

**Minutes of the  
Albemarle Commission Board of Delegates  
April 16, 2020 6:00 P.M.**

**Opening**

Chair Tracey A. Johnson called the meeting to order at 6 p.m.

**Invocation**

Commissioner Fondella Leigh led the Invocation.

**Pledge of Allegiance**

Commissioner Rob Ross led the Pledge of Allegiance.

**Determination of Quorum**

The presence of a quorum was determined by Clerk and Administrative & Benefits Coordinator, Ashley Stallings, by a roll call, with eleven (11) Members present.

<b><u>Name</u></b>	<b><u>County</u></b>
Clayton Riggs	Camden
Robert Kirby	Chowan
Harriett DeHart	Chowan
Elizabeth White	Currituck
Rob Ross	Dare
Howard Swain	Dare
Linda Hofler	Gates
Lloyd Griffin	Pasquotank
Fondella Leigh	Perquimans
Wallace Nelson - Alternante	Perquimans
Jordan Davis	Tyrrell
Tracey A. Johnson	Washington

**Absent Members**

Sandra Duckwall	Camden
Paul Beaumont	Currituck
Earl Pugh	Hyde

**Partners, staff, and guests present:**

Attorney John Leidy of Hornthal, Riley, Ellis and Maland

**Staff members:**

David Whitmer, Interim Executive Director  
Angela Welsh, RPO Director  
Laura Alvarico, AAA Director  
Emily Nicholson, Interim NWDB Director  
Jeri Hansen, Finance Officer  
Ashley Stallings, Clerk and Administrative & Benefits Coordinator

**Guests and Partners**

None

**Agenda (VOTE):**

Commissioner Linda Hofler motioned to adopt the agenda as presented, seconded by Commissioner Jordan Davis, motion carried unanimously.

**Public Comment:**

None.

**Consent Agenda VOTE:**

Commissioner Clayton Riggs motioned to approve the Consent Agenda as presented, seconded by At-Large Delegate Harriet DeHart, motion carried unanimously.

**New Business:**

Chair Johnson requested to combine items A and B for a combination vote. The Board agreed.

**a. Approval of David Whitmer as Interim Executive Director VOTE**

**b. Approval of David Whitmer as EDA Authorized Representative of the Albemarle Commission VOTE**

Commissioner Davis motioned to approve A and B, seconded by Commissioner Leigh, motion carried unanimously.

**c. Senior Nutrition Bids**

Area Agency on Aging (AAA) Director, Laura Alvarico, discussed her March meeting with the Senior Nutrition Bid Committee, At-Large Delegate Howard Swain, Commissioner Hofler, and Commissioner Robert Kirby. The results of their meeting were then discussed with Interim Executive Director David Whitmer, Attorney John Leidy, and the Executive Committee. Director Alvarico recommended a hold on the nutrition bids, and operating on a month-to-month basis with the current caterers due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

Commissioner Kirby agreed with the recommendation on the condition there would not be issues with the current pricing structure. Director Alvarico stated she would bring any issues regarding pricing structure to the Board if the need arises.

Director Alvarico confirmed she is requesting to delay action on the Senior Nutrition Bids due to the Covid-19 pandemic, and will request new bids once it is determined how the program will operate post Covid-19. No vote is required at this time.

Chair Johnson asked Attorney Leidy if this route is sufficient due to the current situation and the unknown. Attorney Leidy responded it is sufficient to extend the current arrangement until there is a clearer picture of where the program needs to go.

**Old Business:**

**a. Consideration of Sponsorship of Water Quality Grant VOTE**

Interim Executive Director Whitmer presented the sponsorship of the 205(j) Water Quality Planning Grant to the Board for official approval. This grant was brought to the Board in January, and has since been approved by the Executive Committee. The grant application is only open to COG's; however, the Albemarle Commission's only role in this grant is to administer the funds as a pass-thru. The Albemarle Commission will be reimbursed for any time spent administering the funds, up to 10% of the total grant. In addition to the Albemarle Commission, the partners in this grant will include the NC Coastal Federation, the town of Nags Head, and Jockey's Ridge State Park. Interim Executive Director Whitmer explained that the purpose of this planning grant would be to identify stormwater management solutions for the soundside beach access behind Jockey's Ridge state park.

Commissioner Ross discussed the bacterial blooms that occur in this area of the sound, and hopes this grant will help find a resolution to the problem. Commissioner Ross asked the board to support an application for the grant since there is minimal effort from the Albemarle Commission.

Commissioner Ross motioned to approve the request to apply for the grant funding, seconded by Commissioner Hofler, motion carried unanimously.

### **FY 2020-2021 Budget Presentation**

Finance Officer Jeri Hansen presented the proposed FY 2020-2021 Budget. Finance Officer Hansen explained the big changes to the budget are the Safe Routes to School Grant and the addition of a Grant Writer. Finance Officer Hansen mentioned overall the programs are operating at the same capacity as last year. The county dues remain at \$0.70 per capita, and the indirect rate remains at 26%, The budget reflects a 3% cost of living adjustment for all employees. The health and dental insurance rates are estimated at a 10% increase. The overall change in the budget from FY 2019-2020 is 2%.

Commissioner Lloyd Griffin stated he is not in favor of the addition of a Grant Writer at this time due to the Covid-19 pandemic. He indicated a budget amendment could be done later in the year if we find we need to hire a Grant Writer.

Commissioner Hofler asked about the health and dental insurance increases. Finance Officer Hansen mentioned the 10% increase is a projection based on last year's budget. At this time, Guardian, who provides the Commission with dental, life, short-term disability, and long-term disability insurance does not foresee any rate increases for next year.

Chair Johnson stated this is just a discussion. The budget will be discussed again at the next meeting and will not be approved until June.

At-Large Delegate Swain asked Finance Officer Hansen if we need the additional position to assist with the Water Quality Grant and if the Commission has a specific person in mind for the position.

Finance Officer Hansen believes we can move forward with the water quality grant without having this position filled. As of right now, the Commission does not have anyone in mind for the position, and Finance Officer Hansen feels the Commission will wait until there is an Executive Director in place prior to hiring anyone.

### **Staff Reports**

Interim Executive Director Whitmer mentioned he has been sending out weekly updates for the programs. He asked if there were any questions for staff. There were none.

### **Report of the Interim Executive Director:**

Interim Executive Director Whitmer discussed how hard the Albemarle Commission staff has been working during these trying times, and how proud he is of the team work that has been shown throughout the staff. Interim Executive Director Whitmer spoke of the Executive Committee weekly meetings and thanked the Board for the support they have provided.

Interim Executive Director Whitmer mentioned the AAA is in need of personal hygiene supplies for their home-bound clients, as well as volunteers, and if anyone would like to donate or volunteer to reach out to AAA Director Alvarico.

Commissioner Ross asked if \$2,000 worth of personal hygiene items would make a difference? Director Alvarico responded by stating yes, as many clients have expressed the need for hygiene items during the agency's weekly calls to their clients.

Commissioner Ross motioned to use \$2,000 of the unallocated fund balance of \$1.5M to buy personal care items needed, under the direction of Director Alvarico, and distribute them to the clients, seconded by Commissioner Davis.



Commissioner Kirby asked if \$2,000 was sufficient? Director Alvarico stated \$2,000 would be a great amount, as she has asked for donations, and she is in the process of applying for a grant for personal hygiene products.

With no further discussion, a roll call vote was made by Ashley Stallings, the motion carried unanimously.

**Committee Report**

Commissioner Griffin discussed where the Search Committee is with the applications for the Executive Director position. Attorney Leidy stated he is hopeful to be in a position in the next couple weeks to set interviews, and to move on to the next round of the process.

Chair Johnson thanked the Committee members and Attorney Leidy for taking on the challenge.

Chair Johnson mentioned herself, Commissioner Griffin, and Commissioner Kirby were tasked to revamp the Executive Director evaluation process. Chair Johnson stated she would like to communicate in the next couple weeks via email about this. Commissioner Griffin feels they will be able to use the job description as a base for the evaluation form once a new Executive Director is hired.

**Chairperson Comments:**

Chair Johnson discussed the possibility of using Zoom or Go-To-Meeting for next month's Board meeting if we are unable to meet face-to-face.

**Board Member Comments:**

Commissioner Riggs spoke of how much he appreciates the work of Interim Executive Director Whitmer, and staff, and thanked everyone for all their hard work.

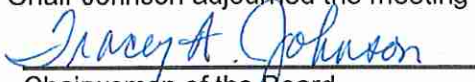
Commissioner Davis mentioned he appreciates Interim Executive Director Whitmer and what a great job he is doing given the circumstances. Commissioner Davis also mentioned his county had four confirmed cases of COVID-19 this past week.

Chair Johnson thanked Interim Executive Director Whitmer for his excellent work. She thanked the Executive Committee, and all of the Directors. She then thanked all the board members for joining in on the conference call.

Attorney Leidy echoed all the comments about the great job the Executive Committee and all the staff are doing under these extremely difficult circumstances.


**Adjournment**

Chair Johnson adjourned the meeting at 6:56 p.m.

  
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Chairwoman of the Board  
Tracey A. Johnson

Attested by:

  
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Clerk to the Board Ashley Stallings

  
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Date

