

**BOARD OF
COMMISSIONERS
REGULAR MEETING
MARCH 4, 2024
5:00 PM**



**R. Jay Foster Hall of
Justice - Womack
Building**

-
1. Call to Order - Chairman Yoder.
 2. Invocation - Chairman Yoder.
 3. Pledge of Allegiance - Commissioner Beiler.
 4. Approval of Agenda
 - A. Items may be added or removed at this time.
Motion to approve the agenda as presented or amended.
 5. Consent Agenda - Motion to approve the Consent Agenda.
 - A. Approval of February 19, 2024 Regular Meeting Minutes.
Motion to approve the Consent Agenda.
 6. Citizen Comments on Agenda Items.
 7. Polk County Schools - Aaron Greene, Superintendent.
 8. Resolution Recognizing April 2024 as Isothermal Community College Day and April 20th as "Paint the Community Isothermal Blue" Day - Margaret Annunziata, Ed.D. President, Isothermal Community College.
Motion to approve the Resolution.
 9. Polk County Website - Bruce Yelton, Polk County IT Director.
 10. Parks, Recreation and Trails Update - Laura Baird, Recreation Coordinator.
 11. Polk County HR Policy Annual Review and Update - Tommy Oakman, Human Resources.
Motion to approve the proposed revisions to the Polk County HR Policy.
 12. Citizen Comments on Non-Agenda Items.
 13. Volunteer Board Applications
 - A. Applications for Consideration: Brandon Schweitzer, - Fire Rescue Advisory Committee. Kenneth B. Miller, Jr. - Library Board of Trustees.
Motion to approve the applicants as presented.

14. Chairman and Commissioner Comments.
15. Closed Session
 - A. Motion to go into closed session for the purpose of attorney client privilege.
 - B. Motion to return to open session.
16. Adjournment

POLK COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
Regular Meeting
February 19, 2024 - 5:00 PM
R. Jay Foster Hall of Justice - Womack Building
Columbus, NC
MINUTES

PRESENT: Chairman Yoder, Vice-Chairman Melton, Commissioner Beiler, Commissioner Moore, and Commissioner Overholt. Also in attendance were County Manager Pittman and Clerk to the Board Tipton. Absent: County Attorney Berg.

1. Call to Order - Chairman Yoder.
2. Invocation - Commissioner Moore.
3. Pledge of Allegiance - Chairman Yoder.
4. Approval of Agenda

A. Items may be added or removed at this time.

Vice-Chairman Melton moved to approve the agenda as presented, seconded by Commissioner Beiler and the motion carried unanimously.

5. Consent Agenda - Motion to approve the consent agenda.
 - A. Approval of the February 5, 2024 Public Hearing and Regular Meeting Minutes.
 - B. Tax Refund Request in the amount of \$4,711.75.
 - C. Polk County GREAT Grant Project, Grantee Progress Report for 4th Quarter 2023.
 - D. Vaya Health Quarterly Financial Reports for the period ending December 31, 2023.
 - E. Sheriffs Department Monthly Activity Report for January 2024.

Vice-Chairman Melton moved to approve the consent agenda, seconded by Commissioner Beiler and the motion carried unanimously.

6. Citizen Comments on Agenda Items.

There were none.

7. Polk County Schools - Brandon Schweitzer, Ed. D., Director of Operations.

A. Public School Building Capital Fund (PSBCF) NC Education Lottery Requests - Polk Central Elementary Paving Project in the amount of \$91,801.

Dr. Schweitzer presented the Distribution Request for reimbursement of paving costs for Polk Central Elementary

Commissioner Moore moved to approve the Distribution Request in the amount of \$91,801, seconded by Commissioner Overholt and the motion carried unanimously.

B. Public School Building Repair & Renovation Fund (PSBRRF) NC Education Lottery Requests - Polk Central Elementary Roofing Project in the amount of \$129,310.

Dr. Schweitzer presented the Lottery request for roofing repairs at Polk Central Elementary.

Vice-Chairman Melton moved to approve the Distribution Request in the amount of \$129,310, seconded by Commissioner Moore and the motion carried unanimously.

8. Proposed updated Polk County Watershed Ordinance amendments, as requested by North Carolina Environmental Quality, Water Supply Watershed Program. The Public Hearing for this item was held on February 5, 2024 - Cathy Ruth, Polk County Planning and Economic Development Director.

Cathy Ruth reported to the Board that she spoke with the citizens who had questions about the proposed updated ordinance, and they have no objection to the approval.

Commissioner Moore moved to to enact the proposed updated Polk County Watershed Ordinance as requested by the North Carolina Environmental Quality, Water Supply Watershed Program and incorporating the Planning Board's Consistency Statement, seconded by Commissioner Overholt and the motion carried unanimously.

9. Renew the Foothills North Carolina Consortium Joint Cooperation Agreement for Home Investment Partnership Act, Home Investment in Affordable Housing - Cathy Ruth, Polk County Planning and Economic Development Director.

Cathy Ruth presented the proposed agreement, previously reviewed by Attorney Berg. She said the agreement was originally approved three years

ago, and gives organizations the opportunity to request funds to be used for affordable housing in Polk County.

Vice-Chairman Melton moved to approve the agreement, seconded by Commissioner Overholt and the motion carried unanimously.

10. Radio Tower/Systems Update - Sheriff Wright and Jeremy Gregg, Director Polk County E-911 Communications.

Sheriff Wright and Jeremy Gregg thanked the Board and Manager Pittman for the radio update. They reported they are actively working on the Saluda area with Kimball Communications, Manager Pittman, and the City of Saluda, which will require a new tower site. Both Manager Pittman and Mr. Gregg said they are actively pursuing grants that will help fund this project.

11. Discussion and approval of the 2024/2025 Budget Calendar - Sandra Hughes, Finance Director.

Sandra Hughes presented the proposed 2024/2025 Budget Calendar for review. She said it is similar to last year's calendar and follows the recommended practice of the Local Government Commission (LGC).

Vice-Chairman Melton moved to approve the proposed 2024/2025 Budget Calendar, seconded by Commissioner Moore and the motion carried unanimously.

12. Proposed FY 2024 Audit Contract with Martin Starnes and Associates - Sandra Hughes, Finance Director.

Sandra Hughes presented the proposed FY 2024 Audit Contract with Martin Starnes and Associates. She said a three year commitment with them was just completed without any additional increases beyond their commitment. However, now the commitment is over, there will be a 16.5% minimum increase up to 30%, depending on how many programs. She said many factors play into the increase such as new programs requiring audits. Due to many counties and municipalities having trouble finding auditors and the fact that Martin Starnes is already familiar with the accounting practices of Polk County, Ms. Hughes recommends approving the contract.

Vice-Chairman Melton moved to approve the FY 2024 audit contract with Martin Starnes and Associates, seconded by Commissioner Beiler and the motion carried unanimously.

13. Citizen Comments on Non-Agenda Items.

There were none.

14. Volunteer Board Application

A. Applications for Consideration: Garry Bradley - Recreation Advisory Board.

Commissioner Overholt moved to approve the applicant as presented, seconded by Commissioner Moore and the motion carried unanimously.

15. Chairman and Commissioner Comments.

Vice-Chairman Melton gave a health update and thanked everyone for their prayers during his absence.

Manager Pittman said the county sends information to the papers, social media, and the county website. Melissa O'Loughlin was present in the audience and reiterated that the revaluation is a "curb reval" and only if a building permit has triggered the property or if a new addition/ building is visible from the road would staff get out of the vehicle to measure or walk around the property. Otherwise, they will be taking pictures from their vehicles. The vehicles are marked with the county logo, and all revaluation staff have a county ID.

Commissioner Moore thanked those in attendance and asked for citizens to be on the lookout for a housing survey coming from Foothill Regional Commission. Commissioner Overholt congratulated the five young men from the Polk County High School Wrestling Team that went to the State Championship in Greensboro. He also reminded everyone that early voting is currently underway at the new Elections Office located at 231 Ward St.

Commissioner Beiler complimented the wrestling team on their hard work and dedication as well as the growth of the entire wrestling program.

Chairman Yoder welcomed Vice-Chairman Melton back and thanked those in attendance. He gave a special thanks to the Sheriff and his department.

16. Adjournment

Vice-Chairman Melton moved to adjourn, seconded by Commissioner Moore and the motion carried unanimously.

Attest:

POLK COUNTY BOARD OF
COMMISSIONERS

Kristy A Tipton
Clerk to the Board

Myron Yoder
Chairman

POLK COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

AGENDA ITEM

March 4, 2024 Regular Meeting

Agenda Item#: 8.

ATTACHMENTS:

Description	Type	Upload Date
Resolution	Cover Memo	2/27/2024

Suggested Motion:

Motion to approve the Resolution.

**RESOLUTION RECOGNIZING APRIL 2024 AS
ISOTHERMAL COMMUNITY COLLEGE DAY
AND APRIL 20 AS
“PAINT THE COMMUNITY ISOTHERMAL BLUE” DAY**

WHEREAS, the more than 1,300 community and technical colleges, public and private, in the United States have contributed enormously to the richness and accessibility of American higher education. Nearly half of all undergraduate college students in the Nation today are enrolled in community colleges; and

WHEREAS, by providing educational opportunities at costs and locations accessible to all who are qualified, community and technical colleges have greatly enhanced the opportunity for every ambitious student, young or old, to enter a postsecondary school program. As community-based institutions, our schools provide varied programs and offer specialized training for more than 1,000 occupations; and

WHEREAS, the economic impact of Isothermal totals \$112 million annually in Rutherford and Polk counties with 2,373 jobs supported; and

WHEREAS, this community is served well by Isothermal Community College, which provides technical training, workforce development programs and college transfer opportunities in more than 90 areas of study, along with cultural opportunities through Continuing Education, the Foundation Performing Arts and Conference Center, and WNCW 88.7 FM; and

WHEREAS, Isothermal Community College has institutional resources including the Powers Promise and other scholarship programs that allow virtually every resident in Polk and Rutherford counties to attend Isothermal tuition-free; and

WHEREAS, Isothermal students, faculty and staff have received numerous state and national recognitions, and faculty and staff serve the global higher education community on state and national boards; and

WHEREAS, on Saturday, April 20, the college will host a community celebration that will include fun events for community members of all ages on the Spindale Campus called “Paint the Campus Isothermal Blue,” and

WHEREAS, in recognition of the important contribution of community and technical colleges to our total educational system, in 1985 the Congress authorized and requested President Ronald Reagan to issue Proclamation 5418 establishing a National Community College Month.

NOW, THEREFORE, We, the Polk County Board of Commissioners recognize April 2024 and Saturday, April 20, respectively, as

Isothermal Community College Month and “Paint the Community Isothermal Blue” Day

Adopted the 4th day of March, 2024.

ATTEST:

POLK COUNTY BOARD
OF COMMISSIONERS

Kristy A. Tipton
Clerk to the Board

Myron Yoder
Chairman

POLK COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

AGENDA ITEM

March 4, 2024 Regular Meeting

Agenda Item#: 10.

ATTACHMENTS:

Description	Type	Upload Date
Update	Cover Memo	2/27/2024

Feb. 2024 Trail updates:

LWOM:

- First 0.6 mile loop has been constructed and use has already increased. First reimbursement has been submitted. Construction to present date will be reimbursed shortly.
- Outdoor classroom under construction
- What's left: Survey for rare plants, finish Phase 1 trail construction, horseshoe/cornhole pits, playground improvement, picnic tables and bike repair station

Tom Raymond Fitness Trail:

- The partnership with St. Luke's Foundation is smooth; reimbursement is up to date.
- This year's improvements will include a gazebo.
- Six new benches have been installed.
- Partner with the Foundation on Community Campfire/Glow Egg Hunt March 22

ICC loop:

- New trail tread by summer
- Removal of invasive species is ongoing with help of Polk County High School Occupational Prep students

Bradley Nature Preserve at Alexander Ford:

- Scheduling a controlled burn next winter
- Working with NPS on signage update, programming
- 50th Anniversary of OVTA march in October

Park Updates:

Stearns Park:

- 2nd Annual Fairy Festival March 23
- 3 benches left to sponsor

Gibson Park:

- Playground planning in progress

POLK COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

AGENDA ITEM

March 4, 2024 Regular Meeting

Agenda Item#: 11.

ATTACHMENTS:

Description	Type	Upload Date
Summary of Changes	Cover Memo	2/7/2024
HR Policy Revisions	Cover Memo	2/7/2024

Suggested Motion:

Motion to approve the proposed revisions to the Polk County HR Policy.

2.22.2. Timekeeping and Time Sheets

2.22.2.1. Non-exempt employees

In order to get paid, all non-exempt employees (full-time and part-time) are required to complete a time sheet for each pay period, accurately reflecting the hours worked during that time including beginning and ending work times, lunch breaks, any time off (compensatory, vacation or sick time) and any overtime worked. Employees are responsible for maintaining accurate daily time entries and submitting a completed time sheet for approval immediately following completion of the pay period. Supervisors are responsible for reviewing and authorizing the time sheets for their employees, with signature designating approval for the reported hours worked. Supervisors shall not complete time sheets on behalf of employees.

The pay periods and payroll deadlines for submitting employee timesheets is published and distributed to employees at the beginning of each calendar year. Established deadlines for submitting completed and signed time sheets must be recognized in order to allow sufficient payroll processing time. Time sheets that are not submitted by the established deadline will result in the employee's pay being held until the next payroll processing. It is the shared responsibility of the employee and Department supervisor to ensure that employee timesheets are properly completed, accurately totaled, appropriated signed and approved, and submitted within the deadlines for each pay period. Any employee or supervisor who willfully falsifies a time record, or habitually shows a pattern of disregard for established time reporting protocol, will be subject to immediate disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal. **(Also see: 2.22.3. Meal Breaks, Section 6.1. Work Schedule, Section 6.2. Attendance).**

2.22.3. Meal Breaks

Meal breaks are typically one (1) hour and must be at least thirty (30) consecutive uninterrupted minutes in order to be considered non-work time. Department heads or designees shall establish meal break schedules, which meet the operational needs of the department in the most cost-effective manner possible.

- a) Meal breaks should not be more than one (1) hour. Non-exempt employees must record time out and time in for meal and/or lunch breaks on their timesheet and are not permitted to work through meal breaks, without prior supervisor approval.
- b) Employees are not permitted to work through meal breaks for purposes of banking or increasing bonus or compensatory time.
- c) Meal breaks cannot routinely be taken to shorten the regular work day.
- d) Meal breaks are not guaranteed, and are intended to provide a more extended respite from work activities that will allow ample time for a meal.

3.2.3. Unacceptable Personal Conduct

8) Falsification of employment documentation, business records or reports, including, but not limited to falsification of timesheets; or

Section 5.14. LEAVES OF ABSENCE

There are various types of leaves away from work available to [eligible] employees if needed and approved:

- a) Leave Without Pay
- b) FMLA (Paid or Unpaid)
- c) Medical Leave (Paid or Unpaid)
- d) Shared Leave
- e) Workers' Compensation Leave
- f) Military Leave
- g) Civil Leave
- h) Parental School Leave
- i) Community Leave
- j) Personal Observance Leave
- k) Administrative Leave

Section 5.16. Workers' Compensation Leave

Employees experiencing an on-the-job accident, injury or illness, will use the following procedures for filing a worker compensation claim. (See policy, Section 6.25. Post-Accident Drug and Alcohol Testing)

Section 5.20. Community Leave

This leave may be used by non-(new hire) probationary full-time and part-time regular employees.

Similar to a parental school leave, a County employee who is interested in donating time and service to local schools or non-profit organizations may take up to four (4) hours of paid leave annually to support the school activities. Employees may use either: a) parental school leave or b) community leave, only once per calendar year. It will be documented in the Timekeeping System as "personal time".

Section 5.21. Personal Observance Leave

This leave may be used by non-(new hire) probationary full-time and part-time regular employees for any single shift or calendar day of personal significance, including but not limited to days of cultural or religious importance. For part-time regular employees, this leave category will be based on a pro-rata share. This leave must be requested and approved in advance by the department head and direct supervision. Personal Observance Leave is available based on the calendar year, is non-transferable, does not accrue, nor roll over annually, nor is redeemable at the point of separation of employment.

Section 6.1. Work Schedule

Department heads shall establish work and lunch schedules, with the approval of the County Manager and which meet the operational needs of the department in the most cost-effective manner possible.

- a) Employees are expected to work their scheduled hours, within the assigned shift or job schedule, to the best of **their** ability.
- b) It is the responsibility of each employee, supervisor, and department head to perform ~~his/her~~ **their** job function/duties in accordance with the County's pay practice and within the regulations of the FLSA.
- c) **Employees may not begin work before their regularly scheduled working hours or work over regularly scheduled working hours without prior approval from their department management. (Working outside of regularly scheduled working hours on a temporary or regular basis requires written authorization from the Department Head for a specified duration and may require review of the County Manager).**
- d) Failure to adhere to County pay practices, **work schedule, attendance** and applicable wage and hour law may result in disciplinary action up to and including dismissal.

Section 6.2. Attendance

Each employee is an important member of the Polk County Government team. The County is committed to providing the highest level of government services and functions to better serve the community. In order to accomplish this, the prompt and regular attendance of every member is important.

- a) In case of an illness or injury that prevents **an** employee from reporting to work at the scheduled time, the employee is required to directly contact **their** supervisor. If the supervisor is not available, employees are required to directly contact the next-level manager or department head, or to the person designated by the supervisor.
- b) **Employees may be considered tardy when they are not at their designated work station, performing their duties and responsibilities at the required report-in time.**
- c) **Abruptly leaving the designated work station before the end of the regular work day, may be considered an early exit.**
- d) ***Failure of an employee to provide notification of absence for three (3) consecutive workdays will be interpreted as a resignation without notice;*** employees who resign under such circumstances are not eligible for rehire, and all separation determinations will be made in accordance with established human resources policies. ***(NOTE: Refer to Article V, "Employee Benefits", Section 5.14, "Leaves of Absence", and Section 5.14.1., "Leave Without Pay" for further information.)***

Section 6.18. No Smoking

The County prohibits smoking, **vaping, and e-cigarettes, etc.** within County buildings or vehicles. These products may only be used in designated "permitted" areas.

Section 6.25. Post-Accident Drug and Alcohol Testing

In order to promote the safety of all employees during the course of their employment with Polk County, this policy is being provided to all employees in order to provide a clear definition of

unacceptable behavior that will lead to disciplinary action up to and including termination should any employee be found in violation of this policy. This policy provides the guidelines under which every employee shall be required to submit to drug and/or alcohol testing following any on the job accident which causes injury to the employee or a fellow employee, or which causes property damage. Receipt of this policy by an employee constitutes employee's understanding, acknowledgment and acceptance that employee is bound by the following provisions.

6.25.1. Definition

Controlled substances – any drug listed in NC Controlled Substances Act as amended.

6.25.2. Policy Statement

Polk County recognizes that safety in the workplace is a top priority for both employees and management. In order to provide a safe work environment for everyone, Polk County prohibits the use of controlled substances and/or alcohol during the workday. Employees are expected to arrive for their work shift without the presence of controlled substances and/or alcohol in their systems. Polk County further prohibits the presence of controlled substances and/or alcohol anywhere on the property of any county owned facility.

6.25.3. Policy Implementation

Upon the occurrence of an on-the-job accident that results in personal injury and/or property damage, all employees are to immediately inform their supervisor of the event. The employee(s) involved in the accident should follow the instruction of the supervisor with respect to the filing of any accident report. Except for cases involving the need for emergency medical treatment, the employee will be directed to a medical provider for a medical evaluation and to provide a sample, either of urine or blood, which will then be subject to testing for the presence of controlled substances and/or alcohol. Results of the testing will be provided first to the employee and then to Polk County. In the event of an accident that requires emergency medical treatment, employee agrees to have collection and analysis of a blood and/or urine sample performed at the medical facility where emergency medical care is provided.

6.25.4. Special Implementation

If an employee has a prescription for a controlled substance, which was written for that employee by that employee's physician, and the medication was taken according to the prescription instructions, the employee should provide this information to the staff of the medical provider to which they were referred by Polk County at the time that they first appear for the drug test. Employees who take their own prescription medication as directed by their physician or pharmacist, and have previously advised management of their need to take this prescription medication during the workday, may not face disciplinary action subject to management's examination of all of the facts regarding the on-the-job accident.

6.25.5. Refusal for Testing

Refusal to take a post-accident drug and alcohol test will result in disciplinary action up to and including dismissal.

POLK COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

AGENDA ITEM

March 4, 2024 Regular Meeting

Agenda Item#: A.

Suggested Motion:

Motion to approve the applicants as presented.