

**Chair**

Ray Cobb

**Planning Director**

Matthew Hoagland



Commissioners' Meeting Room

124 W Elm Street

Graham, NC 27253

November 30, 2023 at 7:00 PM

# **ALAMANCE COUNTY PLANNING BOARD SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES**

Virtual-

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC1QADkhkyUpac9rMs42imjA>

**Members Present**

Ray Cobb, Chair

Rodney Cheek

Vaughn Willoughby

Ernest Bare

Stephen Dodson

Bill Poe

Sandy Ellington-Graves

Amie Perkins

Stephen Dodson

Anthony Pierce

**Members Absent**

Blake Cobb

Eric McPherson

Arthur Hall

John Paisley

**Staff Present**

Matthew Hoagland,

*Planning Director*

Ian Shannon, *Planner II*

Rik Stevens, *County*

*Attorney*

Michelle Horn, *Assistant*

*County Attorney*

## **I. CALL TO ORDER**

Called to order at 7pm

## **II. ROLL CALL**

Staff handled roll call through in-person roster.

## **III. NEW BUSINESS**

### **1. Appointment Recommendations, Current Planning Board Members:**

- a) Amie Perkins: Haw River Township
- b) Rodney Cheek: Newlin Township
- c) Sandy Ellington-Graves: Newlin Township
- d) Blake Cobb: Pleasant Grove Township

### **2. New Applicants:**

- a) David Hadley: Albright Township
- b) Catherine Dickens: Haw River Township
- c) Lee Isley: Patterson Township
- d) Max Morgan: Melville Township
- e) Michael Owens: Newlin Township
- f) Henry Chandler: Faucette Township
- g) William Vines Jr: Patterson Township
- h) Lindsey Causey: Boone Station Township

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**Max Morgan:** Max told the board he has been a lifelong resident of the county in the Melville township. He stated that he owns and operates mobile home parks, and has a realty business. He told the board that he wanted to help guide and have positive input on the growth of the county and wanted to protect people's rights and the community. He said that he also wanted to be considered for Board of Adjustments, and that his knowledge of UDO would be beneficial.

**David Hadley:** David told the board he was also a lifelong resident of the county. He started in 1987 in the homebuilding business and has been president of the local homebuilder's association for 3 terms, serving on the board for 27 years altogether. He stated he had been recommended for appointment last year but the Board of Commissioners appointed someone else instead. He said he wanted to serve the community as best he could.

**Henry Vines:** Henry thanked the board for the opportunity to speak and stated that he would like to serve on board to see the county planned in a structured way. He told the board that he has served on many communities throughout the years. He served on the zoning advisory committee, served as president of the farm bureau in the county and served on the state board of the farm bureau. He told the board that he wants to help the Planning Board lead the county in a planned growth.

**Henry Chandler:** Henry told the board that he wanted to be considered for both Planning Board and Board of Adjustment. He said he was not sure where he stood with the change to Planning Board member numbers. He knew the board had previously nominated David and Lee so he put in an application for the Board of Adjustment as well. He has also been a lifelong resident of the county and serves on the agricultural advisory board for farmland preservation as well as serving on the board of directors for his local fire department.

Ray Cobb gave a few words to thank everyone who came to speak and said that there were a number of people who could not be there. He told the board that he had also applied to be on the Board of Adjustment and thought Ike Holt and Henry Chandler would make good additions to that as well. He said that Henry Vines would make an excellent addition to the Planning Board.

To help the Planning Board sort through all of the applicants for both boards, Matthew Hoagland passed out some lists and mock ballots that the board could use to fill out and make recommendations. Anthony Pierce asked if everyone up for re-appointment wanted to be back on the board. Ray said that Blake Cobb might not be able to with some of the personal obligations he has right now. Sandy Ellington-Graves said that she would like to remain on the board if possible.

Rodney Cheek discussed the recent change to the Planning Board member numbers and the timeline of being told in October it was more of an idea than anything when it was likely already being planned then. He said that if he is still on the board next meeting then he was planning on making a motion to send the Board of Commissioners a letter to recommend they reverse this

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decision. There was then some discussion on if the Planning Board should make recommendations for a 9 member roster or a 13 member one. Matthew advised the board that if they vote on a 13 member roster and the Board of Commissioners does not reverse their decision then 4 members would just be excluded. Rodney said that with everything going on in the county right now that it was a bad time to cut members from the board. He thanked David Hadley for being there after being overlooked last year and thanked everyone else for being there as well.

There was some discussion on the bylaws of the Planning Board. Rik Stevens said that the Board of Commissioners had the authority to make changes to the ordinance that creates the Planning Board as well as the bylaws without Planning Board input. Matthew said that with the current change to the Planning Board, a change to the bylaws would follow.

Ray told the board that ever since he was appointed in 1996 that the Board of Commissioners has respected every recommendation the Planning Board has made and were thankful for what the Planning Board was doing. He brought up that there were 13 townships, not 9, and that 4 townships would go un-represented now. Amie Perkins talked about how she was surprised when she was appointed because she was not recommended and that she would like to remain on the planning board but acknowledged that there were many extremely qualified candidates.

During more discussion on recommending 9 or 13 members and a question on which board Sandy wanted to be considered for, Rik stated that there would actually be an issue with serving on both the Planning Board and the Board of Adjustment since someone could only hold 1 appointed and 1 elected position at once. Sandy would not be able to serve on both boards while still also serving on the Board of Education. Ray stated that Sandy would be a better choice for the Planning Board over the Board of Adjustment. Rodney asked if there would be any conflict in serving on both boards otherwise. Matthew and Rik answered by saying there wasn't anything that would prohibit it but it could lead people to believe there is a conflict and possibly lead to more appeals of decisions.

Motion to recommend re-appointing Amie Perkins, Sandy Ellington-Graves, and Rodney Cheek:  
Ernest Bare  
Second: Vaughn Willoughby  
Vote: Unanimous

Motion to recommend Henry Vines: Anthony Pierce  
Second: Stephen Dodson  
Vote: Unanimous

Motion to recommend David Hadley as an alternate member: Amie Perkins  
Second: Rodney Cheek  
Vote: Unanimous

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Motion to recommend Lee Isley as an alternate member: Rodney Cheek

Second: Vaughn Willoughby

Vote: Unanimous

Motion to recommend Henry Chandler as an alternate member: Rodney Cheek

Second: Stephen Dodson

Vote: Unanimous

Motion to recommend Blake Cobb as an alternate member: Rodney Cheek

Second: Amie Perkins

Vote: Unanimous

### **3. Board of Adjustment Applicants:**

- a) Henry Chandler
- b) Ray Cobb
- c) Isaac Holt, III
- d) Tom King
- e) Max Morgan

Tom King: Tom introduced himself and said that he has lived in the county for 40 years now. He told the board that he has 26 years of experience working in planning and about 20 years of that has been staffing Boards of Adjustment. He stated that he believed his experience would be very beneficial to the new board.

Matthew answered a question on alternate members saying that they were appointed in the same way that regular members were, but the Board of Commissioners had not yet decided how many alternates they want.

Motion to recommend Ray Cobb: Amie Perkins

Second: Anthony Pierce

Vote: Unanimous

Motion to recommend Tom King: Vaughn Willoughby

Second: Anthony Pierce

Vote: Unanimous

Motion to recommend Ike Holt: Vaughn Willoughby

Second: Rodney Cheek

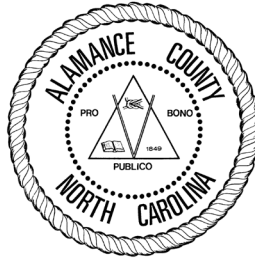
Vote: Unanimous

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Motion to recommend Mike Owens: Rodney Cheek

Second: Bill Poe

Vote: Unanimous

Stephen Dodson asked if there would be any issue in recommending someone for the Board of Adjustment if they only applied for the Planning Board. Rik said there would be no issue with that, just a possible issue with people serving on both. Anthony Pierce suggested recommending Henry Chandler. Rodney asked about recommending Debra Hyder since she was recommended for Planning Board re-appointment last year. Since her application was not older than 2 years she was still applicable.

Motion to recommend Debra Hyder: Rodney Cheek

Second: Ernest Bare

Vote: Unanimous

Motion to recommend Lindsey Causey as an alternate member: Stephen Dodson

Second: Bill Poe

Vote: Unanimous

Amie Perkins acknowledged Max Morgan saying that they didn't always agree but he constantly shows up to Planning Board meetings.

Motion to recommend Max Morgan as an alternate member: Amie Perkins

Second: Anthony Pierce

Vote: Unanimous

There was some discussion on potentially recommending the Board of Commissioners as alternates to the Board of Adjustment instead. Rodney suggested that it wouldn't be a bad idea because they have already served as the county's Board of Adjustment in the past.

Motion to disregard the two already recommended alternates and recommend the Board of Commissioners as alternates instead: Vaughn Willoughby

Stephen stated that that the purpose of the Planning Board was to make recommendations where the Commissioners do not have the specific experience. He said that that experience would also be useful for the Board of Adjustment and suggested the board recommend members based on that. Anthony mentioned that even though the Commissioners have the experience from serving as the Board of Adjustment that could still create a conflict of interest since they have to run for office. Rik answered by saying the fact that the Commissioners are the current Board of Adjustment acknowledges that conflict already. He said the conflict is not so much the issue as is coaching whoever is appointed to make unbiased decisions.

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Vaughn repeated his motion.

Second: Bill Poe

The motion failed by vote.

Motion to recommend the two previously recommended alternates and not recommend any further alternates: Vaughn Willoughby

Second: Anthony Pierce

Vote: Unanimous

### **IV. ANNOUNCEMENTS/DISCUSSION**

Bill asked if there were any updates on the minimum lot size subcommittee. Vaughn reported that there were none yet.

Rodney told the board that he would have more information on the Christmas dinner soon.

Anthony stated that the Graham parade was coming up and they were expecting a lot of attendance.

### **V. ADJOURNMENT**

Motion to adjourn: Amie Perkins

Second: Rodney Cheek

Stephen asked about the overall application process and when applicants would hear if they were appointed or not. Matthew said that they would be able to tune into the Commissioners meeting but the clerk to the board was supposed to notify appointed members.

Vote on motion to adjourn: unanimous

Adjourned at 8:16pm