Local Fire departments use taxiways and open areas for practice drills as well as airplane crash response.
- Fly-ins. Business, homeowners, tourists, prospective real estate buyers.
- Potential training missions from Pope AFB.

James Moose with AVCON stated that he had been working with the airport for several years. I specialize in airports. The FAA requires that any airport that gets federal funding have a 20 year layout plan. We forecast any improvements that will be needed and we look at potential growth. The 20 year layout plan was discussed. We will be removing the old terminal building and constructing a new one., new parking, and relocating the fuel farm. The first stage of the project is redoing the apron which we will be going after federal and state funding. The new terminal building will be a log cabin which the state wants to happen in Avery County.

Blake Vance questioned about the runway length. Is that a realistic plan with the topography? Dean Harris stated that it would open up to different types of aircraft. Mr. Moose said there are a lot of things that come along with runway extension. There would be some significant challenges to get to a 4200 foot runway. It is an objective for the airport.

Recess

Chair Hicks called for a brief recess.

Chair Hicks declared the meeting to be back in session after a brief recess.

Tax Administrator Report

Total Tax Collections

The total tax collections for the month of November 2018 are \$3,377,306.85.

Motion by Blake Vance and second by Tim Phillips to approve the Tax Collections report for the month of November 2018 as presented. Motion unanimously approved (5-0).

Releases

The total Releases for the month of November 2018 are \$92.43.

Motion by Wood Hall Young, Jr. and second by Tim Phillips to approve the Releases for the month of November 2018 at presented. Motion unanimously approved (5-0).

Sales

In November there were 60 qualified sales at 88% of the tax value. Last year there were 62 sales at 99%.

County Manager Update – Phillip Barrier, Jr.

Economic Development Committee Update

The Junior Achievement Program is an introduction to students about what they would like to do with their life. Ken Walter and Susan Siriila with the economic development committee taught seven classes in the marketing class.

Mr. Barrier presented a video that the economic development committee would like to share on the website.

Consensus by the Board to put the video on the website.

Tim Phillips stated that the economic development committee is a wonderful bunch of individuals that put a lot of work into the committee. We, as a board, need to support them and trust their judgement and at budget time give them some money.

Swimming Pool

The windows are supposed to be put in next week. The grout is being finished up this week. The plan is to keep water in the pool during the winter and there should be a temporary fence installed around the pool for protection.

Broadband

In the Pineola area, the pole is up. The electric has been run. Next week the beta testing customers will begin to use this service. This will not help the entire county but will help sections of the county.

Skyline/Skybest did not receive the broadband grant. They will be setting up some meetings with the USDA. North Carolina was passed up as a whole.

Pearl Harbor Day Observance

December 7th will be the observance of Pearl Harbor Day at the County Square at 12 noon.

User Agreement for Avery Cares

In the Agenda Consent Items is the user agreement for Avery Cares.

Finance Officer Report – Tim Greene

Bond—Sheriff

Pursuant to General Statute 162-8 and 162-9 the Board of Commissioners shall take and approve the official bond of the sheriff, which they shall cause to be registered and the original deposited with the clerk of superior court for safekeeping. The amount shall not exceed \$25,000.

Motion by Wood Hall Young, Jr. and second by Blake Vance to approve the Sheriff's bond. Motion unanimously approved (5-0).

Budget Amendment

The Board approved the software for billing for EMS with Colleton a few years ago. The vendor provided the Ipad's. The software now is not working well with the Ipads. We talked to the vendors and we can renegotiate the rate if we provide the equipment which would be a rate of 5 ½% as compared to 6% that we are paying now. In the long run we will come out ahead providing the equipment ourselves.

Replace 8 Ipad's used by EMS staff to enter patient information that is transmitted to the hospitals and the billing software. The cost will be offset by a reduction in the third party billing vendor's new contract that will be effective January 1, 2019.

Motion by Blake Vance and second by Tim Phillips to approve the budget amendment to replace 8 Ipad's used by EMS staff with a debit of \$4,000 to Computer Equipment (105300.7410) and a credit of \$4,000 to Emergency Medical Service (103630.0000). Motion unanimously approved (5-0).

Budget Amendment

The Sheriff's Office has received a NC Department of Public Safety Governor's Crime Commission Grant for body cameras. This grant requires no matching funds.

Motion by Blake Vance and second by Wood Hall Young, Jr. to approve the budget amendment regarding a grant for body cameras with a debit of \$63,000 to Crime Control Grant (105100.7420) and a credit of \$63,000 to Governor's Crime Commission Grant (103615.0000). Motion unanimously approved (5-0).

County Attorney Report – Michaelle Poore

Ms. Poore stated that she had nothing to report to the board.

Approval of Minutes

Motion by Wood Hall Young, Jr. and second by Blake Vance to approve the November 5, 2018 Regular Session Minutes. Motion unanimously approved (5-0).

Agenda Consent Items

Blake Vance questioned why there was an amendment to our audit contract.

Mr. Barrier stated that as management I will say that the previous finance officer did not submit the reports in a timely manner including the postemployment benefits report. We submitted it as soon as we knew from the auditors that needed to be done which was October 5th.

Agenda Consent Items Adopted by Consensus of the Board.

Upcoming Meetings

Mr. Barrier stated that we are planning an open house at the Avery Cares Building.

There will be a joint meeting with the Board of Education on December 10th at 4:00 p.m. Mr. Young and Mr. Vance stated that 4:00 p.m. was not good for them. The Clerk will call and see if the meeting can be rescheduled.

Adjourn

Motion by Wood Hall Young, Jr. and second by Blake Vance to adjourn the meeting at 5:23 p.m. Motion unanimously approved (5-0).

Martha Hicks, Chair
Avery County Board of Commissioners

ATTEST: _____
Cindy Turbyfill, Clerk