

Meeting of the Hoke County Board of Commissioners on Tuesday, January 3, 2017 at 7:00 pm in the Commissioners Room of the Pratt Building.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

James Leach, Chairman
Harry Southerland, Vice Chairman
Tony Hunt
Robert Wright
Allen Thomas, Jr.

OTHERS PRESENT:

Letitia Edens, County Manager
Grady Hunt, County Attorney
Gwen McGougan, Clerk to the Board

Chairman Leach called the meeting to order with a quorum present and welcomed everyone.

Commissioner Hunt led the Pledge of Allegiance and Vice Chairman Southerland gave the invocation.

ITEM 1. ADOPTION OF AGENDA

Motion: Commissioner Thomas made a motion to adopt the agenda, seconded by Commissioner Wright.

Action: The motion passed unanimously.

ITEM 2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM DECEMBER 19, 2016 MEETING

Motion: Commissioner Wright made a motion to approve the minutes from the December 19, 2016 meeting, seconded by Vice Chairman Southerland.

Action: The motion passed unanimously.

ITEM 3. ELECTIONS VACANCY AND BUDGET

Elections Board Chairman Robert Vaughn informed the Board that Director Caroline Shook retired effective December 31, 2016. He would like to advertise for a new Director through the State of NC Board of Elections prior to their meeting on February 13-14, 2017.

Mr. Vaughn then advised the Board that he wishes to temporarily increase the hours of the Elections Department's part-time employee from 20 hours per week to 39 hours per week. He also needs funds to buy office supplies such as toner, which the Department is out of. County Manager Letitia Edens advised Mr. Vaughn that the Department needs to submit purchase orders for what they need.

Mr. Vaughn further advised the Board that there may be a special primary election in March, 2017, which was not budgeted for. After consulting with retired Director Caroline Shook, he estimates that the cost for a special election would be \$25,000. Commissioner Thomas said that it is his understanding that the maps required for the special election are not due until

March, 2017 and the plan is to have the special election in the fall of 2017. This would allow the cost to be budgeted in the FY 2018 budget. Mr. Vaughn said that there is a City election coming up.

Chairman Leach directed the County Manager to look at the Elections Department's budget and see if there are funds to cover the supplies that they need.

Mr. Vaughn told the Board that Mrs. Shook has offered to volunteer some time to assist in the transition. Mrs. Edens said that Mrs. Shook is not allowed to do any work at Elections for 30 days from her retirement. To do so could complicate her retirement status and benefits.

Commissioner Wright asked the County Manager if a 39-hour employee can be considered part time. Mrs. Edens replied that there's only \$33,000 remaining in the salary line item for Elections, due to paying Mrs. Shook for her unused vacation time upon her retirement. Mrs. Edens stressed that increasing the part-time employee's hours would contribute to depleting the remaining funds. As a result, when a new Director is hired, Elections will have to come before the Board to request funds. Chairman Leach asked the County Manager what employment law considers to be full-time. Mrs. Edens replied that benefits must be offered to an employee working more than 30 hours per week. The NC State Retirement System requires that an employee that works more than 1,000 hours per year be included in the system. Mr. Vaughn said to change his request from 39 hours per week to 30 hours per week.

Motion: Vice Chairman Southerland made a motion to approve an increase of the hours worked by the Elections part-time employee be increased to 30 hours per week, effective immediately, seconded by Commissioner Hunt.

Action: The motion passed unanimously.

ITEM 4. MANAGER'S REPORT

Mrs. Edens reported that she and Economic Developer Don Porter have planned a meeting for the Ft. Bragg Impact Study Steering Committee. The meeting is scheduled for February 6, 2017 at 2:00 pm.

Commissioner Wright said he has received several calls asking if citizens can donate money to the Animal Shelter. Mrs. Edens replied that they can; it must go through Interim Finance Officer Garvin Ferguson to be credited to the correct department. Mr. Wright continued by telling the Board that those citizens who have contacted him want to know if the donations are tax-deductible. County Attorney Grady Hunt responded that the recipient must be an approved 501(c)(3) organization for that to be possible.

ITEM 5. PUBLIC COMMENT

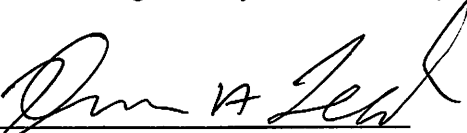
There were no persons signed up to speak during Public Comment.

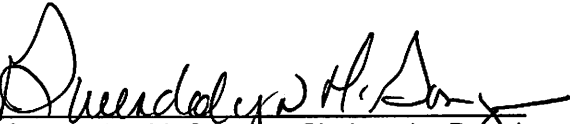
ITEM 6. CLOSED SESSION – ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OR PERSONNEL

No closed session was held.

ITEM 7. ADJOURN

There being no further business to come before the Hoke County Board of Commissioners, Commissioner Thomas made a motion to adjourn, with Vice Chairman Southerland seconding. The meeting was adjourned at 7:15 pm.


James A. Leach, Chairman


Gwendolyn McGougan, Clerk to the Board

