MINUTES – JULY 6, 2020

The Caswell County Board of Commissioners met in regular session at 9:00 a.m. on Monday, July 6, 2020. The meeting was held electronically using Zoom Webinar software. Members present: Rick McVey, Chairman, David J. Owen, Vice Chairman, Sterling Carter, William E. Carter, Nathaniel Hall, Jeremiah Jefferies and Steve Oestreicher. Also present: Bryan Miller, County Manager, Brian Ferrell, County Attorney, and Debra Ferrell representing The Caswell Messenger. Paula P. Seamster, Clerk to the Board, recorded the minutes.

WELCOME

MOMENT OF SILENT PRAYER

Chairman McVey opened the meeting with a moment of Silent Prayer.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Board of Commissioners and all the guests in the attendance recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

The Clerk to the Board read the public comments received via email.

“My name is John Claggett and I reside at 108 Jaye Lane, Providence, NC. Caswell County has proudly displayed its motto, “Preserving the past, embracing the future”, for all to see. Today you have an agenda item to discuss the Confederate Monument on the square in front of the Historic Courthouse. This monument was dedicated on September 10, 1921 with the inscription written by Reverend Burke stating “To the sons of Caswell County who served in the war of 1861-1865 in answer to the call of the country. In whatever event that may face our national existence may God give us the will to do what is right, that like our forefathers, we may impress our time with steadfastness of our lives.” This war memorial was to honor veterans who lived and died fighting during a horrific war and expressed hope for national unity after World War I also known as The Great War. There is no mention of finance, trade, race, or politics. Almost 1/3 of the cost of this memorial came from public funds approved by Caswell County Commissioners. In 1958, the U.S. Congress gave Confederate Veterans the same legal status as U.S. Veterans (U.S. Public Law 85-425, Section 410) and all Confederate graves were declared those of United States war dead, the same as WWI, WWII, Korean, Vietnam, or the current war on terror. I believe this congressional act was done with the concept of "One Nation Under God, Indivisible" in mind. 620,000 soldiers died in the Civil War also referred to as The War between the States. Nearly as many as all other wars and conflicts combined. 40,000 men in the N.C. Confederate service died, more than any other Southern state. In Caswell County, Thomas Day was a free man of color and entrepreneur in the pre-Civil War South. He was also a slave owner with slaves working in his furniture workshop and his residence. White tobacco farmers relied on indentured servants before and after the Civil War to work in the fields. Blacks owned slaves. Whites owned slaves. This memorial was not constructed or erected using slave labor, unlike the National Register of Historic Places in Caswell County, NC which are numerous. According to the University of North Carolina this statue is known as the “Common Soldier” statue, and serves as a memorial to the County’s Confederate veterans, not a government. On December 6, 1865**,** the 13th amendment abolished slavery in the United States. The [14th Amendment](https://www.history.com/topics/black-history/fourteenth-amendment), ratified in 1868, granted citizenship to all persons and guaranteed “equal protection of the laws” to all citizens. In 1870, the [15th Amendment](https://www.history.com/topics/black-history/fifteenth-amendment) granted voting rights regardless of race, color, or previous condition of servitude. It took another 50 years (August 18, 1920) for women to be granted the right to vote with the 19th Amendment. So, is the Confederate Memorial in front the antebellum Historic Courthouse about race, politics, or veterans? Do we erase history? Should the statue be moved, destroyed, or left in place? “Preserve the past and embrace the future” or does the Caswell County motto not mean anything today? These are the facts and the living questions that this Board should discuss. Thank you.”

“My name is Pat Warren and I live at 36 Main Street Prospect Hill. My observation has been that most public comments to the Board of Commissioners have come to you in the form of a request or a complaint but that is not my purpose here. When I heard that the Prospect Hill Convenience Center was going to close permanently, it was a disaster for me as well as for the whole community. I immediately called Commissioner Oestreicher, whose district I am in, to brainstorm any possibilities to keep it open and to express the hardship it would cause the community to close the Center. Closure was especially difficult for me to accept because I was on the Board of Commissioners when the convenience centers were devised and built. It was a great service to all Caswell County communities then and is still to this day. So to get to the point of my public comment, I want to give you all a huge thank you for coming up with a solution to keep the Prospect Hill Convenience Center open. I have heard from other community members and they are also appreciative and relieved of the burden of finding a place to dispose of their trash and recyclables. I know from experience that you are faced with some problems do not have a good solution but, in this case, you found the solution and acted upon it to serve the people of the Prospect Hill community and we are grateful.”

“My name is DeAsia Noble. I’ve lived in Caswell since I was eight-years old and I am now 23. While in this community I’ve had men claiming to be in the KKK run me out a store. I’ve been told I’m scary because I’m black. Both have happened in this community while I was a teenager. The Confederate monument is a constant reminder of the enslavement of black people. Racism is very real in Caswell, and is even seen in the high school and middle school. To bring a community together it starts here and also with change the racially insensitive county motto. People do not want to live in a community with such racial divide. You cannot bring businesses to this area because of this. We must leave this tradition of hatred in the past. So much light could shine, but it must start from the top. Your African American community has spoken, people whose families were enslaved in Caswell county have spoken, the black churches have spoken. We want change.”

“Nateka Adams, no address given. Growing up in Caswell County I seen little to no representation of black people or black lives in general and I still see nothing and the statue just reminds me of that! How can a person love their community and see a statue of someone that held their people back for years through racism?”

“The Caswell County Local Foods Council (CCLFC) thanks you for the $1000 grant you awarded us!  As you know, our farmers market has had to make changes this year to prevent the spread of covid-19.  Some of the usual activities have been put on hold giving us the opportunity to use some funds for coupons to help shoppers ease financial stresses they may be encountering during the pandemic.  In our effort to be as safe as we can practically be, we reward shoppers who wear masks (which we now require and provide if they don’t have them) and wash their hands at our handwashing stations with a $5 Pandemic Produce coupon to spend at the market.  CCLFC has distributed 800 coupons to date!  This $1000 will enable us to give 200 more coupons to purchase fresh local vegetables!  Remember, these vegetables are fresh from our local farms, therefore more nutrient dense than those from the conventional grocery stores, contributing to better health outcomes.  When CCLFC reimburses its vendors for coupons they accept, your money supports our local food growers and is returned to our local county economy.  Thank you for supporting such a winning endeavor!”

“Sandra Aldridge. You are aware that our county was formed in 1777, from Orange County, during the American Revolution. Our county motto is, Preserving the Past and Embracing the Future. Our county has a long and rich history and it worth remembering and retaining. Our County motto expresses these sentiments, Preserving the Past, Embracing the Future*.*  These are not just empty words. There are many historical homes, churches, structures, cemeteries, and monuments scattered throughout the many communities in the county. Leasburg was the first county seat and had the first post office. Many beautiful homes are located there. One being the home of Solomon Lea, the first president of Greensboro College. In the Locust Hill area are the homes of Bedford Brown and Calvin Graves. The Warren Store in the Prospect Hill community was built around 1858, and is still being preserved by the Warren Family. The Post Office in Prospect Hill has existed since 1854. Milton has drawn visitors to the area due to the workshop of Thomas Day and the recently restored Bank of Milton. Yanceyville was once a hub of activity. Many retail establishments once surrounded the town square. Harrelson’s, Neal’s Department Store, Steed’s, and in later years, Watlington’s. There was also Western Auto, Pope’s, Yanceyville Drug, and the Bank of Yanceyville. The Caswell Theater provided entertainment from 1934 until 1957. The Ford Motor Company was located in an impressive building on the square. Sadly, not only have these businesses disappeared, but many of the historical structures they were once housed in. Venturing down Main Street are some homes built in the 1800’s. Many new residents have been drawn to the town as they realize their dreams of restoring a historical home. A magnificent two-story brick home, that was constructed in 1832, sets at the end of the street. Unfortunately, one of the finest homes built in 1850, by Dr. Allen Gunn, was demolished just a few years ago. One the town square rests several monuments. One is a monument erected in 1929, dedicated to those who died serving their country during WWI. It is unlike many of these monuments scattered throughout, as it is inclusive of all races. Another monument was dedicated in 1991 to all the brave men and women who have served in the military from our county. The only non-military monument was erected in 2016. It is dedicated to an educator, NL. Dillard who served as the principal of Caswell Training School for 37 years. Lastly, a monument stands to those soldiers who served during the Civil War. There are many causes for this conflict and scholars have debated this for years. Many men in our county were called to serve. They may not have understood all the causes of the war, just like many soldiers who served in many wars and conflicts since 1945. Yet, all of them went to perform what they believed was their duty. Companies were organized throughout the county: The Leasburg Grays, The Caswell Rifles, The Caswell Rangers, The Caswell County Boys, and the Milton Blues. As with any war, many of the men from the South did not return home to the comfort of their Mothers or wives. They died on battlefields with names like Manassas, Petersburg, Fort Fisher, Antietam, Chancellorsville, and Gettysburg. Others would die of wounds or diseases in Franklin, TN, Ashland, VA, or in Prisoner of War Camps at Elmira, New York, or Point Lookout, Maryland. To add to the family’s grief, they often did not have remains to bury. As many of the soldiers were buried in mass graves. The Confederate Monument pays homage to the memory of these men and boys. Mrs. Barzillai S. (Malvina) Graves, Mrs. Thomas (Nannie Lea) Florence, and Mrs. George (Mary Slade) Anderson headed a committee to raise the necessary funds for a monument. Members of the Board of County Commissioners, C. H. King, T. H. Hatchett, and J.M. Williams agreed to donate $1000 from the County. The $3500.00 needed for the monument was raised. The base is made from granite from Surry County, North Carolina. The bronze solider was designed by the J.F. Manning Co., of Washington, DC. The monument dedication ceremony was held on September 10, 1921. Mrs. G. A. (Mary) Anderson, spoke at the ceremony and said, “To you Mr. Hatchett, as Chairman of the County Board of Commissioners and to your successors in office, conscious of your patriotism, and believe that your successors will be filed with the same high spirit, we commit into your care and keeping this sacred trust, GUARD IT WELL.” Mr. T.H. Hatchett accepted the gift on behalf of his associate board members, and saying “we accept this faithful trust from your hands and pledge that we will guard it well and pass it to our successors in office, feeling sure that they will hold it in equal sacredness.” Today, you serving as elected officials in our county will be discussing the solider monument. I know that you realize how the value of all of our county’s history. So much of our history and been removed, neglected, and destroyed in the name of progress. The high school that Mr. Dillard gave his due diligence to, lays in waste today. Unless drastic steps are taken it will disappear. I urge you to remember the promises made by your predecessors almost 100 years ago. Keep all the monuments of history on our town square. Protect our proud heritage. Live by our county’s motto.”

RECOGNITIONS

There were no recognitions.

ACTION ITEMS

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Commissioner Owen moved, seconded by Commissioner Hall to approve the agenda. After a roll call vote, the motion carried unanimously. (Commissioners S. Carter, W. Carter, Hall, Jefferies, McVey, Oestreicher, and Owen voted in favor.)

APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA

Commissioner W. Carter moved, seconded by Commissioner Owen to approve the consent agenda. After a roll call vote, the motion carried unanimously. (Commissioners S. Carter, W. Carter, Hall, Jefferies, McVey, Oestreicher, and Owen voted in favor.)

The following items were included on the Consent Agenda:

A. Approval of Minutes of June 8, 2020 Special Meeting

B. Approval of Minutes of June 15, 2020 Regular Meeting

C. Approval of Minutes of June 15, 2020 Special Meeting

D. Approval of Minutes of June 22, 2020 Special Meeting

E. Approval of Minutes of June 29, 2020 Special Meeting

DESIGNATION OF VOTING DELEGATE TO NCACC’S 113TH ANNUAL CONFERENCE

Chairman McVey asked for a volunteer and stated that Commissioner Hall usually does this for the Board. Commissioner Hall stated that he had done this in the past but he did not feel he could do it this year because he is having a difficult time with his internet and recommended that someone do this.

Commissioner S. Carter stated “I’d be happy to do it.” Chairman McVey responded “Mr. Sterling Carter has volunteered to do it but we need an alternate too.” Commissioner Owen stated “I will be the alternate if it is okay.”

Commissioner Hall moved, seconded by Chairman McVey to designate Commissioner Sterling Carter as Caswell County’s voting delegate and Commissioner David Owen as the alternate for the NCACC 113th Annual Conference. After a roll call vote, the motion carried unanimously. (Commissioners S. Carter, W. Carter, Hall, Jefferies, McVey, Oestreicher, and Owen voted in favor.)

NACO 2020 VOTING CREDENTIALS FOR ANNUAL BUSINESS MEETING,

MONDAY, JULY 20, 2020 AT 2:00 P.M.

Commissioner S. Carter asked “Do you want me to do that one too? I’m going to be up here anyway because that’s our meeting anyway, the 20th right so I’ll be right here.”

Commissioner Owen moved, seconded by Chairman McVey to appoint Commissioner Sterling Carter as the NACo 2020 Voting Credential for the Annual Business Meeting. After a roll call vote, the motion carried unanimously. (Commissioners S. Carter, W. Carter, Hall, Jefferies, McVey, Oestreicher, and Owen voted in favor.)

PRELIMINARY ASSESSMENT RESOLUTION FOR IMPROVEMENTS

TO SHADOW RIDGE ROAD

Mr. Miller stated “Commissioners in your agenda packet you have a resolution for a preliminary assessment for Shadow Ridge Road. Currently we are missing one key piece of data from DOT to move forward and that’s the amount that would be charged for the survey and plat. So at this time even though we have this on your agenda under an action item I’m not going to ask you to move forward with taking any action on this. We will need this information before you can approve the resolution, expect to see this resolution back on your agenda in 2 weeks. Hopefully by then we will have all the needed information from DOT and at that time we will ask for approval of the resolution and for the Board to schedule a date for the public hearing.”

Commissioner S. Carter asked “I was Mr. Chairman kind of curious about public hearings and how these circumstances work and how we get the word out, is it just to the residents of that area or is it to the Pelham community or is it to the whole county?” Mr. Miller responded “This…no the public hearing would be available to the whole county.”

SEMI-ANNUAL POST CLOSURE MONITORING – CASWELL COUNTY LANDFILL

Mr. Miller stated “Commissioners as you know and as we’ve spoken about before we received a letter from DEQ and our monitoring service saying that some of our landfill levels exceeded prescribed limits. That occurred in 2018. The state had requested the county to put together a plan for mitigation. The county contracted with S&ME to do that. S&ME’s plan called for several additional well drills in monitoring of those wells. The Board approved the plan, approved about $45,000 to have the wells drilled and the plan was subsequently submitted to the state and the state did not approve the plan so we did not continue with the well drilling. S&ME has since then created a new plan that has been submitted to the state and that plan was submitted to the state it was approved therefore we can move forward with the new plan for a little bit less money than what was approved in 2018. The $40,000 that we’re requesting is in the Solid Waste budget so this is not additional money coming out of fund balance, it’s in the approved in the 2020-21 budget. So you have the contract in front of you and we would ask that we would be able to move forward with the mitigation plan for the landfill.”

Commissioner S. Carter moved, seconded by Commissioner Owen to approve the contract for S&ME. After a roll call vote, the motion carried unanimously. (Commissioners S. Carter, W. Carter, Hall, Jefferies, McVey, Oestreicher, and Owen voted in favor.)

APPOINTMENTS TO BOARDS AND COMMITTEES

Commissioner Owen asked if the Board could appoint all the boards and committees at one time since there are more vacancies than applications and added that this is what the Board did the last time. Chairman McVey responded that it would be fine with him. The Board agreed.

Caswell County Adult Advisory Council

Ms. Barbara Ann Jefferies and Ms. Jean Vernon applied

Heritage and Cultural Preservation Committee

Ms. Sandra Aldridge and Mr. Robert Neal applied.

Senior Center Advisory Committee

Ms. Jean Vernon applied.

Commissioner Owen moved, seconded by Commissioner S. Carter to appoint Ms. Barbara Ann Jefferies and Ms. Jean Vernon to the Caswell County Adult Advisory Council; Ms. Sandra Aldridge and Mr. Robert Neal to the Heritage and Cultural Preservation Committee; and Ms. Jean Vernon to the Senior Center Advisory Committee. After a roll call vote, the motion carried unanimously. (Commissioners S. Carter, W. Carter, Hall, Jefferies, McVey, Oestreicher, and Owen voted in favor.)

COVID-19 UPDATE

Mr. Miller asked Ms. Jennifer Eastwood, Public Health Director, to give the Board an update on COVID-19.

Ms. Jennifer Eastwood gave an update on COVID-19. She stated that the case count for Caswell County is 147. Ms. Eastwood stated that it has been a busy couple of weeks with testing. She stated that the first testing event was in Milton and 64 individuals were tested and the second testing event was at the Southern Caswell Ruritan Building and 98 individuals were tested. Ms. Eastwood stated that there was a testing event planned for Yanceyville last week but there were a couple of staff members that tested positive at the Brian Center and added that thankfully no residents have had any symptoms but because the congregate living settings are such a hot spot the county wanted to be aggressive so 108 staff members at the Brian Center were tested on Wednesday of last week.

Commissioner S. Carter asked “That was just the staff?” Ms. Eastwood responded that it was just the staff and added that the Brian Center is responsible for testing the residents and that will be done this week. She added that weekly tests will be performed on the staff.

Ms. Eastwood stated that 2 individuals do constitute an outbreak but she hopes that will be the only two. She stated that she appreciated the Brian Center working with the Health Department to take an aggressive approach. Ms. Eastwood stated that the two staff members that tested positive have very little interaction with the residents. She stated that that governor just signed an executive order that would provide baseline testing for all skilled nursing facilities in the state. Ms. Eastwood stated that this week testing was supposed to be done at Shady Grove United Methodist Church but due to the extreme heat the testing event has been moved to the Providence Volunteer Fire Department where a drive through testing site will be located in the building. She stated that the event will take place from 9:00 to 12:00 and 2:00 to 5:00. Ms. Eastwood thanked Kenneth Everett for offering this location. Ms. Eastwood stated that the Health Department has had a lot of support from several different departments and she is grateful for it. She stated that it is the little things like A.J. Fuqua stopping by to drop off cooling cloths or making sure there is a fan or misters set up. Ms. Eastwood stated that Josh Benfield stops by every morning at the testing events to make sure the printers are working. She added that employees have called to ask what they could do to help and that is really appreciated. Ms. Eastwood stated that the Health Department is continuing to test and the numbers are going up. She asked that people practice the 3 Ws: wear a mask, wait at least 6 feet apart, wash your hands frequently. Ms. Eastwood stated that contact tracing is becoming extremely difficult because people do not want to give any information but this is the only way to stop the spread of the virus.

Commissioner S. Carter stated “Thank y’all for everything that you are doing.”

Mr. Miller stated that he thought the Health Department is doing a tremendous job and have really risen to the occasion when it comes to testing sites and he was really proud to be associated with this group as well as the other departments, EMS, Solid Waste, and 911 that are helping to support the health department. He stated that he wanted to bring the Board up to speed on the public awareness campaign. Mr. Miller stated that there are still a couple of things that he is waiting on but he felt the campaign was crucial enough to start deploying the things that have been received. He stated that over the next week road signs will start being put out and starting tomorrow signs will be put up at businesses and intersections that remind people to wait 6 feet apart, to wear a mask, and to wash their hands. Mr. Miller stated that the county will start working with businesses to launch an Open Safely Initiative where patrons can see that the businesses are operating in a safe manner so be on the lookout for this over the next week or two.

Commissioner Oestreicher stated that Ms. Eastwood had mentioned in a prior meeting that she was having trouble getting some personal protective equipment and wondered if this had gotten any better. Ms. Eastwood responded that an order was put in last week for isolation gowns and the National Guard showed up last week with 5 cases of these and that will take them through the next month or so. Commissioner Oestreicher stated that this was really good news.

SOLID WASTE CONVENIENT CENTER SITES

Mr. Miller stated that he wanted to bring the Board up to speed on a couple of the convenience center sites. He stated the Prospect Hill site, the operator of that site, notify the county last month that they would be closing the site because they are closing the store. Mr. Miller stated that after several discussions with the solid waste director it was determined to keep the site open and have solid waste employees to run it until a discussion could be had with the Board on how to proceed with this site. He stated that he is not aware of any other operators willing to operate this site at the current location and he added that the site may need to be moved. Mr. Miller stated that at the Leasburg site has been through 3 separate operators in the last week. He added that the contracts are made with the landowners and then the landowner either choses to run it or reassigns the operational part of the contract to another entity, person or family. Mr. Miller stated that the Leasburg site landowner lives outside of the county and another family had been running the site and some problems occurred at the site which forced the landowner to find someone to run the site. He stated the new operator after a day or two was not willing to run the site and now the landowner is looking for another operator. Mr. Miller stated that these two sites are conveniently geographically located next to each other and are not terribly far apart which would create a unique opportunity for the county to combine the two sites and make one large county run site with part time employees. He added that the upfront cost to do this would be about $165,000. Mr. Miller stated that there are a couple of other options such as moving these sites to different locations or continue to look for operators are the current sites. He stated that the cost to move to a new site would be about $35,000. Mr. Miller stated that for the Prospect Hill site there is one other option and that would be to take this site back to the original location at Walker’s Store which is 5.2 miles away from the current location.

Commissioner S. Carter stated “Three miles away from Leasburg.”

Mr. Miller stated that there are a lot of different options and he asked the Board how to proceed.

Commissioner Owen stated that at this time he would like for the county to look for a new site or new operators until the Board can get a handle on what is going to happen in October or whenever as far as the budget.

Commissioner W. Carter asked the county manager if there was a chance that someone else would open the store. Mr. Miller responded that at the current time there is no interest from anyone to take over the operations.

Chairman McVey asked how long the county had before having to move this site. Mr. Miller responded that the county has 2 months to make a decision on how to proceed and to be off the site.

Commissioner S. Carter asked “The site at Prospect Hill, the store owners are the property owners?” Mr. Miller responded “Yes.” Commissioner S. Carter continued “Are they not willing to have the site at all, they just flat out said that there is no combination of an alternate route.” Mr. Miller responded “Right.” Commissioner S. Carter continued “Just like the one at Leasburg has been operating for at least the last 15 years and its had it issues but as far as the operations of it until recently it has been running pretty smooth as far as having somebody close by that could tend to it and do what needs to be done.” Mr. A.J. Fuqua responded “I just spent about 15 minutes this morning before this meeting getting that site, I could not get the current operator to come over, the hopper was full, trash was everywhere, so I spent 15 minutes cleaning the site before I came to the meeting.” Commissioner S. Carter stated “Until recently, in the last 15 years we did not have a lot of troubles there in that neighborhood.” Mr. Fuqua responded “Not to interrupt you, within the last 6 months to a year there has been problems with people leaving stuff on the ground and at least once a week I am having to get a load of trash out of there, remove mattresses, because they know the site is not watched and they know what time the operator goes and pushes the button but it is not being watched at a store. These sites are not designed and made to be run off site. At time we may have one at somebody’s house or they are designed to be run at a store so that someone is there and can look at the camera and see it and they can call them on the intercom and say hey stop and even if they step away they can see something there and can have a short window, maybe 30 minutes, to go down and we can go back and review the tape and see who it is. There is times in Leasburg that there are hours that the operator is not there because I have it all documented.” Commissioner S. Carter continued “I feel like we are in a rut. My thought on the whole thing there is it is all about having the right people. Like I was saying we’ve had some good ones’ years ago.” Mr. Fuqua responded “Oh, yes, years ago yes.” Commissioner S. Carter continued “For the last 3 years it’s been crazy, I will agree with you and I feel like we just have to find the right person. I don’t see why in the situation with Leasburg and now Prospect Hill that we can’t find some like young person that is desperate for a part time job that they can devote more attention versus individual families and kids have all kind of stuff going on and maybe they have multiple jobs, I don’t see why we can’t find suitable people to run these because in the past and despite the fact that the store is closing you did not have the problems that you are having now.” Mr. Fuqua responded “So the contract is with the landowner and we pay them for the use of their land and we pay them to provide operators whether they do it themselves or they have to pay somebody so to find an operator in my opinion is not on us as the county, it would be up to whoever we have the contract with. And the people that own the store in Prospect Hill are not willing to go out and find an operator. They have agreed to let me use the property until we can find a home or we can figure something out.” Commissioner S. Carter stated “So there is that aspect of it. The other thing with Prospect Hill and Leasburg, I would not promote or consider those two sites close, they are 11 miles apart. That’s an inconvenience for someone to travel 11 miles to dump their trash. The county is about 20 by 20, that’s a good distance to travel one way. I don’t know if combining them may be the solution but even at that that distance factor alone is going to inconvenience a lot of elderly people who have been grateful for having these sites in each township of the county. I don’t think closing Leasburg, that particular site because I think it perfectly central to that area and it’s very far already from Yanceyville, very far already from the nearest site in Milton, and like I said it is 11 miles from Prospect Hill so if you remove one from that general 5 mile radius are you are going to inconvenience a huge portion of the county and I know we’ve had discussions about having larger sites, maned sites, and I think eventually we will get to that point, we are knocking on the door now. But in the now I think you have just had some terrible bad luck with some operators. The one in Prospect Hill, you all asked the store right down the road at that huge complex if they were willing to have it there?” Mr. Fuqua responded “So that puts us right at the county line.” Commissioner S. Carter continued “Yeah.” Mr. Fuqua responded “We already have a hard time with individuals from Orange and Alamance coming to the site but if the Board wants we can ask them. I am not in favor of that because we are at the county line but if that is what you all want I can ask. I think Walker’s Store at 119 and 86 assuming that that is still there, where it was originally, that’s is the minimal cost. He has reached out by email asking. A person on 86 S has reached out but his land is full of trees.” Commissioner S. Carter stated “I think that is a big inconvenience putting it at Walker’s because of their inability to man it more hours, watch it more hours, they close rather early.” Mr. Fuqua responded “He said that he would do it 7 days a week at Walker’s, 12 hours a day.” Commissioner S. Carter continued “With somebody…” Mr. Fuqua responded “The landowner would do it or somebody out of the store.” Commissioner S. Carter stated “I do feel like even with Walker’s in consideration that one at the county line is better because of the site that is there, they have longer hours, they got more staff there, I don’t see for example that store closing anytime soon. Walker’s has been threatening it and that needs to be in the back of our mind for future reference. If it just folded, you would have the same situation that you have in Leasburg.” Mr. Fuqua responded “So the person that owns the land, that owns the store, the contract would be with him and he’s actually going to run it but he is going to get the store, the person that rents the store from him to help when he is not around so it would actually be with the landowner and not in the facility there.” Commissioner S. Carter continued “That’s my two cents but I don’t think it should be closed.”

Commissioner Jefferies recommended sending this information out so that people will have the chance to fill out an application so the Board can choose the best applicant. He added that this needed to be someone that would keep the sites clean and do what is needed to be done. Commissioner Jefferies stated that he was 100% for putting both sites out there to receive applications on. Commissioner Owen stated that he agreed with this suggestion. He added that this is a convenience so if people want it in their community someone needs to step up that is willing to house a site and take care of it. Commissioner Owen stated that he did not think it needed to be young people because they are not at the site and the reason he is worried about Leasburg because there is nobody around and that is what is causing the problems. He stated that he would like to see the Leasburg site moved to a new site where somebody is near it but it would depend on the people in those areas.

Commissioner Oestreicher asked Mr. Fuqua how much it would cost to relocated the convenience site in Prospect Hill to the 3 Points area where the gas station and store is. Mr. Fuqua responded that it would cost about $35,000 because a cement slab would have to be poured. Commissioner Oestreicher recommended a discussion with the owner of that site just to see if they are interested at all. He added that it is less than 3 miles from the county line and the current site so he did not think this would be a big deterrent because he thought a lot of people come from Orange to where it is now. Commissioner Oestreicher stated that there is plenty land at the 3 Points location and seem to be more stable than the current site. Mr. Fuqua responded that this could be done. Mr. Fuqua asked the Board if it would like for him to post this somewhere for 10 days to see if anyone is interested in this. Commissioner Owen responded that it would not hurt. Mr. Fuqua asked how many miles would the Board consider for each of those sites. Mr. Miller responded that the community needs to weigh in and the Board can look at the applicants and choose the best site.

Commissioner Hall stated that he thought it was time for the county to re-examine the whole solid waste program. He suggested that it might be the time for community pick up at the homes as well as to consider redesigning the contract process. Commissioner Hall stated that there are other options that could be considered in terms of the solid waste sites and those options needed to be looked into. Mr. Miller responded that curbside service can be looked into.

Commissioner Oestreicher stated that the Board heard from Ms. Warren this morning and he thought she spoke for a lot of the citizens in Prospect Hill that the convenience site is very important and it gets used a lot. He added that it is important to have this service or curbside service which would be interesting because it may not be more convenient than what the county already has. Commissioner Oestreicher stated that it is very important that this site or one close to it remain open and functional for the residents of Prospect Hill. He added that it would be inconvenient if someone would have to drive 10 miles further.

Chairman McVey stated that the Solid Waste Director and County Manager to look at the options that are available and to bring them back to the Board to move forward. Mr. Fuqua responded that this could be done.

RECESS

The Board took a brief recess.

DISCUSSION ON CONFEDERATE STATUE ON THE SQUARE

Commissioner Hall stated “I will start with some general comments. From 1619 to 1776 while under Britain and from 1776 to 1865 slavery was legal in this country. In 1861 the South Carolina Militia fired upon Fort Sumter off the coast of Charleston and that started the Civil War. The reasons were somewhat complex but the bottom line was something called state rights and the design to get people to get representation for property owned, i.e. Slavery. The southern states wanted more congressional representation based upon the slaves that they owned. It was somewhat ironic that on the one hand slaves were considered property and on the other hand they wanted representation. The statue on the Square was erected around 1920. I think one of the public comments this morning said 1921 and it was and attempt to memorialize the efforts of the confederacy. Now some say it is about history. It’s not all about history because we don’t put up memorials to everybody in history. We only put up memorials to those we share values with and this confederate statue was a memorial of shared values. Well those values for many have changed, for some we’ve never shared those values, and I think it is time that that statue be removed.”

Commissioner W. Carter stated “I have had a lot of phone calls on this but every phone call I’ve had I have not had one call that wanted to remove the statue. All the calls that I had wanted to leave it in place in my district.”

Commissioner Hall asked “How many phone calls did you receive from African Americans?” Commissioner W. Carter responded “Well I don’t know if they were black or white, I didn’t ask them if they were black or white.” Commissioner Hall continued “Why not?” Commissioner W. Carter responded “Well I just did not ask them that.” Commissioner Hall stated “Okay, part of the reason you didn’t ask them is because they were echoing your sentiments so we knew all you wanted to know.” Commissioner W. Carter responded “Well I am not going to do into the comments but I have the names but I am not going to reveal the names.”

Commissioner Owen stated “I am going to sit in opposition of the removal of the statue because I don’t believe the sole intent in Caswell County now when anybody looks, anybody white, Caucasian, looks at that statue, I don’t believe their intent is to say oh that represents white supremacy, I don’t believe that of people from Caswell County. I am not saying there aren’t some on the out ridges that believe that, I don’t know but for most that have talked with me and my personal view is as I read that statue it is a memorial to those who fought and lost their lives in that war. We may not agree with the war and some think the reasons of the war were wrong and I agree with that. The fight to protect slavery was absolutely wrong morally, ethically and any other way you want to look at it and I will never promote that in any state, form or fashion. But those that have spoken to me only see it as a memorial and I haven’t talked to everybody and not everybody has talked to me but I have talked to some young African Americans, as a matter of fact a couple of weeks ago we had some little things that were going on on the Square and I came there as well as another commissioner and our county manager and in their conversations that they were having and these were Caucasian and African Americans talking, never once was the statue mentioned in those conversations. Systemic racism was mentioned quite a bit and I think that is a problem that we are facing so I sit in opposition. In all openness I would like to see us clear the Square. I believe the Square could serve a greater purpose for Caswell County and I don’t mean get rid of the monuments and statues, I mean move them to a different place. I believe that Square could be a much better use for our County for various events such as the Hoedown, make it easier and better for that, other events could be held there and so forth. That’s just where I stand personally. I’ve that this discussion with our county manager back probably 4 years ago, back when we had the little café on the corner and we knew we were looking at this project on the Square possibly and so that is where I am really in. I would like to see us use the Square for a better reason. I want us to really think a little bit about where we are in Caswell County. Now we are not perfect by any means and I think all of us has to admit if we are all going to be honest about this, we all have our biases, okay, towards other people for whatever reason but in Caswell County today, you know, we are 62% Caucasian and yet this County elected an African American sheriff with 61% of the vote. Now I am going to tell you that’s not typical of a county that would be called racist but let me share other reasons that I opposed this and I will get to the most important reason. First of all, we know that on May 23, 1958 there was a public law that designated those that fought for the confederacy in the Civil War were designated as veterans and not only that their living spouses were given a stipend for that. Secondly, we have a statute in place, North Carolina General Statute 100-2.1 that says this in essence an object in remembrance, which they define as a monument, statue, plaque, or marker located on public property may not be permanently removed and may only be relocated to a site of simple prominence, honor, and visibility. So there are a couple of statutes that we need to consider. The first one regarding veterans. Just because I disagree with that war that was fought, the Civil War, the reasons the confederates fought the war, these are still veterans classified by our government as veterans. It would be like, we know that when the Vietnam War came about man there were riots, there were, you know, demonstrations, the Vietnam veterans were not accepted back to their home but yet we have a Vietnam memorial. Now should we remove that because people are offended by what we were in that war about, that’s for another debate. But more importantly, here’s the biggest reason I don’t think removing that statue is going to accomplish what we are after. We are trying to get rid of systemic racism in our society. The removal of a statue is not going to do that. The removal of that statue, I mean in 2014 there were statues torn down by us and some were removed by the local government and here we are right back in the same boat so removing a statue is not going to take care of our problems. Here is what I would propose that we do because I think if we just remove the statue and that statue alone it is going to cause a greater divide in Caswell County than what exists and I what I don’t see as very visual and I think it is going to cause more problems for what some of you really want. What we need to do is build bridges instead of putting wedges in there. I believe if we truly want to see change what we need to do is have a diverse community lead group where those on both sides of this issue sit down together with one another talking, opening up lines of communication, working together to eliminate systemic racism because that is what I heard on the night on the Square with those young African American men. They talked about systemic racism and especially in our courts. So I would think if we could get our people to sit down together and you can express your view on the statue, I express mine and then let’s talk about the real issue, systemic racism in our society and I just think that would be a better way to facilitate in how we react to one another, and how we think about one another. So that’s kind of where I am. I’m either we don’t remove anything from the Square or let’s remove everything form the Square to make better use of it. Thank you.”

Commissioner Jefferies asked “Mr. Hall do you want to make that a motion and then we can find out, we can kill it or we can vote for it and we will know where we stand? Make that as a motion to what you are trying to say to remove the statue.” Commissioner Hall responded “I have no problem doing that but I think…” Commissioner Jefferies continued “Go ahead and make the motion we can know where we stand at and I’ll second your motion.” Commissioner Hall responded “Okay, Mr. Chairman I move that we remove the statue from the Square.”

Commissioner Hall moved, seconded by Commissioner Jefferies to remove the statue from the Square.

Chairman McVey stated “We have a motion and a second on the floor to remove the statue, is there any more discussion.”

Commissioner S. Carter stated “Yes sir. I’ve spent my whole life dedicated to our County’s history and on this particular topic, I was ignorant on some points. I spent probably a total of 8 hours in the Register of Deeds office just looking at our Commissioners’ minutes and read extracts of those on as far as how this monument was put up and what I see and if anybody wants to hear any of it I am happy to read it to you. It’s the process in which the grandchildren of veterans regardless of the politics of the war their grandfathers fought in they were trying to put a Veterans monument up and the process I seen was no different than the process that so many people in this county have worked long and hard on to get a monument to veterans built for all wars after the Civil War. Removing it is not going to change anything. It’s not going to solve the problem so I wholeheartedly agree with everything Commissioner Owen said. If we want to have real change in this county we need to start coming together and start talking about it. Reacting and doing radical things like this will never solve the problems that divide us but these men that the monument is dedicated to they did not know what they were fighting for, they didn’t have a choice whether to fight or not. There was essentially a draft as we have seen in other eras of our history. Their state has left the United States. What do you do? You don’t run away from your home so they did what they had to do and the very fact that they are veterans just like with any other war and I am glad that in Commissioner Owen’s remarks that other wars were mentioned. I would hope and pray that one day that new Veterans monument that we are about to build will not be taken down because people don’t fully understand the fact that it is purely there not to justify any political and historical cause that took place but the fact that people from this county fought to defend home and that alone speaks volumes. There is nothing in any of these minutes, the documents, the process, that says that this is glorifying the confederacy or anything to that affect. These were the literal children and grandchildren of veterans, point blank and the beautiful thing about our monument is what it says ‘To the sons of Caswell County who fought in the war of 1861-1865’ so surprisingly enough and as ignorant as I am of our history sometimes unless you look further the beautiful thing is there is always something new to find. Even these ladies that fought to put this monument up raised, in today’s dollars it was about $50,000 that is a pretty expensive, you know, thing to be put on the Square and the County give a third of that, which was in today’s dollars about $14,000, back then that was a lot of money. But it says ‘To the sons of Caswell County that fought in the war’ so I started searching our veterans’ records from that time of history and I’m happy to report that over, at least at this point, at least 12 people from Caswell County fought for the North. Now that is something to be highlighted, that’s something to be remembered, that’s something that these men deserve honor despite the politics of their time and place they chose the other side. That monument unlike what these women thought of putting it up is actually a monument that covers all Caswell County residents that fall in that war and to that at least 12 group of men that fought for the North they are covered under that monument and I think that is awesome because no other monument in the country has that inscription. Most of them glorify a general or somebody or it says something about the South and the lost cause but our monument is not to that because at least these ladies and gentlemen that donated for this monument had a legitimate reason to put it there. World War I had just ended and they wanted to go back and honor veterans that were totally forgotten about at that point in time so I think their intentions were pure and they did what they thought was best. Now, us as commissioners, being financially obligated to this monument from the past the people that donated the monument give the monument to the County and the commissioners that accepted it said they hoped their successors in office would know why that monument was there and they hoped that it would stay there so I am going to continue the legacy that they left for us that we remember veterans of this County despite what circumstances they fought for or why they were in, you know, whatever it might be because I don’t want the same thing to happen to veterans that are remembered, three of which are my family relatives on the new monument that is about to be built down here on the Town’s property. So I wholeheartedly disagree with the removing of the monument and I think that as part of this discussion moving forward with addressing the problems that divide us, understanding our history, understanding the unknown and the forgotten history, is a very important part of that discussion so that we can all move forward and do what is right and best for this county and that’s all I’ve got.”

Chairman McVey stated “County attorney, Mr. Ferrell.” Mr. Ferrell responded “Yes Mr. Chairman.” Chairman McVey continued “Is it legal according to this statute for us to take that statue down?” Mr. Ferrell responded “Well North Carolina General Statute 100-2.1 places some limits on the removal and relocation of objects of remembrance which, you know, would include in the definition a monument such as this. The exceptions turn in part on ownership of the statue or the monument of remembrance so I’ve heard some discussion about the history here. I need to know a little bit more about that before I can say definitively whether or not the ownership is an issue in this case. But let me give you, so the general rule is that objects of remembrance located on public property may not be permanently removed and may only be relocated as provided in the statute. So I know there is some talk about relocation but let’s just talk about the removal because that is the subject of the motion. So as to removal there are three exceptions that to which the statute wouldn’t apply and would prevent the removal. The exceptions are first for a highway marker set up by the DOT and that’s not an issue here. The second exception is an object of remembrance owned by a private party that is subject to an agreement between the private party and the state or political subdivision. That’s why I said in the outset it would be important to understand the ownership, you know, fully and finally of the monument to see if that exception was relevant. Some jurisdictions have found that the object of remembrance was actually in private hands and that dictates, you know, whether the exception applies. And the final exception that some local governments have looked to is if the object of remembrance is one in which the building inspector or similar official has determined it poses a threat to public safety because of an unsafe or dangerous condition. If that is the case, then the statue that prevents removal does not apply so presumably if the statute doesn’t apply the prohibition of removal doesn’t apply that statue could be removed. So that is a general outline of the general rule which prohibits removal of objects of remembrance from public property and the three exceptions to that general rule.”

Commissioner S. Carter stated “Mr. Chairman, I just wanted to connect the dots on the ownership of the statue, the County of Caswell owns the statue. It was presented to the County Commissioners so it is at our discretion to remove it or not.” Mr. Ferrell responded “So presuming that’s the case that the statue is not owned by a private party, the second of the three exceptions would not be available.” Chairman McVey stated “Thank you, sir.”

Commissioner Hall stated “Mr. Chairman, I want to comment on a couple of things, one from Commissioner Owen and another from Commissioner Carter. Commissioner Owen made in his comments that statement about systemic racism and I think that is part of what he and many other Board members fail to understand, exactly what is systemic racism. You can’t sit down and talk with me or anybody else in the community to remove systemic racism. Systemic racism means there’s something that’s baked into law. Some of the things that our general counsel just said, it was all baked into law. Systemic racism started back in this country when it was against the law to teach African Americans to read and write. Systemic racism in this country is when it was against the law for white and black kids to go to school together, it was called segregation. That was systemic racism. Systemic racism was when until the 15th amendment we did not have the right to vote. Systemic racism was when my father served in the US Army even though he was a veteran he was in a segregated Army. He couldn’t serve and fight with white soldiers. That was systemic racism. Now those things you cannot address on a local basis. You can push them away. You’ve got to take some actions and any action that you take counter to systemic racism is going to be counter to some law or some statue in this state or country. That’s just the way it is. That’s the way it always has been. The military was not desegregated until the 50s, that’s when it was desegregated. So the schools were not desegregated until the 60s. Look back when the commissioners accepted this statue, how many African American or Black commissioners we on that board to make that commitment, that they were going to keep the statue. I guaranteed you there was none. How many African Americans or Blacks have been elected as commissioners since 1921? Systemic racism. So if you are going to address it you can’t hide behind these other things and that’s what’s been happening for years. And Mr. Carter, Mr. Sterling Carter, says this is radical, man you don’t know radical. Radical was not being able to go to the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill when I graduated high school because of systemic racism. That’s not been a whole long time ago. Many of you sitting around this Board are old enough to remember if you went to Carolina or State there were no black students there or only a handful out of thousands. Carolina is one of the oldest liberal arts universities in the country. They didn’t admit any black students, systemic racism. So this Board if you are going to be true to yourself you are going to have to consider all of this and take some actions that are meaningful. That statue is visual; it means something to the people that look at it especially African Americans. You can talk to one or two young Black men on the Square and ask them what they think. Most of them don’t think anything because they have seen it all their lives. Once you’ve seen something all of your life it is almost like it becomes invisible but it’s not invisible. It is there. It has a meaning. It says all of the systemic horrors that our people faced, African Americans faced, that you still support it and you’ll make any kind of explanation you can to support that position and that’s what I am hearing from Commissioner Owen and Commissioner Carter. They support what it represents. They support the values of the old confederacy and that to me is very disheartening. Thank you.”

Commissioner Owen stated “I want to respond to just, number one I never said I supported slavery or the commission of slavery, I said I supported that statue and that statue is representing veterans of a war that that United States Government has deemed a war. Second, you must have misunderstood what I was saying. I know what you are talking about that we don’t understand systemic racism that’s the reason I believe it is important for us to sit down at the table, people in the communities, sit down with one another and you share what systemic racism is. That’s the only way we are going to get anything changed. Since, I know in 2014 there were statues torn down, what has changed? What did that help? What did that do to promote or do away with systemic racism? Nothing or we wouldn’t still be having this problem with statues being torn down. That was my point. That’s the reason I say I don’t think this is going to eliminate systemic racism. It’s not going to make it any better. I think people sitting down at the table with one another explaining what it is and what they have faced in our country and in our county, you know, with others who don’t understand it is the better way to go and that’s what I was trying to say. Thank you.”

Commissioner Hall stated “Okay and what I am trying to say is that if you support the values that that statue represents, now keep in mind one thing the Civil War was about treason, treason to the United States of America. These people took up arms. These people, the southern states took up arms against the United States of America and they lost and even after losing we’ve got those that say that we are going to honor them for what they did. There’s a very powerful, powerful meaning in that to say that we are going to support those guilty of treason because we believe in their values, because they were soldiers. Any reason that you give if it doesn’t take away from the bottom line or what it was all about. Now Mr. Sterling Carter said that there was 12, at least 12 people from Caswell that he found that fought for the North and that statue covered them also. Well the North won, why didn’t this county put up a Union soldier? They didn’t. I don’t believe that that statue covers the 12 people that you found that fought for the North, it covered the confederacy that lost.”

Commissioner S. Carter stated “Again, I think you misunderstood my comments, the women and the men that put that statue up didn’t know about the 12 that fought for the North. No mention of it ever, anywhere.” Commissioner Hall responded “Right but that was your interpretation that…” Commissioner S. Carter continued “My interpretation of?” Commissioner Hall responded “That the statue covered the 12 people that fought for the North. That is what I understood you to say.” Commissioner S. Carter stated “I think that’s something we can embrace today that there is a gem in there somewhere because it covers all soldiers that fought in the war from Caswell County.” Commissioner Hall responded “And that’s the way I understood it.” Commissioner S. Carter continued “And I do not support the loss cause of the confederacy. I had ancestors on both sides of that conflict and this county was split down the middle when it comes to being for the confederacy and against the confederacy. The people that put the monument up were past that and it was all about it being veterans, the facts are in the minutes.”

Chairman McVey asked “Does anybody else have anything to say before I say what I need to say?”

Commissioner Oestreicher stated “I thought Commissioner Owen did a very good job of summarizing many of the issues and my feeling is that reaction to taking down the statue would actually create more division than it would solve. Taking down the statue is not going to solve the issue of systemic racism by itself. I believe all of the specific items that Commissioner Hall mentioned have been repealed, those things do not exist anymore. Sure, I am talking about segregation in the military and things like that. That is the way you solve that issue. So my concern is, is that we will create a problem by taking it down than we will solve.”

Chairman McVey asked “Anymore comments?”

Chairman McVey stated “Mr. Hall I want to remind you too that folks took down the Grant statue and Grant done a lot work for the North to get things situated and in correct order. I want to remind you that Columbus’ statue was recently taken down. Do I believe in that? No, I don’t. I believe that if we take this statue down that the entire Square should be cleaned off. That’s the only way I would vote yes for it is for each and every monument, statue, that is on that Court Square be taken down because I think that is fair. Now where we would move that, I don’t know but I do not want to see all those statues come down and I think the only fair thing to do is to take them all down. So at this time I will call for a roll call vote to vote on taking down the statue, the confederate statue on the Square, the veteran monument to the Civil War soldiers. I will call for a roll call vote at this time.”

Commissioner Oestreicher asked “Mr. Chairman, could I ask the county attorney that does this voting on this point that was listed as a discussion point, now we have it as an action item is that appropriate?” Mr. Ferrell responded “You have certain limitations in your rules about taking action on first introduction of ordinances and certain expenditures of above a threshold. I have not heard any talk about expenditures here and I don’t know of anything that would prevent you from taking up the pending motion other than of course the legislation that we’ve discussed.”

Chairman McVey stated “I really thought at this point this would all be a discussion and that we all could come to a reason agreement or resolution on things but the motion has been put out there for us to vote on it so we will vote on it by roll call voting.”

After a roll call vote the motion failed by a vote of five to two. (Commissioners Hall and Commissioner Jefferies voted yes. Commissioners S. Carter, W. Carter, McVey, Oestreicher, and Owen voted no.)

COUNTY MANAGER’S UPDATES

Zoning Community Meetings

Mr. Miller stated “Commissioners I have one update for the Board. The update concerns the community informational meetings on zoning. We’re looking at having, because of COVID-19 and its impact on our community and our state we’re looking at doing a large meeting hosted through Zoom where the whole county can attend and we will set up several viewing locations throughout the county to abide by attendance regulations. We plan on doing that mid to late September. We’re going to put out informational pieces with the tax bills and the tax bills will go out to the people with information on the connection information through several channels throughout the county so everybody will have an opportunity to attend. The tax bills go out late August so we think we could have that meeting sometime mid to late September.”

Commissioner S. Carter asked “Mr. Chairman I have a question for Mr. Miller, have informational video that he and Mr. Hoagland put together has been put on line and on social media? I think between now and September would be a good time for people to absorb that information.” Mr. Miller asked “David have you done that on YouTube? Not to my knowledge, we will work to get that on YouTube, create a YouTube link that we then can post to our website.”

Commissioner Oestreicher asked “Mr. Chairman, I had a question, I’ve mentioned the permitted uses table and I wonder what the status on that is? Can that be put before the Board for a comment and review and as part of the Zoom meeting information packet?” Mr. Miller responded ‘Yes, there has been a lot of work on the permitted uses, schedule of uses, we can definitely include that when we send out, probably not when we send out that information but we can provide it on our county website and provide a link to that where people can get to it, so yes we can do that.” Commissioner Oestreicher continued “Well part of my comment was that I would like to have that brought before the Board for us to review certainly before the meeting and then we could discuss it during the meeting.” Mr. Miller responded “Yeah we have, we have that for review by the committee the Board set up so at our next committee meeting…” Commissioner Oestreicher asked “Which is?” Mr. Miller responded “We have that for review so it might be better for the committee to look over it first and then come before the Board.” Commissioner Oestreicher continued “Okay, fine.”

COMMISSIONER COMMENTS

Commissioner S. Carter stated “I would like us to pursue a joint meeting that we have discussed in the past with the School Board, the Town of Yanceyville, the Town of Milton, and the Board of Commissioners before school starts in whatever form in August. I think it would be very beneficial that if we all sat down and discussed kind of what’s going on with the county, how our services are being provided, how schools may be running, I think a lot of citizens are concerned. It would be good if we all sat down and networked and talked and shared ideas and gave each other updates. I know we mentioned doing it through Zoom. We had a great joint, the Board of Education was joining us at a meeting and it went very well so I would like to throw it out there that we maybe have a meeting towards the end of this month or early, early August. Is that realistic?” Mr. Miller responded “We can do whatever the Board says. I will say when we reached out to the Town of Milton and the Town of Yanceyville to ask about a joint meeting with the Board of Education there seemed to be very little interest from the towns and I think the county could have that discussion at one of its meetings for having a joint meeting.” Commissioner S. Carter continued “I have my opinion that I think they should be very interested in what is going on with the Board of Education.”

Chairman McVey stated “I would suggest that maybe if Milton the Town does not want to join that would be okay.” Mr. Miller responded “We can definitely set up a meeting and invite everybody.” Chairman McVey continued “I think it would be well worth our time.”

Commissioner Owen stated “I was getting ready to say, I think until the governor decides I don’t know how much planning they can do. I mean, I am sure there are some preliminary planning that they are already doing for whatever scenario happens but until he makes that decision they are kind of in limbo but I have no problem meeting with them.”

Commissioner S. Carter stated “I just don’t think we should.” Chairman McVey stated “Let’s meet before school starts to see where everybody is going.”

Commissioner S. Carter stated “And then the second thing is more of a long term idea/suggestion. I’ve had people have conversations with me in the past about if the county could possibly, not the county itself but if we could have an event in this county for the 4th of July. I know there are many other towns that do things and other counties that do events however small but I think having something like that could draw the community kind of together. It would be a great idea. I think we could probably find some community partners, business partners, people to get together and pitch in towards having something. I feel like folks would embrace it instead of sitting at home watching fireworks on TV you know going and spending money, you know, elsewhere it would be a good opportunity for us to have something here at home so I am just throwing that out there as an idea that we may work towards in the upcoming couple of years.”

ANNOUNCEMENTS AND UPCOMING EVENTS

A. Caswell County Blood Drive – Wednesday, July 15, 2020 – 9:30 a.m. –

2:30 p.m. – Senior Center (Red Bus)

B. BYSHS Groundbreaking Ceremony – Wednesday, July 22, 2020 at 10:00 a.m.

C. 113th NCACC Annual Conference – August 13 – 15, 2020 – Virtual

Commissioner S. Carter asked “Mr. Chairman, I just had a question for the manager, have you heard anything about specific demolition on the high school? I have had people ask me saying they would like to be around when that took place and watch it.” Mr. Miller responded “I think demolition on the high school will take place in several different phases. I don’t think it’s a one big boom and the high school is gone.” Commissioner S. Carter continued “Right.” Mr. Miller responded “I think it will occur and it has already started.” Commissioner S. Carter continued “At least the first hall.” Mr. Miller responded “Some of that has already begun.” Commissioner S. Carter continued “I did not know if you knew of a timeline.” Mr. Miller responded “No, I do not have a timeline.”

Commissioner Hall stated “Mr. Chairman, one final thing, the Piedmont Triad Regional Council of Governments has received some dollars for small business loans. I don’t have all of the details but I am sure that any business in the county that would be interested could contact our economic developer and she could get the information to them. I meant to get out an announcement on that.” Chairman McVey responded “Thank you, sir.

ADJOURNMENT

At 11:00 a.m. Commissioner Owen moved, seconded by Chairman McVey to adjourn. After a roll call vote, the motion carried unanimously. (Commissioners S. Carter, W. Carter, Hall, Jefferies, McVey, Oestreicher, and Owen voted in favor.)

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Paula P. Seamster Rick McVey

Clerk to the Board Chairman

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