

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

Opening

Acting Chair Rob Ross called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

Invocation

Commissioner Fondella Leigh led the Invocation.

Pledge of Allegiance

Commissioner Robert Kirby led the Pledge of Allegiance.

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 |
| Robert Kirby | Chowan |
| Harriett DeHart | Chowan |
| Elizabeth White | Currituck |
| Rob Ross | Dare |
| Howard Swain | Dare |
| Linda Hofler | Gates |
| Earl Pugh | Hyde |
| Lloyd Griffin | Pasquotank |
| Fondella Leigh | Perquimans |
| Jordan Davis | Tyrrell |
| Tracey A. Johnson | Washington |
| <u>Absent Members</u> | |
| Sandra Duckwall | Camden |
| Owen Etheridge | Currituck |

Partners, staff, and guests present:

Attorney John Leidy of Hornthal, Riley, Ellis and Maland

Staff members:

Michael Ervin, Executive Director
David Whitmer, NWDB Director
Angela Welsh, ARPO Director
Laura Alvarico, AAA Director
Jeri Hansen, Finance Officer
Ashley Stallings, Clerk and Administrative & Benefits Coordinator

Guests and Partners

Nancy Nichols, Chowan County TDA
Corrina Ruffieux, Visit Elizabeth City
Sara Phelps, Marketing Director Eastern 4-H Center
Phillip McMullan, Harbor Town Project
Nicholas Didow, Kenan-Flagler Business School UNC

Agenda (VOTE):

Commissioner Clayton Riggs motioned to adopt the agenda as presented, seconded by Commissioner Linda Hofler. With a roll call vote, the motion carried unanimously.

Public Comment:

None.

Consent Agenda VOTE:

Commissioner Earl Pugh motioned to approve the Consent Agenda as presented, seconded by Commissioner Kirby. With a roll call vote, the motion carried unanimously.

Acting Chair Ross asked the Board to consider moving Item 9 New Business above Item 8 to discuss Item 9-B first.

Commissioner Riggs motioned to trade the two items to expedite the Harbor Town Item, seconded by Commissioner Hofler. With a roll call vote, the motion carried unanimously.

New Business:

A. Harbor Town Project Discussion

Corrina Ruffieux from Visit Elizabeth City Tourism Development Authority discussed the Harbor Town Project. Ms. Ruffieux asked for support, partnership, and permission to borrow the Albemarle Commission SAMs number to apply for the CARES Act Grant. Ms. Ruffieux advised the Board the intent is to submit for the maximum grant amount of \$200,000. Ms. Ruffieux discussed the plans for using those funds. Ms. Ruffieux asked the Albemarle Commission to commit a 20% match in funding, as required by the grant application. The Board was advised the matching funds would actually come from Towns within the Region the grant is serving; however, the grant application required proof of matching funds upon application. If the project cannot secure a commitment for the full 20% match from the Towns, Ms. Ruffieux stated the project would not move forward. It is not her intent that the Commission actually provide any matching funds for this project.

After much discussion Commissioner Jordan Davis motioned the Albemarle Commission will put in writing, Albemarle Commission will, in the event needed, provide the matching funds necessary so the grant application can be submitted to the EDA for the CARES Act available due to COVID-19 funding for branding and marketing for the Inner Banks, seconded by Commissioner Kirby.

Attorney John Leidy informed the board since the Albemarle Commission is submitting the application we would be in control of said application. Should the additional funding from the 5-counties/port city's not come together we could withdraw the application as the applicant.

With no further discussion, a roll call vote was called, the motion carried unanimously.

B. Personnel Policy – Article V, Section 2 (F) Discussion

Commissioner Pugh discussed Article V, Section 2 (F) of the Albemarle Commission Personnel Policy, as Hyde County wanted to fill a Commissioner position with an Albemarle Commission employee. The policy states "no employee shall be a candidate for nomination or elector to office in the local government in the Albemarle Commission's region". Commissioner Pugh wanted to discuss for clarification on why this provision was placed in the Albemarle Commission Personnel Policy and the possibility of changing said provision.

Commissioner Pugh motioned to remove Section 2 (F) under Article V of the Personnel Policy. After some discussion, Commissioner Pugh withdrew his motion.

Old Business:

A. Comprehensive Regional Economic Development Strategy (CREDS) Discussion

Executive Director Michael Ervin discussed the need to review and determine what goals and documents need to be updated. Acting Chair Ross suggested a committee be created to address the updates for the CREDS. It was determined the committee would consist of Commissioner Lloyd Griffin, Executive Director Michael Ervin, and Northeastern Workforce Development Board (NWDB) Director David Whitmer.

Commissioner Riggs suggested for the CREDS to be re-written to become a living document and possibly shorten it. Commissioner Hofler suggested to list items in a bulletin format.

Staff Reports

Acting Chair Ross asked ARPO Director, Angela Welsh, about funding NCDOT received. ARPO Director Welsh responded stating legislature was preventing NCDOT from going further in the hole.

Report of the Executive Director:

Executive Director Michael Ervin advised the Board that staff are continuing to telework, and come into the office as needed, per the Governor's guidance. Executive Director Ervin reminded the Board to complete and return the fraud letters they should have received from the auditors. Executive Director Ervin shared he attended his first NC Regional Councils Meeting via Zoom, where the discussion revolved around Medicare. He felt this could benefit some of our clients, and he would bring more information as it was provided. Additionally, Executive Director Ervin is researching Broadband for our region.

Executive Director Ervin advised the board the Albemarle Commission qualifies for a non-competitive EDA grant in the amount of \$400,000. Acting Chair Ross asked how long we knew about this grant. NWDB Director Whitmer stated it had been out about 3-4 weeks. Executive Director Ervin said he spoke with our EDA representative Hilary Sherman. Executive Director Ervin said this grant money could be used to fill the potential grant writer position and fund it for 2 years.

Acting Chair Ross motioned to move forward with applying for the non-competitive EDA grant, seconded by Commissioner Kirby. With a roll call vote, the motion carried unanimously.

Executive Director Ervin discussed the status of the salary study. Executive Director Ervin mentioned how helpful NWDB Director Whitmer, and all the staff, have been to him.

Committee Reports

None.

Board Member Comments:

Chair Tracey Johnson discussed she hoped to have goals for Executive Director Ervin next month.

Commissioner Griffin discussed COVID impacts and that Pasquotank County has moved forward with obtaining a certified industrial site through the state.

Commissioner Leigh discussed COVID impacts in Perquimans County.

Commissioner Davis discussed the COVID impacts in Tyrrell County.

At-Large member Elizabeth White discussed COVID impacts in Currituck County and the impacts of the amounts of new people to the area.

Commissioner Pugh discussed COVID impacts in Hyde County.

Commissioner Hofler discussed COVID impacts in Gates County and mentioned their inspections department is doing well.

Commissioner Kirby discussed COVID impacts in Chowan County and mentioned a new Sherriff will be appointed.

Commissioner Riggs discussed COVID impacts. A heavy equipment company will be moving to the Commerce Park. Commissioner Riggs also mentioned a new waterfront project that will be staring construction in September.

Acting Chair Ross discussed COVID impacts in Dare County and mentioned the National Park Services announced the Cape Hatteras National Seashore for the month of June recorded the second highest tourist traffic.


Closed Session

Commissioner Riggs motioned to enter into a Closed Session pursuant to N.C.G.S. 143-318.11(a)(3) and (6) to consult with the Board attorney regarding a matter protected by the attorney-client privilege and to discuss confidential personnel matters, seconded by Commissioner Pugh. With a roll call vote the motion carried unanimously. The Board entered into a Closed Session at 8:10 p.m.

The Board returned to the open session at 8:40 p.m.

Adjournment

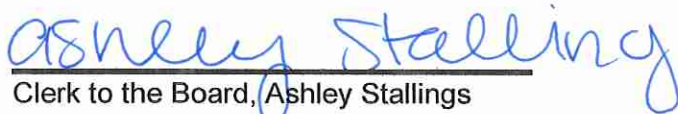
Commissioner Hofler made a motion to adjourn. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Pugh. There was no discussion and the motion carried unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 8:42 p.m.



Acting-Chair of the Board
Rob Ross

8/20/20

Attested by:



Clerk to the Board, Ashley Stallings

8/20/20

Date