



Chatham County, NC

Meeting Minutes

Board of Commissioners

Monday, December 4, 2023

6:00 PM

Agriculture and Conference Center

Regular Session - 6:00 PM - Agriculture and Conference Center

Present: 5 - Chair Mike Dasher, Commissioner David Delaney, Vice Chair Karen Howard, Commissioner Franklin Gomez Flores and Commissioner Katie Kenlan

INVOCATION and PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Chair Howard asked everyone to pause for a moment of silence and offered a thought to many Chatham County families dealing with illness after which the Chair invited everyone to stand and recite the Pledge of Allegiance.

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Howard called the meeting to order at 6:04pm.

ORGANIZATION OF THE BOARD

County Attorney Bob Hagemann reviewed the two different processes that can be used to elect a Chair and Vice Chair. Hagemann stated that the first, is a simply motion to appoint someone, and if seconded, there would be a vote, and if that motion carries, that person is appointed as chair. Hagemann stated that the alternative process is an election where the Board of Commissioners would take nominees and any member of the board could nominate any other member of the Board, including themselves to be Chair, when the nominations are closed, then the Board would have an election based on those nominees.

Hagemann called the floor open for which ever process the Board of Commissioners would like to follow.

[24-5177](#)

Vote to Appoint Chair for the Board of Commissioners

Commissioner Howard made a motion to appoint Commissioner Mike Dasher as Chair of the Board of Commissioners.

Commissioner Delaney stated that there was a resolution that he hoped to introduce on the topic of the election of Chair and Vice-Chair that would guide the Board of Commissioners in the discussion of the election. Delaney continued that he would like to be able to discuss the resolution before the motion was turned over to a vote.

Commissioner Howard reminded the Board of Commissioners that there was a motion and second currently on the floor appointing Mike Dasher as Chair of the Board of Commissioners.

Commissioner Delaney stated since there was a motion and a second, that the motion is now up for debate. Delaney continued that he thought that the Board of Commissioners should give every Commissioner the opportunity to put an item on the agenda. Delaney further stated that even though there is a motion and a second on the floor, he feels the topic of diversity, inclusion, and belonging is something that is tied very deeply to everything that the Board of Commissioners have done throughout the year and was one of the first points of agreement that the Board shared at the January strategy session. Delaney expressed that whether the Board of Commissioners discuss the topic now or later, that it is appropriate and within our procedures to discuss it.

Commissioner Howard reminded the Board of Commissioners again that there was a motion and second currently on the floor to appoint Mike Dasher as Chair of the Board of Commissioners and asked if the Board was ready to vote on the motion.

Commissioner Howard suggested that if Commissioner Delaney had something that he would like to add that during Commissioner's Report may be a good time.

Commissioner Delaney stated his interpretation of the organization meeting was the election process, but that he shared the agenda item this afternoon with the Board Members, Attorney, and Clerk and he would like the item added and he finds it a little odd that the item will not be added since it is directly relevant to how the Board of Commissioners conducts the organization of the board. Commissioner Delaney suggested that if the resolution is considered afterward and becomes something that guides the Board in December of 2024.

Commissioner Howard called for a vote on the motion and second on the floor.

A motion was made by Commissioner Karen Howard, seconded by Commissioner Katie Kenlan, to appoint Commissioner Mike Dasher as Chair of the Board of Commissioners. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 5 - Chair Dasher, Commissioner Delaney, Vice Chair Howard, Commissioner Gomez Flores and Commissioner Kenlan

[24-5178](#)

Appoint the Vice-Chair of the Board of Commissioners

Chair Dasher thanked the Board of Commissioners for their trust and confidence in him and began presiding over the meeting.

Chair Dasher called for a motion to nominate the Vice Chair of the Board of Commissioners.

Commissioner Delaney made a motion to nominate Commissioner Gomez-Flores for the position of Vice- Chair of the Board of Commissioners.
Chair Dasher asked for a second, having none the motion failed.

Commissioner Kenlan made a motion to nominate Commissioner Howard for Vice-Chair of the Board of Commissioners. Commissioner Karen Howard seconded the motion.

Commissioner Delaney asked for discussion since he feels that it's relevant for everyone's awareness and for the Board of Commissioners specifically. Delaney stated that the goal of the resolution that he proposes is to inject diversity, equity, inclusion,

and belonging into the way that the Board of Commissioners selects the Chair and Vice-Chair. Delaney continued that it is not the goal of having any one particular person in either of those positions, but to recognize that as a board that has adopted a strategy goal the idea of making sure that there are pathways to underrepresented groups filling our leadership positions and representing those communities. Delaney continued that the resolution was to assist the board developing leadership capacity and taking advantage of the extensive experience on the board and other ways around us to continue to develop people into leadership positions. Delaney hopes that would be in a position of balancing the most senior people on the board with having one of the leadership position filled by somebody of more recently voted into office and that was his goal of the resolution.

Commissioner Howard thanked the board for the nomination and wanted to point out that she is black, a female, over fifty five, a parent, and represents multiple groups, and to suggest that some level of diversity is absent when she is present, is diminishing at best, and if we would like to have a conversation with real integrity around advocating for and incorporating diversity, equity, and inclusion, she is all for it. Howard continued that she did not think this was a genuine way of approaching this topic at this time with the agenda that is set forth. Howard continued that she thinks there are many opportunities to build consensus amongst the board members and pursue leadership opportunities at the board level, but this is not the way to do that.

Commissioner Delaney stated he wanted to adjust the point and thanked Howard for making those items clear. Commissioner Delaney stated that he wanted to be clear that the idea is not to say that there is not diversity, equity, and inclusion in any one person being nominated, it is to say that across the board we wish to have many forms of diversity, equity, and inclusion recognized. Delaney continued that for him it promotes a greater degree of belonging and to emphasize his first point, there is nothing personal in the proposal to consider the resolution or for the Board's consideration on the points that he has raised. Delaney thinks that the board can promote even better diversity equity, inclusion, and belonging by having a pathway to leadership positions and goals that is more than simply having two of the too most senior people in those positions. Delaney continued that is an issue and that he knows it has been raised in our planning board and other places over time. Delaney further stated that he thinks it is proper for the board to show leadership when discussing the issues, even if it may be difficult and with that the goal is strategic and institutional, not personal and unique to anybody in any way whatsoever.

Chair Dasher stated that there was a motion and a second to appoint Commissioner Howard as Vice-Chair and called for a vote.

A motion was made by Commissioner Kenlan, seconded by Commissioner Howard, to appoint Commissioner Karen Howard as Vice Chair of the Board of Commissioners. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 5 - Chair Dasher, Commissioner Delaney, Vice Chair Howard, Commissioner Gomez Flores and Commissioner Kenlan

APPROVAL OF AGENDA and CONSENT AGENDA

Chair Dasher called for a motion to approve the agenda and consent agenda.

Commissioner Delaney reminded the Board of Commissioners that he would like to add a resolution.

Chair Dasher asked if the Board of Commissioners would like to add the resolution to the agenda, hearing no objections, Chair Dasher called for a motion to approve the agenda and the consent agenda.

A motion was made by Commissioner Gomez Flores, seconded by Commissioner Delaney, that agenda and consent agenda be approved as amended. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 5 - Chair Dasher, Commissioner Delaney, Vice Chair Howard, Commissioner Gomez Flores and Commissioner Kenlan

[23-5024](#)

Vote to approve the Sole Source for Detention Center Body Scanner

Attachments: [Body Scanner request for Sole Source \(edited\)](#)

A motion was made by Commissioner Gomez Flores, seconded by Commissioner Delaney, that the sole source for Detention Center Body Scanner be approved. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 5 - Chair Dasher, Commissioner Delaney, Vice Chair Howard, Commissioner Gomez Flores and Commissioner Kenlan

[23-5032](#)

Vote to approve the Letter of Funding Commitment for the NC Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services' Local Agricultural Growth Zone grant application

Attachments: [Funds Commitment Letter - NC Dept of Ag - Agricultural Growth Zones Grant - Dec 2023](#)

A motion was made by Commissioner Gomez Flores, seconded by Commissioner Delaney, that the Letter of Funding Commitment for the NC Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services' Local Agricultural Growth Zone grant application be approved. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 5 - Chair Dasher, Commissioner Delaney, Vice Chair Howard, Commissioner Gomez Flores and Commissioner Kenlan

[23-5034](#)

Vote to approve the grant application for the Chatham County Farmland Preservation Plan Implementation Project to the North Carolina Department of Agriculture and Consumer Service's Agricultural Development Project grant program

A motion was made by Commissioner Gomez Flores, seconded by Commissioner Delaney, the grant application for the Chatham County Farmland Preservation Plan Implementation Project to the North Carolina Department of Agriculture and Consumer Service's Agricultural Development Project grant program be approved. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 5 - Chair Dasher, Commissioner Delaney, Vice Chair Howard, Commissioner Gomez Flores and Commissioner Kenlan

[23-5035](#)

Vote on a request authorizing the County Manager to execute Growing Rural Economies with Access to Technology (GREAT) Grant Agreements between the State of North Carolina, Chatham County, and AT&T North Carolina for extension of broadband to unserved areas of the County. County match of \$169,228.20

Attachments: [Chatham County Website](#)
[GREAT Grant Agreement w AT&T](#)

A motion was made by Commissioner Gomez Flores, seconded by Commissioner Delaney, that the Growing Rural Economies with Access to Technology (GREAT) Grant Agreements between the State of North Carolina, Chatham County, and AT&T North Carolina for extension of broadband to unserved areas of the County Contract, attached hereto and by reference made a part hereof, be approved. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 5 - Chair Dasher, Commissioner Delaney, Vice Chair Howard, Commissioner Gomez Flores and Commissioner Kenlan

[23-5039](#)

Vote to approve appointment of Sigi Markworth to the Community Advisory Committee

A motion was made by Commissioner Gomez Flores, seconded by Commissioner Delaney, the appointment of Sigi Markworth to the Community Advisory Committee be approved. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 5 - Chair Dasher, Commissioner Delaney, Vice Chair Howard, Commissioner Gomez Flores and Commissioner Kenlan

[23-5041](#)

Vote to approve appointment of Regina Artis to the Central Piedmont Community Action Board to fill the County Board of Commissioners seat

Attachments: [R. Artis Board Application Resume](#)

A motion was made by Commissioner Gomez Flores, seconded by Commissioner Delaney, that the appointment of Regina Artis to the Central Piedmont Community Action Board to fill the County Board of Commissioners seat be approved. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 5 - Chair Dasher, Commissioner Delaney, Vice Chair Howard, Commissioner Gomez Flores and Commissioner Kenlan

End of Consent Agenda

SPECIAL PRESENTATION

[23-5038](#)

Presentation of the Order of the Long Leaf Pine, North Carolina's highest honor for outstanding service, to George W. Lucier. Ceremony conducted by NC Representative Robert Reives, Jr.

North Carolina Representative Robert Reives thanked the Board of Commissioners for allowing this presentation of the Order of the Long Leaf Pine tonight for Dr. George Lucier.

Reives continued, Dr. Lucier was one of the very first people he met when he dove into politics. He was always going to give me a big bright smile and he was always going to talk about Jordan Lake. Every interaction was positive, enlightening, and it was clear he genuinely care about his community. It was an honor to be around him and talk to

him and to help procure this presentation. Reives thanked George's good friend, Diana Hales for her help as well.

Representative Reives read aloud the Order of the Long Leaf Pine.

Jane Gallagher thanked Rep. Reives, Karen Howard for the letter of support, Lisa Chapman for the naming of the sustainable technology building, Diana Hales, Kimberly Thigpen, Elaine Chiosso, Linda Bernbaum, Mark Barrasso for filming, and all their friends, and those who have worked with him.

This Agenda Item was received and filed.

PUBLIC INPUT SESSION

None one signed up to speak.

BOARD PRIORITIES

Present: 5 - Vice Chair Karen Howard, Chair Mike Dasher, Commissioner David Delaney, Commissioner Franklin Gomez Flores and Commissioner Katie Kenlan

23-5040

Presentation of the State of the County

Chair Dasher thanked Vice Chair Howard for her leadership as Chair the past year and asked if she would give the State of the County.

Vice Chair Howard presented the State of the County, which an official copy is attached to these minutes

Commissioner Howard thanked staff for making Chatham County a place worth supporting and protecting. It was her pleasure to serve as Chair and it will be a pleasure as Vice Chair.

This Agenda Item was received and filed.

24-5176

A vote to adopt a Resolution on Individual and Board Leadership to Advance Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging

Attachments: [Reolution on Individual and Board Leadership 12-4-2023](#)

Chair Dasher recognized Commissioner Delaney, who wanted to add a resolution to the agenda titled Individual and Board Leadership to Advance Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging.

Commissioner Delaney read aloud the resolution.

Chair Dasher asked if there was a motion to approve the resolution.

Commissioner Gomez-Flores made a motion to approve the resolution, which was seconded by Chair Dasher.

Chair Dasher stated that it is certainly a worthwhile goal of this Board to continue to develop leadership of commissioners.

Vice Chair Howard asked for clarification around mentorship. Howard stated that she does not want mentorship to be dictated as one of her responsibilities. And she questioned what problem the resolution is trying to address.

Vice Chair Howard reminded the Board that Commissioner Gomez-Flores was Vice Chair very soon after being elected and there is nothing in this resolution that makes her feel this is genuine desire to build equity and inclusion.

Commissioner Kenlan stated that part of the process of selecting chair and vice chair is to select someone that demonstrates a commitment to the public and other board members.

Commissioner Kenlan thinks it is more important for board members to participate in School of Government training and she does not want to pass a resolution that a future boards are expected to follow.

Commissioner Gomez-Flores stated that future board members may not have the same ideals in the resolution and that is a reason he appreciates the resolution.

Vice Chair Howard stated that this seems to her to be about building up of other members of the Board.

Commissioner Kenlan stated whether we vote on this or not, it is a non binding thing that we can change and would have appreciated talking about this before the meeting.

Chair Dasher stated that the resolution speaks to an important goal that we do all share. He wonders if it is worthwhile to rework it so that it speaks more to other commissioners.

Vice-Chair Howard stated that the resolution seems it is addressing a problem yet to be identified and she wants to work on policy at this board level. This board has historically worked really well together despite our politics. Our work is to make ourselves individually better commissioners.

Chair Dasher reminded the Board of Commissioners that there was motion and second to approve the resolution and called for a vote.

A motion was made by Commissioner Gomez-Flores, seconded by Chair Dasher, that the Resolution on Individual and Board Leadership to Advance Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging be adopted. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 3 - Chair Dasher, Commissioner Delaney and Commissioner Gomez Flores

No: 2 - Vice Chair Howard and Commissioner Kenlan

CLERK'S REPORT

24-5181

Board of Commissioners Committee Assignments

Clerk to the Board Lindsay Ray reviewed the current committee assignments with the Board of Commissioners. The consensus of the Board of Commissioners was for everything to remain the same.

The consensus of the Board of Commissioners was to appoint Commissioner Kenlan to the newly joined CAMPO Board, so that someone from the board would be attending until the official appointment is made.

MANAGER’S REPORT

County Manager Dan LaMontagne reminded the Board of Commissioners about leadership academy graduation and the re-entry simulation events.

COMMISSIONERS’ REPORTS

Commissioner Kenlan stated that she attended the ribbon cutting of the Monarch facility in Pittsboro, the UDO subcommittee meeting, the CCCC building named after George Lucier, and the United Way Partnership meeting.

Commissioner Kenlan thanked Michael Smith of Economic Development Corporation for meeting with her and thanked Sheriff Roberson for giving her a tour of the facility they have taken over and they look like they are going to be great stewards of the building. Kenlan stated that she also will participate in the Reindeer Run.

Chair Dasher stated that Chatham County Partnership for Children will be having a retirement party for Genevieve Megginson on December 16th at Starlight Meade at 6:00pm.

Commissioner Gomez-Flores stated that he attended the Board of Health meeting and they are at a break even point of the new provider will take about five years.

Commissioner Delaney thanked everyone for the discussion this evening.

ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made by Vice-Chair Howard, seconded by Commissioner Gomez Flores, that this meeting be adjourned. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 5 - Vice Chair Howard, Chair Dasher, Commissioner Delaney, Commissioner Gomez Flores and Commissioner Kenlan