# POLK COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
## Public Hearings & Regular
## Meeting February 17, 2025 -
## 5:00 PM
## Bryant H. Womack Justice & Administration Building
## 40 Courthouse Street
## Columbus, NC 28722
## MINUTES

Present: Chair Yoder, Vice-Chair Moore, Commissioner Hargett, and Commissioner Melton. Also present were Attorney Berg, Clerk to the Board Freeman, media, and citizens.

Absent: Commissioner Beiler, and Manager Pittman.

1. Public Hearings - The public hearings were properly advertised in the Tryon Daily Bulletin.

   A. Public Hearing I.

   Chair Yoder called to order the public hearing for the proposed text amendments to the Polk County Zoning Ordinance.

   I. Call to Order the Public Hearing - The proposed text amendment to the Polk County Zoning Ordinance to permit temporary housing buildings to be provided to those in need for use as a temporary shelter during recovery from the state of emergency declared in Polk County. (A copy of the current and proposed draft of the Zoning Ordinance is available for review online at https://www.polknc.gov/ordinances.php or in the County Manager's office).

   Cathy Ruth, the Planning and Economic Development Director, delivered a presentation, which is included by reference in these minutes. The current and proposed draft of the Zoning Ordinance was available for review online at https://www.polknc.gov/ordinances.php or in the County Manager's office.

   II. Citizen Comments

   There were no citizen comments.

   III. Adjourn Public Hearing

   Commissioner Melton moved to adjourn the Polk County Zoning Ordinance public hearing, seconded by Vice-Chair Moore, and the motion carried unanimously.

   B. Public Hearing II.

   Chair Yoder called to order the public hearing for the proposed text amendments to the Polk County Subdivision Ordinance.

   I. Call to Order the Public Hearing - The proposed text amendment to the

Polk County Subdivision Ordinance to update and clarify easements, road maintenance agreements, private roads, and minor subdivisions.(A copy of the current and proposed draft of the Subdivision Ordinance is available for review online at https://www.polknc.gov/ordinances.php or in the County Manager's office).

Cathy Ruth, the Planning and Economic Development Director, delivered a presentation, which is included by reference in these minutes. The current and proposed draft of the Subdivision Ordinance was available for review online at https://www.polknc.gov/ordinances.php or in the County Manager's office.

II. Citizen Comments

There were two citizen comments.

III. Adjourn Public Hearing

Vice-Chair Moore moved to adjourn the Polk County Subdivision Ordinance public hearing, seconded by Commissioner Hargett, and the motion carried unanimously.

2. Call to Order the Regular Meeting - Chairman Yoder.

A. Appointment of Clerk to the Board of County Commissioners, Kennedy Freeman.

Commissioner Melton moved to approve the appointment of Kennedy Freeman as Clerk to the Board of County Commissioners, seconded by Vice-Chair Moore, and the motion carried unanimously.

B. Administer Oath of Office for Clerk - Chairman Yoder.

Chair Yoder administered Kennedy Freeman, Clerk to the Board's Oath of Office.

3. Invocation - Chairman Yoder.

4. Pledge of Allegiance - Commissioner Melton

5. Approval of Agenda

A. Items may be added or removed at this time.

Commissioner Hargett requested that item 6.D. in the Consent Agenda be amended and moved to item 8.I. in the Regular Agenda.

Commissioner Hargett moved to approve the agenda as amended, seconded by Commissioner Melton, and the motion carried unanimously.

6. Consent Agenda

A. Approval of the January 13, 2025 Regular Meeting Minutes

B. Schedule a Public Hearing for proposed new road names to be considered

on Monday, March 17, 2025 at 5:00 pm in the R. Jay Foster Hall of Justice, Womack Building.

C. Declare six Sheriff vehicles & miscellaneous equipment surplus to be sold electronically by public auction. Asset details attached.

D. Adopt resolution of Polk County recognizing and approving of the Polk County official America 250 NC Committee

This item was moved to the Regular Agenda Items as item 8.I.

E. Tax Refund Request through February 10, 2025 in the amount of $849.60

F. Vaya Health Quarterly Financial Report for the period ending December 31, 2024

G. 2024 Community Health Assessment (CHA) Briefing.

H. Appoint Commissioner Hargett to the Community Child Protection Team (CCPT)

Vice-Chair Moore moved to approve the consent agenda, seconded by Commissioner Melton, and the motion carried unanimously.

7. Citizen Comments on Agenda Items.

There were five citizen comments.

8. Regular Agenda Items

A. Organization of the Polk County Regional Water Authority (PCRWA) - Discuss the creation of the PCRWA and review the next steps. Schedule a public hearing on the proposed resolution to organize the Polk County Regional Water Authority for Monday, March 17th at 5:00 p.m. in the Bryant H. Womack Justice & Administration Building, 40 Courthouse St. Columbus - Presented by Attorney Belton Zeigler.

Attorney Belton Zeigler presents the creation of the Polk County Regional Water Authority and requests a public hearing to be scheduled for the next Board of Commissioners meeting on Monday, March 17, 2025, at 5:00 p.m.

Commissioner Melton moved to approve the scheduling of the public hearing for Monday, March 17, 2025, at 5:00 p.m., seconded by Commissioner Hargett, and the motion carried unanimously.

B. Review changes to the Voluntary Agricultural District & Enhanced Voluntary Agricultural District Ordinance and request to schedule a public hearing on the proposed resolution for Monday, March 17th, at 5:00 p.m. in the Bryant H. Womack Justice & Administration Building, 40 Courthouse St. Columbus - Kelly Gay, Director of Polk County Soil and Water Conservation District, and Dawn Jordan, Director of Polk County Agricultural Economic Development will be present.

Kelly Gay and Dawn Jordan presented the proposed text amendments.

Commissioner Melton moved to schedule the public hearing as presented, seconded by Vice-Chair Moore, and the motion carried unanimously.

C. Award Service Contracts for Brush Grinding and Hauling and to approve the associated Budget Amendment – Travis Ballard, Solid Waste Director.

Mr. Ballard reported that the excess debris from Hurricane Helene has led to more vegetative waste at the landfill than anticipated. After receiving two bids, he recommended awarding the contract to the lowest bidder, CompostNow.

Vice-Chair Moore motioned to award the service contracts for Brush Grinding and Hauling, seconded by Commissioner Melton, and the motion carried unanimously.

Vice-Chair Moore motioned to approve the associated budget amendment, seconded by Commissioner Melton, and the motion carried unanimously.

D. Consideration and approval of the proposed Zoning Ordinance Amendment subsequent to the Public Hearing - Cathy Ruth, Polk County Planning and Economic Development Director.

Cathy Ruth, Planning and Economic Development Director, was present.

Commissioner Hargett moved to approve the proposed Zoning Ordinance Amendment, seconded by Vice-Chair Moore, and the motion carried unanimously.

E. Consideration and approval of the proposed Sub Division Ordinance Amendment subsequent to the Public Hearing - Cathy Ruth, Polk County Planning and Economic Development Director.

Cathy Ruth, Planning and Economic Development Director, was present.

After discussion, the Commissioners requested that the Subdivision Ordinance be sent back to the Planning Board for further review.

Vice-Chair Moore moved to send the Subdivision Ordinance Amendment back to the Planning Board for reconsideration, seconded by Commissioner Melton, and the motion carried unanimously.

F. Discussion and approval of the 2025/2026 Budget Calendar - Sandra Hughes, Finance Director.

Sandra Hughes, Finance Director, presented the 2025/2026 Budget Calendar.

Commissioner Melton moved to approve the 2025/2026 Budget Calendar as amended, seconded by Commissioner Hargett, and the motion carried unanimously.

G. Disaster and Relief Recovery Update - Bobby Arledge, Emergency

Management Director.

Emergency Management Director Bobby Arledge reported significant progress with the Army Corps of Engineers. Waterway debris removal has begun, and as of February 17, 2025, 52,000 cubic yards of debris (equivalent to 3,700 truckloads) have been cleared. Right of way debris removal is nearing completion, with citizens needing to place debris roadside by February 20. So far, 84,500 cubic yards of right-of-way debris (equal to 6,000 truckloads) have been collected by AshBritt. Citizens can visit the county website for more information.

The Private Property Debris Removal (PPDR) Program is starting where residents can apply to have debris cleared from their properties, including unsafe structures. For details, visit polkcounty.gov/PPDR. The Disaster Relief Center (DRC) is setting up a call center. Arledge recommends citizens stay updated via social media for its completion.

H. Public Information Officer, Kellie Cannon, Introduction - Manager Pittman.

Chair Yoder introduced and welcomed new Public Information Officer, Kellie Cannon, to Polk County.

I. Adopt resolution of Polk County recognizing and approving of the Polk County official America 250 NC Committee.

Commissioner Hargett removed an item from the consent agenda for a presentation on the America 250 NC Committee. The presentation was given by Gary Linton, President of the Blue Ridge Chapter National Society Sons of the American Revolution, and Craig Isaacson, Vice President. Polk County is part of this chapter.

Mr. Linton read the following resolution for the Board's consideration:

"A resolution of Polk County, North Carolina, supporting the America 250 NC committee for the United States semiquincentennial (AMERICA 205 NC)

WHEREAS, Roy Cooper, former Governor of North Carolina, created AMERICA 250 NC to plan, encourage, develop, and coordinate the commemoration of the 250th anniversary of the United States and North Carolina's integral role in that event and the role of its people on the nation's past, present, and future: and

WHEREAS, AMERICA 250 NC has a mission to engage ALL North Carolinians and ALL 100 counties through their many signatures and officially recognized programs, projects, and events over the commemoration by inspiring future leaders and celebrating North Carolina's
Contributions to the nation over the last 250 years; and

WHEREAS, by adoption of America 250 NC's mission, the Polk County Committee is officially formed to achieve the goals of America 250 NC.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the County of Polk hereby endorses AMERICA 250 NC and its mission; and

RESOLVED, the County of Polk officially establishes an AMERICA 250 NC Committee made up of a group of citizens to work with AMERICA 250 NC on any and all activities. The participants of the Polk County Committee will be strictly voluntary roles and there will be no compensation for participation.

IT IS FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this resolution be sent to Polk County's legislative delegation and the AMERICA 250 NC Committee."

Mr. Linton explained that to be eligible for the $10,000 grant, they must have the resolution approved by the County. He also says that the committee plans to use the funds to build a battlefield memorial marker.
Commissioner Hargett says that she supports the celebration and historical markers, but she had reservations about parts of the program, such as the mention of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI). Mr. Linton clarified that their focus was on history and Patriot service, and not political endorsements.

Commissioner Melton moved to adopt the resolution as read, seconded by Vice-Chair Moore. The motion carried, with Commissioner Hargett abstaining from the vote.

9. Citizen Comments on Non-Agenda Items.

There were three citizen comments.

10. Volunteer Board Applications

A. Board of Adjustment - There are two vacancies and one applicant; Wendy Wipperman.

Vice-Chair Moore moved to approve the appointment of Wendy Wipperman to the Board of Adjustment, seconded by Commissioner Melton. The motion carried, with Commissioner Hargett abstaining from the vote.

B. Equalization & Review Board - There are five vacancies and four applicants; Ray Gasperson, Jeff Miller, Tonya Walls, and Wendy Wipperman.

Vice-Chair Moore moved to approve the appointment of all four applicants, seconded by Commissioner Melton, and the Motion carried unanimously.

C. Library Board of Trustees - There are four vacancies and five applicants; Cathleen Cullen, Summer Flynn, Susannah Hogan, Libby Morris, and Jackson Rainer. (Please choose four applicants to appoint.)

Vice-Chair Moore motioned to appoint Summer Flynn to the Library Board of Trustees, seconded by Commissioner Melton, and the motion carried unanimously.

Commissioner Melton moved to appoint Susanna Hogan to the Library Board of Trustees, seconded by Commissioner Hargett and the motion carried unanimously.

Vice-Chair Moore motioned to appoint Libby Morris to the Library Board of Trustees, seconded by Commissioner Melton, and the motion carried unanimously.

Commissioner Melton moved to appoint Jackson Rainer to the Library Board of

Trustees, seconded by Vice-Chair Moore and the motion carried unanimously.

D. Planning Board - There is one vacancy and three applicants; Carrie Federici, Teresa (Terri) Morrin, and Charles Noffke. (Please choose one applicant to be appointed as the At Large Alternate.)

Commissioner Melton moved to appoint Carrie Federici to the Planning Board, seconded by Vice-Chair Moore and the motion carried unanimously.

11. Commissioner Comments.

The Board of Commissioners expressed gratitude to everyone who came to the meeting and showed their appreciation for the new Clerk to the Board and Public Information Officer.

12. Adjournment

Vice-Chair Moore moved to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Commissioner Hargett and the motion carried unanimously.

Attest:

Kennedy E Freeman
Clerk to the Board

POLK COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

Myron Yoder
Chair