

**Minutes of the
Albemarle Commission Board of
Delegates March 21, 2019
6:00PM**

Opening

Secretary Linda Hofler (Acting Chairperson) called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

Pledge of Allegiance

Secretary Linda Hofler led the Board in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Invocation

Board Member Fondella Leigh led the Board in the Invocation.

Determination of Quorum

The presence of a quorum was determined by Clerk and Administrative Benefits Coordinator, Ashley Stallings, with twelve (12) Members present.

<u>Name</u>	<u>County</u>
Clayton Riggs	Camden
Sandra Duckwall	Camden
Robert Kirby	Chowan
Harriett DeHart	Chowan
Elizabeth White	Currituck
Howard Swain	Dare
Linda Hofler	Gates
Earl Pugh	Hyde
Lloyd Griffin	Pasquotank
Fondella Leigh	Perquimans
Jordan Davis	Tyrrell
Marion Gilbert	Ex Officio
<u>Absent Members</u>	
Paul Beaumont	Currituck
Rob Ross	Dare
Tracey A. Johnson	Washington

Partners, guests, and staff present:

Attorney Hood Ellis of Hornthal, Riley, Ellis and Maland was present.

Staff members:

Melody Wilkins, Executive Director
David Whitmer, NWDB Director
Angela Welsh, RPO Director
Carolyn LaDow, Finance Officer
Ashley Stallings, Administrative & Benefits Coordinator

Guests and Partners

None.

Agenda (VOTE):

Board Member Clayton Riggs made a Motion to approve the agenda as presented. His Motion was seconded by Board Member Fondella Leigh. With no further discussion, the Motion carried unanimously.

Approval of February, 2019 Minutes (VOTE):

Board Member Clayton Riggs made a Motion to approve as presented. His Motion was seconded by Board Member Earl Pugh. With no further discussion, the Motion carried unanimously.

Public Comments:

None.

Old Business:

a. Charter/Bylaws

Secretary Linda Hofler announced all 10 counties have approved the Bylaws, being so the Bylaws are now in effect.

New Business:

a. NWDB Consideration for Outreach Coordinator Services (VOTE)

NWDB Director David Whitmer spoke about the NCWorks Outreach Coordinator Services. For past two years this service has been contracted out for the Coordinator. Heidi O'Neal has been in this position which has been funded through the Innovation grant. The grant and contract for this position ends March 31, 2019. NWDB would like to continue these services and has applied for an Enhancement grant with Division Workforce Solutions (DWS). The grant is expected to be approved. However, the grant review team is behind and will not be able to review NWDB's grant until the end of the month. NWDB Director Whitmer expressed how valuable the services have become to our community and the need to prevent a lapse in service. Sufficient formula funds are available to support a new contract without the Enhancement grant. NWDB requests to use formula funds for this service until grant funds are received to prevent a lapse. Staff and NWDB Chair recommended that the Albemarle Commission Board of Delegates authorize the Executive Director to sign the contract for the NCWorks Outreach Coordinator services to continue.

Board Member Lloyd Griffin asked if at the end of the month no new contract exists, would we dissolve this program or would we carry over with a budget amendment to use funds to support this program? NWDB Director Whitmer stated if there is no contract in place, the contractor would not report to work.

Board Member Lloyd Griffin made a Motion to accept the Staff's recommendation. His Motion was seconded by Board Member Jordan Davis. With no further discussion, the Motion carried unanimously.

b. Consideration of "Safe Routes to School" Grant (VOTE)

RPO Director Angela Welsh discussed the Federal government discontinuing funding the Active Routes to School program in May. NCDOT is now offering funding through a competitive grant process to provide funding for innovative non-infrastructure projects which promotes bicycle and pedestrian safety. This grant is paid on a reimbursement basis and is awarded for three years with a maximum award of \$150,000 per year with a local 20% match required. The proposed project will be developed through a partnership with NC Vision Zero. NC Vision Zero is a part of the Institute for Transportation Research & Education (ITRE) at North Carolina State University. NC Vision Zero would develop videos and print materials regarding bicycle and pedestrian safety for all public/charter, and private schools within the 10-county region to be used as part of their physical education if they choose. Staff recommends approval of the submittal of the grant

application by the Board of Delegates. Also, recommends the Board of Delegates to approve the required 20% match up to \$30,000 per year for three years if the grants funds are awarded.

Board Member Robert Kirby asked if we are competing with others for this grant. RPO Director Welsh responded by saying she has reached out to other RPO's and she thinks not many applied due to the time restraint. She stated Triangle J Council of Governments is possibly doing something similar which might reduce our cost.

Board Member Earl Pugh made a Motion to apply for \$100,000 a year but stipulated adding a \$20,000 annual administrative fee for the Commission. His Motion was seconded by Jordan Davis. With no further discussion, the Motion was carried unanimously.

c. County Dues

Executive Director Melody Wilkins stated that the County/Municipal Dues letters were mailed out on March 5, 2019 to all the Region R counties and towns. Director Wilkins reported due rates didn't change. She has had a response from one of the towns but none of the counties.

Board Member Lloyd Griffin made a Motion to accept Staff's recommendation for contributions for each county. His Motions was seconded by Board Member Sandra Duckwall. With no further discussion, the Motion carried unanimously.

d. 2019-2020 Budget Review Presentation

Finance Officer Carolyn LaDow presented the proposed 2019-20 Albemarle Commission budget. She asked that any recommendations, proposed changes or updates be submitted to staff prior to the Board budget review in April. Workforce Development Consortium Board voted to approve the Workforce Development budget, which was included in the packet documentation. The budget was prepared using information provided by Albemarle Regional Health Services (ARHS) who provide accounting services to Albemarle Commission. For the purpose of comparison, ARHS has projected a 2.5% salary increase for all their employees. Albemarle Commission is budgeting an anticipated 10% increase for Employee Medical and Dental insurance. Retirement rate is currently 7.79% and no information has been received from the local government state board of a proposed change. The current match of 1% for 401K for Albemarle Commission staff remains intact. Indirect rate remains the same at 26%. Program Directors and Coordinators had an input in the proposed budget. Board Member Clayton Riggs asked about the estimated \$460,000 increase in the budget. He asked do we project \$460,000 will come from revenue from the State? Finance Officer LaDow responded that we will need to utilize fund balance this year and move \$33,537.00 from fund balance in order to balance the budget. Secretary Linda Hofler asked if we are putting enough funds aside for retiree health benefits. Finance Officer LaDow responded that Albemarle Commission no longer has retirees who are eligible, as the final retirees have transitioned off Albemarle Commission's health insurance plan. Board Member Elizabeth White requested metrics to show the budget trends. Finance Officer LaDow responded it would be difficult to do with historical data. But going forward this should not be an issue to produce. Board Member Elizabeth White asked that Staff produce a metric for the April meeting of last year's budget versus this year's proposed budget. Board Member Lloyd Griffin asked Staff to remove the \$33,537 projected inflow from the Fund Balance from the proposed budget and if the increase becomes necessary during the new fiscal year to do an amendment to the budget. Finance Officer LaDow responded that she would adjust anticipated legal fees accordingly.

Staff Reports

Secretary Linda Hofler reminded all that a vote was made last month to only have one Albemarle Commission Program Director at each Board Meeting. However, this month three Program Directors had business to present.

Report of the Executive Director:

Secretary Linda Hofler opened the floor to Albemarle Commission Executive Director Melody Wilkins. Director Wilkins spoke about the phone and server upgrades that should occur sometime in late April-early May. Director Wilkins touched on the Safety Committee's progress on the creation of a new Safety Manual. Director Wilkins talked about the Clean Water Management Grant which is matched by the Albemarle Commission by 33%. Director Wilkins announced Finance Officer Carolyn LaDow will move to a part-time position within Albemarle Commission in AAA. Interviews have been conducted and a final candidate will soon be chosen to fill the Finance Officer position. Director Wilkins reminded the Board that Jennifer Haynie with the NC Environment Special Projects Division of Water Infrastructure will make a 20-minute presentation at the May Board meeting.

Report of Committees

Workforce Development met earlier in the afternoon to review the proposed Workforce 2019-20 budget. The budget was approved by the Consortium Board. Also, the Bylaws were amended to reflect the business of Workforce Development and how they can move forward with the organization based on the membership. Discussed was clarification on how the members are appointed and the terms of the membership. The annual retreat last week that was held in Kitty Hawk was also discussed.

The RPO board meeting will be held on April 17, 2019.

Secretary Linda Hofler opened the floor for discussion of the next meeting scheduled for April 18th noting that it is the evening before Good Friday. Several board members raised their hands that they would be out of town and unable to attend an April 18th meeting. The meeting was changed to April 25th at 6 PM. Everyone present was in agreement to change the meeting date due to the Holiday.

Chairwoman Comments:

Secretary and acting Chairperson Linda Hofler thanked everyone for attending the meeting. She stated that Gates County is working on their budget. Also mentioned that progress is being made on the Middle School renovation.

Board Member Comments:

Board Member Clayton Riggs reported the \$1.8M internet work in Camden County is scheduled to begin at the end of May when everything dries up from all the rain. Should take about 18 months. Also, noted the waste water treatment in South Mills has been upgraded with a new pond. The waste water treatment plant at the Camden Center is on budget and scheduled to open in June.

Board Member Robert Kirby reported a meeting was held with Senator Steinburg and Representative Goodwin expressing a major concern about not receiving a grant for the internet that Chowan County needs. He mentioned a scheduled meeting with Chairman of Vidant Health regarding the NC Health program. The treasurer is trying to pull \$400M statewide out of the program, with \$40M coming out of the Vidant Health system potentially having a significant impact on the Chowan Hospital.

Board Member Lloyd Griffin stated incoming large industries are outpacing small businesses in Pasquotank County. Pasquotank Economic Development is looking at industries in the region, what they have, what may be coming in and how best to recruit based on community strengths and weaknesses.

Board Member Jordan Davis reported Tyrrell County is going through the budget process and losing tax base.

Board Member Fondella Leigh reported that Perquimans County is in the budget process as well. Commissioner Leigh also mentioned the new assisted living center in Hertford is in the process of being built.

Board Member Earl Pugh stated that Hyde County is also in the budget process. Discussed an article in the Washington Post about rising sea levels and losing valuable farmland due to the high salt content in the soil.

Ex Officio Marion Gilbert spoke of 3 Currituck County residents including Albemarle Commission Board Member Paul Beaumont running for the late Representative Walter Jones' vacant seat.

Adjournment

Secretary Linda Hoffer adjourned the Board meeting at 7:18 pm.



Acting Chairperson of the Board
Linda Hoffer



Date

Attested by:



Clerk to the Board Ashley Stallings