



# County of Dare

P.O. Box 1000 | Manteo, NC 27954

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## MINUTES

### DARE COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS MEETING

Dare County Administration Building, Manteo, NC

**9:00 a.m., March 2, 2020**

Commissioners present: Chairman Robert Woodard, Sr., Vice Chairman Wally Overman  
Rob Ross, Steve House, Jim Tobin and Danny Couch

Commissioners absent: Ervin Bateman

Others present: County Manager/Attorney, Robert Outten  
Deputy County Manager/Finance Director, David Clawson  
Master Public Information Officer, Dorothy Hester  
Clerk to the Board, Cheryl Anby

A full and complete account of the entire Board of Commissioners meeting is archived on a video that is available for viewing on the Dare County website [www.darenc.com](http://www.darenc.com).

At 9:00 a.m. Chairman Woodard called to order the regularly scheduled meeting with appropriate prior public notice having been given. He invited Rev. Tom Wilson, of All Saints' Episcopal Church, to share a prayer, and then he led the Pledge of Allegiance to the flag.

#### **ITEM 1 – OPENING REMARKS – CHAIRMAN'S UPDATE**

Following is a brief outline of the items mentioned by Chairman Woodard during his opening remarks, which may be viewed in their entirety in a video on the Dare County website.

- He attended the Outer Banks Community Foundation Annual meeting and praised their accomplishments as an asset to the community. Five days after Hurricane Dorian's impact, they raised more than \$500,000 for the Dare County and Ocracoke Disaster Relief Funds.
- As a member of the Roanoke Island Festival Park Board, he reported the Board had unanimously voted to name the 83<sup>rd</sup> season of The Lost Colony performances in honor of Dare County's 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary.
- He had attended the National Association for County Commissioners' conference in Washington with Vice-Chairman Overman. They had attended sessions which included the subjects of energy, transportation, IT issues, justice, public safety and sustainable housing. He would be returning to attend additional conference sessions upon the meetings' conclusion.

- He addressed the draft resolution presented to the Board on February 18 and reported the Board's consensus was it would not be necessary to adopt an additional resolution as to the First Amendment of the U.S. Constitution. He noted the Board annually adopted a resolution in support of "Constitution Week", which urges citizens to study and reflect on the privileges the U.S. Constitution brings to American citizens.
- He reviewed the requirement of the revaluation of Dare properties, which was statutorily required every eight years. County staff had worked on the revaluation for over a year and notices, which are not bills, had been mailed to the public. The Board had not yet addressed the 20/21 budget and would be holding a March retreat to address numerous County issues, along with the ad valorem, at that time.

Mr. Outten relayed the Assessor's Office had apprised the Board in detail with the process of the revaluation, which in accordance with the specific formulas and methodology was required to determine tax values. They reviewed real estate sales for the past two years as part of the evaluation of all properties to determine whether they met current fair market values. The notices provided an established value and also contained information regarding an appeal process, if owners disagreed with their new value. The Board would later determine the tax rate based upon the revenues required to operate the County.

#### **ITEM 2 – PRESENTATION OF COUNTY SERVICE PINS**

- 1) Janet Midgette received a 10-year pin.
- 2) Dave Clawson received a 30-year pin.

#### **ITEM 3 – EMPLOYEE OF THE MONTH – March, 2020**

The Employee of the Month for March would be presented at the March 16, 2020 meeting.

#### **ITEM 4 – PUBLIC COMMENTS**

At 9:23 a.m. the Manager outlined the procedure for making public comments in Manteo and via the video link to the Fessenden Center Annex in Buxton. Following is a summary of all citizen remarks, which can be viewed in their entirety in a video on the County website:

*The following comments were made in Manteo:*

1. Steve Goodheart, Vice Chairman of the Veterans Advisory Council, announced there would be a Dare County Veterans Resources & Job Fair on Thursday, April 30, 2020, from 2-7 p.m. hosted at the Dare County Center. The event is free and would afford veterans an opportunity to connect with local employment opportunities and veteran's benefits. On behalf of the Council, he thanked the Board for their continued support of Dare County veterans.
2. Susan Merrill, resident of Kitty Hawk, spoke regarding a resolution in support of the U.S. Constitution. She questioned why the resolution recently adopted by the Board only referred to the 2<sup>nd</sup> Amendment. The draft resolution she read to the Board for their consideration referenced the 3<sup>rd</sup> Amendment as "one of the vital protectors of the freedom to personal domicile."

*There were no comments made in Buxton*

The County Manager closed Public Comments at 9:33 a.m.

#### **ITEM 5 – OUTER BANKS COMMUNITY FOUNDATION**

Lorelei Costa, Executive Director of The Outer Banks Community Foundation, provided the Board with an update of the Foundation's accomplishments. She noted the community stepped up quickly to raise disaster relief funds after Dorian. Many of the donors resided outside the Outer Banks' zip code with collected funds totaling \$1.5 million dollars. They work with non-profit organizations to disburse funds to disaster victims, some of which had been used to elevate homes against future storm threat. The Community Foundation's Endowment of totaled more than \$20 million dollars and served as a perpetual, charitable fund to aid the community today and for later generations. Their community scholarship program was open for application with approximately \$175,000 in scholarships to be awarded this year for all age groups attending college, trade and technical school programs. A new grant initiative, called Vision 2020, established from a singular generous \$105,000 donation, had been established to support non-profits in the Outer Banks. The Foundation would be requesting proposals, beginning March 23, 2020 with a deadline of June 26, 2020, for suggestions on how to utilize the Vision 2020 funds. In the fall, they would announce the Vision 2020 grant recipients. More information may be found at [www.obcf.org](http://www.obcf.org).

#### **ITEM 6 – DARE COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES – PUBLIC HEALTH DIVISION – COVID-19 (Coronavirus) OUTBREAK UPDATE**

Dr. Sheila F. Davies provided the Board with an update on the Coronavirus outbreak, which was first discovered in Wuhan, China. The respiratory virus spreads person-to-person through close contact (within about six feet) via respiratory droplets from coughs or sneezes. She warned it spreads rapidly and specifically attacks the lungs. The typical symptoms included fever, cough and shortness of breath, without the general muscle weakness or fatigue noted with common flu symptoms. As of March 2, 2020, there were 89,197 reported cases worldwide, 86 in the United States and none currently in North Carolina. Dr. Davies urged vigilance without panic, as she offered the statistics for seasonal influenza for perspective. However, she noted there was a vaccine to protect against influenza and currently none for COVID-19. She reviewed prevention measures, which included, avoidance of close contact with sick people, avoidance of touching your eyes, nose and mouth, vigilant hand washing practices along with disinfection of frequently touched surfaces. She reviewed the three levels of current travel restrictions from the CDC. On February 11, 2020, North Carolina Public Health Department established the Novel Coronavirus Task Force. Dare County had activated its epidemiology team (EPI Team), provided guidance to area healthcare providers and continued to communicate with key community partners. Updated information could be found on a web page located on the Dare County website at: [darenc.com/coronavirus](http://darenc.com/coronavirus). Dr. Davies stressed the importance of seeking information from additional reliable sources such as: [cdc.gov/coronavirus](http://cdc.gov/coronavirus) and [ncdhhs.gov/coronavirus](http://ncdhhs.gov/coronavirus).

#### **ITEM 7 – 2020 OBX ROD & CUSTOM FESTIVAL**

Michael Tillett, together with Sara Hole, gave an update on the 2020 OBX Rod & Custom Festival, which would be held May 2 and 3, 2020. He reported this time last year there had been 94 cars registered and currently there were 415 preregistered cars for the event. They would hold registrations for up to 500 cars. Although the hub of the festival would be at the event site at Nags Head, with food trucks and other vendors, the area restaurants and

businesses could expect an influx of activity, while attendees came to see the whole area. Mr. Tillett reported they were currently working with the Children Youth Partnership of Dare County and the Dare County Toy Run. If the event proved as successful as expected, they hoped to include an additional charity. Their statistics indicated 95% of last year's attendees had never been to the Outer Banks before. This year many of them had made reservations to enjoy the area for an entire week, rather than for just the two-day event. Six hotels and one motel were currently at full occupancy and attendees would be nationwide and include Canadian and Finland entries. Mr. Tillett reported the festival would not only aid area charities, but would boost economy and bring additional awareness of the Outer Banks.

**ITEM 8 – DARE COUNTY TOURISM BOARD REQUEST CONSENT EXPENDITURE FROM LONG TERM RESTRICTED FUND 4525**

Lee Nettles, Executive Director of the Outer Banks Visitors Bureau, presented the request for consent of expenditure of up to \$60,000.00 from Long Term Restricted Fund 4525 for the purpose of demolition of South Beach Grille, located at 6806 S. Virginia Dare Trail in Nags Head. The Bureau had determined the location would have greater value as expansion of much needed event parking then the costs of renovation.

**MOTION**

Commissioner Couch motioned to consent to the expenditure of up to \$60,000.00 from Long Term Restricted Item 4525 for the demolition of South Beach Grille.

Vice Chairman Overman seconded the motion.

VOTE: AYES unanimous

**ITEM 9 – DARE COUNTY DEPT. OF HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES – PUBLIC HEALTH DIVISION “TAKE DOWN TOBACCO DAY” (Att. #1)**

Rebecca Woods introduced the Health, Education and Outreach Unit intern, Mykhanh Guidebeck, who explained the “Peer Power” students from Cape Hatteras Secondary School, First Flight and Manteo High Schools who attended the elective course had become peer health educators for their schools to learn health habits pertaining to nutrition and the dangers of alcohol, tobacco and other drugs. They had gone to middle and elementary schools to deliver this message of healthy choices. The high school representatives highlighted e-cigarette increased use among high schoolers with 2019 CDC national statistics reflecting a 27.5% usage. National middle school smokers had risen from 3.3% in 2017 to 10.5% in 2019. The group requested March 18, 2020 be declared as “Take Down Tobacco Day” to focus and increase awareness of the problems regarding tobacco use among Dare County youth. Chairman Woodard asked if there were any lobbying efforts on the issue. Ms. Woods noted she was not aware of any; but she would certainly bring up the possibility at an upcoming coalition meeting with Teresa Beardsley, who was the Region 9 Tobacco Prevention Manager. The Board applauded the efforts of these students making a difference with their concerns for their peers and the community.

**MOTION**

Vice-Chairman Overman motioned to issue the Proclamation declaring March 18, 2020 as “Take Down Tobacco Day”.

Commissioner House seconded the motion.

VOTE: AYES unanimous

**ITEM 10 – PROCLAMATION ESTABLISHING APRIL 2020 AS “NORTH CAROLINA 811 SAFE DIGGING MONTH (Att. #2)**

Chairman Woodard provided the background of the NC811 system, which celebrates its 42<sup>nd</sup> year of continuous service to the State. North Carolinian law requires anyone engaging in demolition or excavation activities contact NC811 at least three days prior to beginning their work. In 2019, the notification service received 2.2 million requests to mark locations for excavators and homeowners. Commissioner Tobin commented it was an especially important practice for landscaping businesses. Commissioner Couch added the Hatteras area had recently lost communications for over four hours, which may have been avoided if a call had been made. Commissioner House had used the service and noted it was an easy and valuable safeguard to avoid damages to underground utility lines. Chairman Woodard noted the service was provided free of charge.

**MOTION**

Commissioner House motioned to issue the Proclamation Establishing April 2020 as “North Carolina 811 Safe Digging Month”.

Commissioner Tobin seconded the motion.

VOTE: AYES unanimous

**ITEM 11 – NCDOT’S FUTURE I-87 RESILIENCY, INNOVATION, SAFETY, ECONOMY PROJECT**

County Manager Outten presented highlights from a letter to be sent to U.S. Secretary of Transportation, Elaine Chao, in support of the “Future I-87 RISE Project”. The project would help with “North Carolina’s vision to build out and harden the network of freight distribution/military corridors in Eastern North Carolina” and would “serve as an interstate connection between the Port of Virginia and I-95”. The project would also install fiber optic cable along its length, “as well as the extension of U.S. 64 from Williamston to Whalebone”.

**MOTION**

Commissioner Tobin motioned to approve the letter to the U.S. Secretary of Transportation and authorize the County Manager to sign the letter of support.

Vice-Chairman Overman seconded the motion.

VOTE: AYES unanimous

**ITEM 12 – CONSENT AGENDA**

The Manager announced the items as they were visually displayed in the meeting room. He noted a correction to be made to the Feb. 28, 2020 minutes on page six.

**MOTION**

Commissioner House motioned to approve the Consent Agenda as amended:

- 1) Approval of Minutes (02.18.2020) **(Att. # 3)** as amended on page 6
- 2) Water Department Budget Amendment – Distribution Lines – ND
- 3) Water Department Budget Amendment – Stumpy Point Maintenance
- 4) Amendment to Capital Project Ordinance for 2018 CIP for Manteo High School
- 5) Department of Health and Human Services - Social Services Division – Low Income Energy Assistance Budget Amendment
- 6) Corrections to Revenue Account Numbers for FY 2020 CIP Budget
- 7) Government Education Access Channels 2020-21 Proposed Budget

Commissioners Couch and Ross seconded the motion.

VOTE: AYES unanimous

### **ITEM 13 – BOARD APPOINTMENTS**

#### 1) Upcoming Board Appointments

The upcoming Board appointments for April, May and June, 2020 were announced by the County Manager.

### **ITEM 14 – COMMISSIONERS’ BUSINESS & MANAGER’S/ATTORNEY’S BUSINESS**

Commissioners and the County Manager frequently make extensive remarks, which can be viewed in their entirety in a video on the Dare County website. Following is a brief summary outline of the items mentioned by Commissioners during this segment:

#### Commissioner Couch

- He noted the happy expectation of visitors to the area with the arrival of March. The Outer Banks Tourism Bureau was working on “FAM” (Familiarization) tours with both Pennsylvania and Ohio travel providers to further promote the area.
- He invited everyone to take a look at the Jug Handle Bridge, also known as the Rodanthe Bridge, which was currently under construction. Upon completion, it would provide wonderful sunset and sunrise views. There would be a construction update from DOT on March 5.

#### Commissioner Tobin

- He shared the recent efforts to bore one of the cannons of the USS Monitor. The recent painstaking boring of the cannon had not resulted in any evidence relating to the old tale of a pair of boots, a coat and possibly a cat having been logged in one of the cannons prior to its sinking.
- He provided an update on the dredge project. Most of the shipyards had requested a two-week extension and many had presented questions to the engineers and architects. Bids could be expected by the end of March.
- The Merritt dredge was working and would remain until mid-March. The Currituck was expected by the end of March, and may be available for a couple of months this summer.
- He announced he would miss next Board meeting and would return on March 22.

#### Commissioner Ross

- He gave an update on activities surrounding the illness of dementia and related Alzheimer’s disease which included the “BOLD Act”, also known as “Building Our Largest Dementia (BOLD) Infrastructure”, the OBX Dementia Task Force’s annual conference to be held at St. Andrew’s By-the-Sea Episcopal Church on March 17 and the annual meeting of GEM “Gentle Expert Memorycare” to be held on March 26 in Southern Shores.
- He would be attending the “Keep It Clean 2020 Economic Summit” to be held on March 12, at the Duck Woods Country Club.
- The Task Force continues their investigation with two issues facing the strategic plan for the second event site, which are parking and wastewater management.
- He attended the welcoming event for new COA President, Dr. Jack Bagwell.
- He attended an update with Vice-Chairman Overman regarding involuntary commitments. There would be continued training scheduled in September.
- Reminded everyone of the upcoming St. Patrick’s Day parade next weekend.

- On March 18, he would be making his annual tour of the area from Whalebone to Hatteras Village with NPS Superintendent David Hallac.

#### Commissioner House

- He attended the “Chili Cook Off 2020” event at Stripers Grille, with the proceeds benefiting the efforts of the local Shriners Club.
- He attended the NC Marine Fisheries meeting in New Bern. The topics included the Shrimp and Flounder Amendments, which were given direct guidelines to follow and the Blue Crab Amendment 3 which was passed with a 5” minimum size. He would report on other amendments and changes as they become available.
- Today in History: In 1962, President John F. Kennedy announced the United States would be continuing above-ground nuclear testing.

#### Vice Chairman Overman

- He attended the RPO meeting in Hertford and presented the Dare County Alligator Bridge Replacement Resolution. Other counties had passed similar resolutions. During a transportation session at the NACo. Conference, he had discussed bridge issues with someone from Louisiana, who commented there were possible Federal “pockets” of funds which the County could investigate further.
- He attended the Outer Banks Community Foundation meeting. Among the awards presented was one to a gentleman who gave a moving presentation regarding the on-going recovery work being done on Ocracoke since Hurricane Dorian.
- On February 25<sup>th</sup> he attended a meeting on the State Mandated Crisis Plan with Dave Peterson of Trillium. Dare County had met the transportation criteria requirements; however, they would need to be codified and placed in the County’s formal plan.
- The DC Health & Human Services – 2018/19 Annual Report was presented February 25. It provided a “summary and data snapshot” of their years’ activities. He encouraged citizens to review the pamphlet on the Dare website or to pick up a copy.
- At the Washington NACo. Conference, he attended a session which offered interesting additional ways to utilize our GIS operation. He would be discussing some items for possible implementation with the County Manager.

Chairman Woodard responded to the earlier public comment regarding the U.S. Constitution. He reiterated the Resolution passed by the Board on February 4, 2020 and noted the Board’s view was very clear that “all amendments therein exist co-equally in importance and stature”. As to the request for a resolution in support of the Third Amendment, the Board would provide a response once a copy of the language had been provided to them.

#### **MANAGER’S/ATTORNEY’S BUSINESS**

Mr. Outten announced he would be going to Raleigh with the President of COA to meet with the architects for the college project. Their goal would be to finalize the programing for the plans in order to keep it on the established construction schedule.

Dorothy Hester noted Public Works was doing a great job with the St. Patrick’s Day float and announced there would also be a 2020 Census float entered in the parade.

Dave Clawson discussed the possibility of refinancing approximately \$28 million of bonds. The guidelines were currently above what the Financial Advisory suggests; however, they

had improved. Mr. Clawson had scheduled a May sale date with the State Treasurer, which could be delayed if necessary.

At the conclusion of the meeting, Chairman Woodard asked for a motion to adjourn.

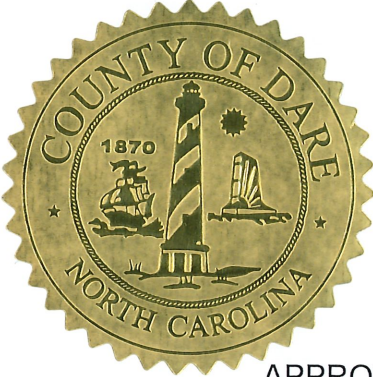
**MOTION**

Commissioner House motioned to adjourn the meeting.

Commissioner Ross seconded the motion.

VOTE: AYES unanimous

At 11:19 a.m., the Board of Commissioners adjourned until 5:00 p.m., March 16, 2020.



APPROVED:

Respectfully submitted,

By: *Cheryl C. Anby*  
Cheryl C. Anby, Clerk to the Board

By: *Robert Woodard, Sr.*  
Robert Woodard, Sr., Chairman  
Dare County Board of Commissioners

Note: Copies of attachments (Att.), ordinances, resolutions, contracts, presentations, and supporting material considered by the Board of Commissioners at this meeting are on file in the office of the Clerk to the Board.