The Cleveland County Board of Commissioners met in a regular session on this date, at the hour of 6:00 p.m. at the LeGrand Center located at 1800 E. Marion St., Shelby.

**PRESENT:** Susan Allen, Chairman  
Ronnie Whetstine, Vice-Chair  
Johnny Hutchins, Commissioner  
Doug Bridges, Commissioner  
Deb Hardin, Commissioner  
Brian Epley, County Manager  
Tim Moore, County Attorney  
April Crotts, Deputy Clerk  
Chris Green, Tax Assessor  
Kerri Melton, Assistant County Manager  
Clifton Philbeck, Board of Elections Director  
Allison Mauney, Human Resources Director  
Scott Bowman, Maintenance Director  
Tommy McNeilly, Emergency Medical Services Director  
Stori McIntyre, E-911 Communications Director  
Katie Swanson, Social Services Director

**CALL TO ORDER**

Chairman Allen called the meeting to order and Commissioner Bridges provided the invocation and led the audience in the Pledge of Allegiance.

**AGENDA ADOPTION**

**ACTION:** Commissioner Hutchins made the motion, seconded by Commissioner Whetstine and unanimously approved by the Board to, **approve the agenda as presented.**

**CITIZEN RECOGNITION**

No one registered to speak.

**CONSENT AGENDA**

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

The Clerk to the Board included the Minutes from the **September 1, 2020 regular meeting**, in board members packets.

**ACTION:** Commissioner Bridges made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Hardin, and passed unanimously by the Board to, **approve the minutes as written.**

**TAX COLLECTOR’S MONTHLY REPORT**

The Tax Collector provided Commissioners with the following detailed written report regarding taxes collected during **August 2020.**
The Tax Assessor provided Commissioners with a detailed written report regarding tax abatements and supplements during August 2020. The monthly grand total of tax abatements was listed as ($38,951.62) and monthly grand total for tax supplements was listed as $288,440.07.

**TAX ABATEMENTS AND SUPPLEMENTS AND PENDING REFUNDS/RELEASES**

The following requests have been reviewed by the County Assessor. The final request does not constitute a valid request to the Tax Assessor until it is finalized and approved by the County Commission. Therefore, all pending requests must be finalized and approved by the County Commission before they are finalized. The following requests have been reviewed by the County Assessor. The final request does not constitute a valid request to the Tax Assessor until it is finalized and approved by the County Commission. Therefore, all pending requests must be finalized and approved by the County Commission before they are finalized.
**ACTION:** Commissioner Bridges made the motion, seconded by Commissioner Hardin, and unanimously adopted by the Board, to approve the Abatements and Supplements and Pending Refunds/Releases as submitted by the Tax Assessor.

**SOCIAL SERVICES: BUDGET AMENDMENT (BNA #012)**

**ACTION:** Commissioner Bridges made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Hardin, and unanimously adopted by the Board, to approve the following budget amendment:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Account Number</th>
<th>Project Code</th>
<th>Department/Account Name</th>
<th>Increase</th>
<th>Decrease</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>011.504.4.350.00</td>
<td>93556-P096</td>
<td>Title XX/State Grants</td>
<td>$128,000.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>011.504.5.210.00</td>
<td></td>
<td>Title XX/Departmental Supplies</td>
<td>$10,000.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>011.504.5.910.00</td>
<td></td>
<td>Title XX/Equipment</td>
<td>$118,000.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Explanation of Revisions: Budget allocation for $128,000.00 to accept additional COVID-19 state funds for equipment for Adult and Child Protective Services (APS and CPS) workers due to the COVID-19 crisis FY 2020/2021.

**COVID-19 RELIEF FUNDS: BUDGET AMENDMENT (BNA #013)**

**ACTION:** Commissioner Bridges made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Hardin, and unanimously adopted by the Board, to approve the following budget amendment:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Account Number</th>
<th>Project Code</th>
<th>Department/Account Name</th>
<th>Increase</th>
<th>Decrease</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>029.493.4.350.19</td>
<td></td>
<td>COVID19/State COVID Relief Funds</td>
<td>$1,900,950.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>029.493.5.370.00</td>
<td></td>
<td>COVID19/Advertising-Promotions</td>
<td>$40,000.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>029.493.5.230.05</td>
<td></td>
<td>COVID19/Lab Supplies</td>
<td>$225,000.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>029.493.5.790.00</td>
<td></td>
<td>COVID19/Donations-Contributions</td>
<td>$325,000.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>029.493.5.700.00</td>
<td></td>
<td>COVID19/Municipal Sharing</td>
<td>$936,145.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>029.493.5.890.19</td>
<td></td>
<td>COVID19/Interfund Transfers</td>
<td>$374,805.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Explanation of Revisions: Budget allocation for $1,900,950 for second distribution of CARES Act funding received for the COVID-19 relief.

**REMOVAL OF SERVICE WEAPON FOR RETIRED DEPUTY DEWEY COOK**

Sheriff Alan Norman requested retiring Deputy Dewey Cook be presented his departmental service weapon. Deputy Cook will retire after twenty-seven years of service with the Cleveland County Sheriff’s Office. The service weapon requested to be removed from inventory is a Glock 9mm, Model 17, serial number BDKT-758 and County asset number 201177.

**ACTION:** Commissioner Bridges made the motion, seconded by Commissioner Hardin, and unanimously adopted by the Board, to approve the request to remove the service weapon from County inventory and issue to Deputy Dewey Cook.

**PLANNING DEPARTMENT: TEXT AMENDMENT CASE 20-07 (Schedule Public Hearing for October 6, 2020)**

The Planning Department is requesting a Public Hearing be set for Tuesday, October 6, 2020 to hear Text Amendment Case 20-07, to allow Child Care Institutions in Residential (R) Districts. Jay Westmoreland has requested an amendment to the Cleveland County Unified Development Ordinance (UDO) to allow Child Care Institutions in the Residential District (R) with a Conditional Use Permit (CUP). Currently, Child Care Institutions/Orphanages is a use allowed in the UDO under the General Business district with a CUP. This proposal would allow this use to also be allowed in the Residential (R) districts.
**ACTION:** Commissioner Bridges made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Hardin, and unanimously adopted by the Board to, approve scheduling the public hearing as requested.

**COMMISSIONERS: CHANGE IN MEETING SCHEDULE RESOLUTION**

The Board of County Commissioners have decided that it is appropriate to cancel their November 3, 2020 Regular Meeting and the November 20, 2020 Capital Work Session and schedule a regular Commissioners Meeting on Tuesday, November 17, 2020.

**ACTION:** Commissioner Bridges made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Hardin, and unanimously approved by the Board to, adopt the change in meeting schedule resolution.

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**REGULAR AGENDA**

**NATIONAL VOTER REGISTRATION DAY**

Chairman Allen recognized Clifton Philbeck, Board of Elections Director, to talk about National Voter Registration Day. Mr. Philbeck introduced Renee Bost, Deputy Director of Elections and several staff members and Board of Election members Mary Accor and Allen Langley. Mr. Philbeck advised while many other counties in North Carolina are looking for volunteers to assist at poll locations during the election, Cleveland County currently has three hundred and fifty volunteers for the 2020 election season.

Mr. Philbeck spoke about the importance of voting and advised this year, National Voter Registration Day is on September 22, 2020. There are several options for citizens to register to vote which include registering on-line.
or picking up a form at a local post office, Board of Elections office or the Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) and mailing in the completed form. The deadline to register to vote this year is October 9, 2020.

The safety of all voters and staff are of the utmost importance to the Board of Elections and staff. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, health and safety procedures such as protective barriers, sanitation stations, social distancing and cloth face coverings will be implemented to protect in-person voters, election staff and volunteers. The Board of Elections has opened four early voting sites in Cleveland County for the 2020 election; Shelby, Kings Mountain, Boiling Springs and Lawndale. These locations will be open seventeen days prior to election day which is November 3, 2020.

Commissioners thanked Mr. Philbeck, his staff and members of the Board of Elections for the information and all their hard work through these unprecedented times.

STATUS OF THE 2020 CENSUS

Chairman Allen called Kerri Melton, Assistant County Manager, to the podium to present the status of the 2020 Census. September 30, 2020 is the very last day for people to be counted in the Census. There are several options available to complete the Census which include, completing the on-line form, complete the mail in form or provide the information in person if a Census worker comes to your residence. Delivery of the apportionment data is due to the government by December 31, 2020 and the redistricting data should be available by March 30, 2021. The following PowerPoint was presented to the Board.
Census Timeline

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity/Operation</th>
<th>Original Date</th>
<th>Response Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lyndhurst Census (Reduction)</td>
<td>March 17 – April 17</td>
<td>Phased in-opening occurred between May 4 and June 12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Service Based Enumeration</td>
<td>March 20 – April 1</td>
<td>September 21 – 24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Targeted Non-Sheltered</td>
<td>March 18 – April 1</td>
<td>September 23 – 24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outdoor Locations</td>
<td>April 2 – June 5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group Quarters Enumeration</td>
<td>April 9 – May 4</td>
<td>September 3 – 26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nonresponse Follow-up*</td>
<td>May 15 – July 31</td>
<td>August 9 – September 30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Delivery of Apportionment Data**</td>
<td>By Statutory Deadline: December 31, 2020</td>
<td>By Statutory Deadline: December 31, 2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Delivery Redistricting Data**</td>
<td>By Statutory Deadline: March 30, 2021</td>
<td>Plan in Development</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Self Response Data

National Average
Vs
North Carolina Average

- National Self Response: 65.9%
- North Carolina Self Response: 61.9%

State Average
Vs
Cleveland County Average

- North Carolina Self Response: 61.9%
- Cleveland County Self Response: 61.9%

Currently ranked 34th out of 100 counties

51.9% in May

Percentage By Municipality

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Municipality</th>
<th>May</th>
<th>Sept</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Boiling Springs</td>
<td>59.1%</td>
<td>68.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shelby</td>
<td>51.9%</td>
<td>61.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kings Mountain</td>
<td>51.7%</td>
<td>63.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Belwood</td>
<td>48.5%</td>
<td>56.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kingstown</td>
<td>46.4%</td>
<td>56.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grover</td>
<td>44.7%</td>
<td>51.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Patterson Springs</td>
<td>43.9%</td>
<td>52.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latimore</td>
<td>41.0%</td>
<td>57.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Casar</td>
<td>39.0%</td>
<td>48.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lawndale</td>
<td>35.7%</td>
<td>49.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Earl</td>
<td>34.7%</td>
<td>39.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Polkville</td>
<td>32.7%</td>
<td>44.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fallston</td>
<td>26.0%</td>
<td>46.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mooresboro</td>
<td>21.3%</td>
<td>45.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Waco</td>
<td>15.0%</td>
<td>51.7%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total Enumeration Data

Enumeration Progress By Year
Chairman Allen opened the floor to the Board for questions and comments. Commissioner Hutchins inquired, with the information given, if there is a way to reach out to those residences who have not completed the census yet. Mrs. Melton advised the census staff are working every day to see what locations they need to target to get a complete count for the census. Mrs. Melton thanked the Mayors of Cleveland County for their help to raise percentages in smaller municipalities. Commissioner Bridges reiterated the importance of residents completing the census. He stated a full and complete count allows for more federal dollars to come to the county for highways, hospitals, etc. The Board thanked Mrs. Melton for the information presented.

**FY 2019 – 2020 END OF YEAR WRAP UP**

Chairman Allen recognized County Manager Brian Epley, to present the Fiscal Year 2019 – 2020 End of Year Wrap Up. This past year has demonstrated a paradox of unprecedented operational challenges. The dramatic modification, caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, required the budget team and all members of the leadership team to modify many preliminary policies. The organizational survival strategy focused on a three-step phased approach – ReAct, ReBuild, ReThink. The county’s position and strategies required a comprehensive outlook on all external realities including economic restrictions, employee safety, and operational policy modification.

Cleveland County’s community impact can be most easily summarized through the Board of Commissioners strategic planning process that focuses on Community Wellness, Public Safety, Fiscal Sustainability, Economic Development and Citizen Engagement. Staff’s work plan is robust and has accomplished many important goals during the FY 2019 – 2020 year including the creation of six hundred fifty-one new community jobs, formal advancement of long-term capital planning, and major investments into human capital recruitment and retention.

Over the past three years, the leadership team has intensely focused on developing a performance-based culture. The prime methodology has been an intentional move away from a decentralized organizational structure to much more of a centralized administration that ensures accountability. The county’s progress is measurable in numerous ways. A few key metrics, are un-reserved equity (fund balance), talent retention rate, operational efficiency and output, and business agility and adaptation. The organization is performing at exceptional levels and as one team. At the closing of FY 2019 – 2020, in the midst of the largest regulatory shut down in over a century, Cleveland County slightly grew fund balance, had an employee retention rate of 95%, a customer satisfaction
rating of 93%, has improved its’ efficiency ratings by over 5%, and is poised to meet the demands of a growing community.

Cleveland County experienced tremendous growth of new and expanded economic development opportunities over the FY 2019 – 2020. Over the year, the county has had over one hundred sixteen million dollars’ worth of capital investment from manufacturing and the creation of over six hundred jobs that have been announced to be created. The investment of both public and private funding has led to several awards and recognition as Cleveland County continues to recruit new business and expand existing ones. The local economy is continuing to show positive trend data as the county moves through the recovery curve. Unemployment continues to decline and was at 7.8% which is down from 13% in April. Hotel occupancy rates were down significantly in April – July but have rebounded to prior year normal. In August, they were down only five percent compared to 2019. Work force development continues to be a primary focus for long range success. In the Fall of 2019, Cleveland County successfully completed its second Accelerate Cleveland Class with twelve graduates. Accelerate Cleveland is a job training program targeted at the underemployed and unemployed population. Students who completed the class received offers from local manufacturing companies earning an average wage of $41,669. In the spring, Cleveland County was awarded a Golden Leaf workforce innovation development grant in the amount of two hundred fifty thousand dollars for Accelerate Cleveland. Recruitment for the third class will begin in the Spring of 2021.

The total public safety budget for Cleveland County has grown nearly thirty percent over the last five years. This includes the Sheriff’s Department, Detention Facility, EMS, Emergency Management, and E-911 Communications. During the Fall of 2019, Commissioners approved a thirty-six-million-dollar capital project which included a 210 bed jail expansion at McBrayer Street, renovations to the Shelby Star Building to house the Sheriff’s Office as well as four million dollars in renovations to the existing Law Enforcement Center. Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, the jail population was averaging 320 inmates per day in two locations with a total capacity of three twenty beds. Cleveland County was often having to house inmates in other counties due to over-crowding. Since April, when all capital projects were put on hold, the jail population has been as low as 180 inmates and averages approximately 200 inmates per day. With the reduction in average jail population per day and changes that have occurred locally, staff will be working with Judges, the District Attorney, the Sheriff’s Office and the local Bar Association to re-evaluate long-term detention center needs.

Cleveland County continues to see growth in building permits being issued. During the 2019 calendar year, Cleveland County issued a total of 113 new residential permits and 189 additions/remodels. Total new residential permits are 25% percent higher for the 2020 calendar year and additions/remodels are expected to be up 10%. The first quarter of 2020 also showed growth in Commercial Building Permits. Cleveland County and the City of Shelby are making steady progress on construction of a new 100,000 square foot industrial shell building on Plato Lee Road. Construction has been slightly ahead of schedule, we anticipate completion by the first of December
2020. The county is aggressively pre-marketing the building to brokers, site location consultants and companies. The cleanup and development of Dover Mill was completed in FY 2019. To assist with determining direction for the historical property, a Housing Market Study was completed to determine the housing needs across all markets in Cleveland County over the next five years. Data from the housing needs assessment confirms that there is a high need across all housing sectors including rentals, for-sale and senior care. This assessment has been used in the recruitment of housing developers to Cleveland County.

In FY 2019, the Human Resource Department began updating the Personnel Ordinance with Articles I, II and III. The last comprehensive update was completed thirty years ago. In FY 2020, additional updates were made to the ordinance and Cleveland County filed for substantial equivalency through the Office of State Personnel. The county continued to modernize their Human Resource practices into 2020 by standardizing the Employee Recruitment Process and transitioning to twenty-six pay periods.

As Cleveland County continues to ReAct, ReBuild, ReThink with COVID-19 effecting revenues, the importance of responsibly managing fund balance is critical. With a fund balance of 18.3% for the county, Cleveland County is in line with peer counties averaging 18.9% fund balance. To maintain fiscal stability, Cleveland County has a focus on maintaining a fund balance of 18% to 20%. The following PowerPoint was presented to the Board.
ReAct, ReBuild, ReThink

Strategic Plan Update

Strategic Goal - Economic Development

- High Businesses
- Job Creation
- Investment

Strategic Goal - Public Safety

- Animal Services Director
- Organizational Restructuring
- Team Building and Culture

Strategic Goal - Community Wellness

- Dental Health Pilot Project
- School Telemedicine

Strategic Goal - Fiscal Sustainability

- IT Modernization
- Right-sizing, Streamlining

Performance Indicators

- Health Claims down 27%
- Talent Retention 95%
- Customer Satisfaction Index 83%
- Employee Headcount - 771

Strategic Goal - Public Safety

- Increase Revenue
- Deter delinquency
- Increase awareness

Strategic Goal - Community Wellness

- Cleveland County COVID-19 Statistics
- Free Cloth Mask Distribution Event

Strategic Goal - Fiscal Sustainability

- Becoming the employer of choice

FY 19-20 Revenue Summary

- Total County Revenue - $185.8M
- Revenue Indicators
  - Property Taxes - $67.1M (97.6%)
  - Sales Tax - $31.4M
  - Miscellaneous - $1.5M
  - Occupation Tax - $3.7M
- Revenues
  - Sales Tax, Income Tax, Other
  - General Fund, Capital, Enterprise Funds
- Expenses
  - General Fund, Capital, Enterprise Funds
- Fund Balances
  - General Fund, Enterprise Funds
Chairman Allen opened the floor to the Board for questions or comments. Commissioners thanked Mr. Epley, the leadership team and all the employees of Cleveland County for the hard work, leadership and dedication that has been put in, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic. The commitment of all of the employees continues to make Cleveland County a growing success and a great place to live, work and play.

**ADJOURN**

There being no further business to come before the Board at this time, Commissioner Hutchins made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Bridges, and unanimously adopted by the Board, to adjourn the meeting. The next meeting of the Commission is scheduled for **Tuesday, October 6, 2020 at 6:00 p.m.**