

**MINUTES**

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA  
COUNTY OF HENDERSON

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS  
JANUARY 15, 1997

The Henderson County Board of Commissioners met for a regularly scheduled meeting at 9:00 a.m. in the Commissioners' Conference Room of the Henderson County Office Building.

Those present were: Chairman Bob Eklund, Vice-Chair Grady Hawkins, Commissioner Vollie G. Good, Commissioner Renee Kumor, Commissioner Don Ward, County Manager David E. Nicholson, County Attorney Don H. Elkins, Assistant County Manager/Staff Attorney, and Clerk to the Board Elizabeth W. Corn.

Also present: Planning Director Matt Matteson and Planner Karen Collins.

**CALL TO ORDER/WELCOME**

Chairman Eklund called the meeting to order and welcomed all in attendance.

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

Commissioner Good led the Pledge of Allegiance to the American Flag.

**INVOCATION**

Mr. Morris Kaplan, Agudas Israel, gave the invocation.

**DISCUSSION/ADJUSTMENT OF AGENDA**

David Nicholson added the following items as an "Update on Pending Issues" -"F":

1. Report on the Legislative Goals Conference.
2. Report on the ice storm.
3. Continuation of discussion at the last commissioners' meeting about the Mission Statement.

Mr. Nicholson also announced that originally an afternoon workshop had been scheduled on the Historic Courthouse. That has been canceled but will be held at a later date, possibly February 19.

**CONSENT AGENDA**

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Commissioner Hawkins made the motion to approve the consent agenda as presented. All voted in favor and the motion carried.

CONSENT AGENDA consisted of the following:

**Notification of Vacancies:**

The Board was notified of the following vacancies, which will appear under "Nominations" on the next agenda:

1. Recreation Committee - 3 vac.
2. Board of Equalization & Review - 7 vac.
3. Nursing/Adult Care Home Community Advisory Committee - 7 vac.
4. Henderson County Planning Board - 1 vac.

**INFORMAL PUBLIC COMMENTS**

1. Brian Aleksich - Mr. Aleksich mentioned the fact that the County has advertised for a Public Information Officer (PIO). He stated that he has a very well qualified candidate who will work for nothing.

Mr. Aleksich explained that he didn't think that the county needed a PIO. Mr. Aleksich gave his views on things the county needs and things the county does not need.

**REPORT OF THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE**

In June of 1996, the Board appointed a Committee to review the overall economic development effort in Henderson County and make specific recommendations regarding a strategy for the long term economic growth and stability of our county.

The Committee, chaired by David Reeves, held eight meetings and have prepared and endorsed a final report for the Board's consideration.

David Reeves was present to answer any questions. Mr. Reeves stated that the Committee found that we have a balanced economy now and would like to see this balance continue. They wish to keep the four aspects of the economy in the same proportion and the county grows: agriculture, tourism, retirement, and manufacturing.

Recommendations from the Committee:

1. They would like to see the county become proactive in recruiting good, clean, high-paying jobs.

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2. Preservation of the small town agricultural atmosphere that Hendersonville has had for the past 20 years or more.

The report was distributed to the Board for their review and consideration. Chairman Eklund stated that the Board would set a work session as the next step.

ECONOMIC INCENTIVES FOR MANUAL WOODWORKERS AND WEAVERS, INC.

Angela Skerrett reminded the Board that on January 6, a Public Hearing was held as required by NCGS 158-7.1 to consider the request of Manual Woodworkers and Weavers, Inc., for assistance from Henderson County in the form of Economic Incentives.

Manual Woodworkers and Weavers, Inc., (MWW) is a locally owned and operated corporation that is planning an expansion consisting of an additional 150,000 square feet of office/warehouse space to hold and equip a state of the art automated distribution facility. This expansion would create 100 new jobs in less than one year from completion of the facility. These jobs would range from entry level of \$6 per hour up through management positions in excess of \$20,000 per year. Manual Woodworkers and Weavers, Inc. expects to make a taxable capital investment of \$5,000,000 for the expansion. Henderson County has advertised that the Henderson County Board of Commissioners would consider granting economic incentives to Manual Woodworkers and Weavers, Inc., consisting of reimbursement of up to \$103,000 towards site preparation and grading costs, to be reimbursed over a period of three years. Estimated total site preparation and grading costs are \$105,000.

Ms. Skerrett distributed a revised agreement including an exhibit A. Exhibit A outlines the anticipated new positions to be created and their pay range. Exhibit A contains 123 new positions that MWW will create. Development will occur over three phases. These jobs will be created in the first phase. Ms. Skerrett reviewed the few minor changes in the revised agreement.

David Short, Human Services Coordinator for MWW, was present and prepared to answer questions.

Following discussion, Commissioner Good made the motion to approve the agreement and to authorize Ms. Skerrett to finalize the agreement. All voted in favor and the motion carried.

ECONOMIC INCENTIVES FOR BYERS PRECISION FABRICATORS, INC.

Angela Skerrett reminded the Board that on January 6, a Public Hearing was held as required by NCGS 158-7.1 to consider the request of Byers Precision Fabricators, Inc. for assistance from Henderson County in the form of economic incentives.

Byers Precision Fabricators, Inc., is a locally owned and operated corporation that is planning an expansion consisting of an additional 31,000 square feet. This expansion would create 15-20 new jobs, ranging from \$15 to \$18 per hour. Byers Precision Fabricators, Inc. expects to make a taxable capital investment of \$2,000,000 for the expansion. Henderson County has advertised that the Henderson County Board of Commissioners would consider granting economic incentives to Byers Precision Fabricators, Inc., consisting of reimbursement of up to \$41,200 towards a sewer force main and pump station costs, to be reimbursed over a period of two years. Estimated total of the sewer force main and pump station costs are \$89,902.

Ms. Skerrett distributed a revised agreement. She requested authority to finalize the agreement, if the Board approves it at this time. Exhibit A has not been made available as yet.

Mr. Roger Byers was present and prepared to answer any questions. He stated that he had faxed Exhibit A last night and explained that the jobs in question are 15 positions varying in range from administrative assistants in a range of \$22,000 to \$28,000, machine operators \$25,000 to \$30,000, janitorial and grounds people \$22,000 to \$25,000, and precision welders \$25,000 to \$30,000.

There was some discussion of the Sewer Ordinance and the force main. Byers will own the force main, not Henderson County.

Jon Laughter (engineer) discussed the potential of additional customers on this force main and he suggested the Board of Commissioners revisit their Sewer Ordinance for the capability of addition of customers to the force main.

Commissioner Ward made the motion to approve the agreement and to authorize Ms. Skerrett to finalize the agreement including the addition of Exhibit A. All voted in favor and the motion carried.

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#### NOMINATIONS

Chairman Eklund reminded the Board of the following vacancies and opened the floor to nominations:

**1. Western Carolina Community Action Board of Directors** - 1 vac. Commissioner Ward requested this be rolled until the Board of Commissioners meets jointly with the WCCA Board of Directors.

**2. Laurel Park Planning Board and 3. Laurel Park Board of Adjustment** - David Nicholson explained that these vacancies should be held until after the February 3 Public Hearing.

**4. Library Board of Trustees** - 1 vac.

There were no nominations at this time so this item was rolled to the next meeting.

#### UPDATE ON PENDING ISSUES

**1. Legislative Goals** - Bob Eklund, Renee Kumor, and Angela Skerrett attended the Legislative Goals Conference in Raleigh last week. Ms. Skerrett informed the Board of a GOAL that Henderson County got added to a slate of goals for consideration re: the trouble that local businesses have in establishing a day care for their employees and for persons that might be coming out of the Workfirst Program. There was a legislative goal that was adopted to look at creating a job tax credit for businesses that are creating jobs for Workfirst participants but Chairman Eklund felt that that wasn't quite enough but that it needed to be looked at further. The goal itself was *"To study the link between economic development and workfirst, to form a legislative study commission to evaluate how economic development incentives can be used as a tool to facilitate the transition of workfirst participants into the work force, including but not limited to employer provisions of health care, day care, and transportation."* Numbers of people will be coming off out of the Workfirst Program in a couple of years and it will take planning at all the levels of government, local, state, and federal to be sure that these people have jobs to go to, jobs that will provide benefits and that will be able to afford to keep.

**2. Report on ice storm** - Rocky Hyder, Fire Marshall, informed the Board that during the recent ice storm of January 8 through January 12 we had about 1/4 inch of accumulation of ice on the trees. In

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comparison with last February's storm, it was about half of what we had in February of 1996. The temperatures following the ice storm were milder this year also contributing to the fact that this event was not as large as nor as critical as the storm of 1996.

At peak, Henderson County had 19,150 power outages. Henderson County did not have to open a shelter. Red Cross provided some shelter to those in need. The National Guard was notified and provided humvees for transportation assistance as well as generators for the Town of Laurel Park. Laurel Park's water system is not on emergency power. Two generators were made available for them. Ten humvees were available to the County for transportation of people to and from shelters and to other family members' homes.

The Henderson County Fire Commission responded to 173 calls during the time frame: 41 auto accidents, 7 structure fires two of which were actual working fires, 5 chimney fires, 31 power lines down, 24 trees down, 2 automobile fires, and 53 calls for assistance to emergency medical services. The Rescue Squad also responded to 15 calls as well as their normal routine of transporting nurses to the hospital and providing back-up for emergency medical services.

Power was restored by Sunday, January 12. Duke Power brought in at least 700 extra crews to make sure that power restoration was there by the time the colder temperatures arrived in our area.

Mr. Hyder commended the American Red Cross for their efforts and assistance.

Mr. Hyder had prepared a draft Thank You letter for the Chairman's signature and presented it to Chairman Eklund.

David Nicholson presented a draft Resolution to Mr. Hyder that staff had prepared to thank various agencies:

- Fire Marshall's office
- Duke Power
- American Red Cross
- National Guard
- Fire Commission
- Fire Departments
- Rescue Squad
- EMS
- Sheriff's Department

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Dept. Of Social Services  
Henderson County Dept. Of Public Health  
Several hotels who made rooms available to people

The County Manager and the Board of Commissioners commended Mr. Hyder and the entire citizenry of Henderson County for their show of great community support during this event.

Commissioner Hawkins made the motion to adopt the presented resolution, adding the names mentioned above. All voted in favor and the motion carried.

**3. Mission Statement** - David Nicholson reminded the Board that at the January 6 meeting, the Board discussed very briefly their Mission Statement.

There was discussion of setting a work session during Important Dates.

**MOMENT OF SILENCE**

Commissioner Good requested that the Board, staff, and members in the audience stand for a moment of silence in honor of our former State Senator, Bo Thomas, who passed away recently as the result of an accident.

**IMPORTANT DATES**

David Nicholson reminded the Board of the up-coming January 23 joint meeting with the Public Board of Education at Mills River Elementary School Cafeteria.

Mr. Nicholson reminded the Board of a letter from Trend inviting the Board of Commissioners to join them for their January 28 meeting at 5 p.m. Following some discussion, it was the consensus of the Board for Commissioner Kumor to attend the Travel & Tourism Committee meeting at that time to represent the Board and the other members would attend the Trend meeting.

Chairman Eklund informed the Board of a request from the Republican Men's Club that representatives from the Board of Commissioners attend that meeting to discuss issues before the County Commissioners. That meeting will be on February 26.

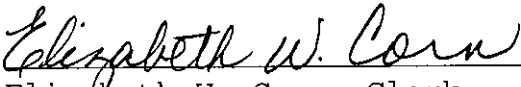
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David Nicholson reminded the Board of the need to set a CIP work session in early February. Mrs. Corn has polled the Board and it appeared that February 10 was a good date for four out of five Commissioners. Following some discussion, the work session on the CIP Process was set for February 10 at 5:30 p.m.

There being no further business to come before the Board, Commissioner Good made the motion to adjourn the meeting at 10:00 a.m. All voted in favor and the motion carried.

ATTEST:

  
Elizabeth W. Corn, Clerk

  
Robert D. Eklund, Chairman