



Caldwell County North Carolina

Board of Commissioners Meeting

October 9, 2023 at 6:00 PM
City-County Chambers
905 West Avenue NW, Lenoir

MINUTES

Attendance:

Randy Church, Chairman
Mike LaBrose, Vice Chairman
Jeff Branch, Commissioner
Donnie Potter, Commissioner
Robbie Wilkie, Commissioner
David Lackey, County Attorney
Donald Duncan, County Manager
Abby Rich, County Clerk

Call to Order

Chairman Church called the October 9, 2023 Board of Commissioners meeting to order at 6:00 PM.

Public Comment Period

There were no individuals signed up for public comment.

Invocation

Pastor Dan Duke of St. Stephens Lutheran Church provided the invocation for those in attendance.

Pledge of Allegiance

Commissioner Jeff Branch led the Pledge of Allegiance for those in attendance.

Agenda Amendments from the Board, Manager & Public

The County Manager informed the Board of a few amendments to the agenda. The first was an additional Life Saver Award to be given out under Item 1. The next was the addition of Item 21, an extension for the closing date on the Central Street Property located in Hudson. The last was the removal of the Closed Session, as there was no business to be discussed in a Closed Session.

Vice Chairman LaBrose made the motion to accept the agenda as the County Manager and Clerk had presented.

The motion carried unanimously.

Agenda Items

1. Life Saver Award

Chairman Church welcomed EMS Chief Jonathan Cook to the podium.

Chief Cook told the Board that Emergency Services wanted to honor and recognize individuals who assisted on two calls. The first of these calls occurred in July. Caldwell County EMS and Lenoir Fire Department responded to a code blue where a patient was in cardiac arrest. The actions of Lenoir Fire Department and Caldwell County EMS ultimately saved the life of the patient, Virginia Hoyle, who was in attendance for the meeting. Chief Cook asked Ms. Hoyle to come to the podium to be gifted a certificate. Chief Cook then recognized all of the individuals who assisted with this call. Those were Chuck Austin of 911 Communications, Michael Clark, Charlie Philyaw, and Cody Cox of Lenoir Fire Department, Captain Matt Shook, Paramedic Kloie Bryant, EMT Gary Whisnant, and Community Paramedic Tara Swanson of Caldwell County EMS.

The second call was a traumatic event that occurred in late September. The patient had multiple traumatic injuries and a significant amount of blood loss. Chief Cook told the Board that Grace Chapel Fire Department and Caldwell County EMS were able to

quickly stop the bleeding and EMS was able to administer blood to the patient. Upon the latest update, the patient is doing well. Chief Cook told the board that had blood not been given to the patient, the outcome could have been different. Chief Cook continued by telling the Board that blood has now been administered over 10 times in Caldwell County and this would not have been possible without our community partner, UNC Health Blue Ridge. Chief Cook noted that Caldwell County is 1 of the 13 counties in North Carolina that carry blood. Chief Cook then recognized the individuals that assisted with this call as Bailey Quick of 911 Communications, Grant Newton, Tanner Shelton, Tyson Maynard, Kaleb Kerley, Jackie Kerley, and Zac Bumgarner of Grace Chapel Fire Department, and Lieutenant Christopher Morrissey, Paramedic Ethan Miller, and Paramedic Amber Outlaw of Caldwell County EMS. Chief Cook then recognized Chief Nursing Officer Barry Nelson and Director of Emergency Services, Trauma, and Behavioral Health, Leonora Mahoney.

Commissioner Potter commented that two people reached out to him and complemented the way Grace Chapel Fire Department and Caldwell County EMS worked together on the scene. He continued by saying that the community was watching and both agencies did an excellent job.

The County Manager took a moment to thank Dr. Snyder and Dr. McClinton for their collaboration with Caldwell County EMS.

Commissioner Wilkie said that he appreciates all of the efforts and that agencies have to work together to accomplish great things.

The County Manager then recognized Dr. Anthony Frank as being in attendance as well.

2. R.E.S.T.A.R.T. Updates

Caldwell County R.E.S.T.A.R.T. Director Jason Powell came to the podium to provide updates on the R.E.S.T.A.R.T. program. Director Powell told the Board "what we were is not what we are now". Director Powell then provided the mission statement and emphasized the portion that states "while ultimately reducing overdose deaths". He said that this statement is the purpose and the goal of the program. Director Powell continued by saying that when the R.E.S.T.A.R.T. program began, the number of fatal overdoses in North Carolina was 9 per day and now that number has increased to 11 per day. In a calendar year, there were 239 overdoses in Caldwell County seen by the emergency department. In that same time frame, there were 152 opioid related overdoses seen by the emergency department. The number of EMS calls for suspected overdoses in North Carolina in June 2023 was 1,129 calls. 61% of those overdoses occurred in private residences. Director Powell continued by telling the Board that year to date there have been 267 total calls for overdoses. 175 of those calls have been for illicit drugs or overdose. 98 of those have been opioid specific. Director Powell then told the Board that last year there were 230 total reported overdoses in Caldwell County as reported by the State. Caldwell County R.E.S.T.A.R.T. found 278 overdoses that were actually illicit. Director Powell then told the Board that this data shows that the data obtained from the State is incorrect. Year to date, there have been 8 confirmed overdose deaths. Director Powell stated that the reporting of inaccurate data has to stop and it is part of the program's mission to correct this data.

The presentation continued with Director Powell telling the Board that there are 204 unique participants of those, 127 admitted to using opioids, 36 have agreed to follow up and maintain connections with R.E.S.T.A.R.T., and 62 have been referred to treatment programs. Throughout the County this year, 216 doses of naloxone have been given out.

Director Powell then showed the Board a timeline displaying highlights of the year's events. He also told the Board that there is a new software R.E.S.T.A.R.T. will be using called 5CRM. The County Manager asked if the State had this. Director Powell told Mr. Duncan that the state did and they reached out to them.

Director Powell told the Board about the Goldie Project. He explained that this is a platform for post-overdose response teams, and community paramedics. Caldwell County was one of 6 out of 45 counties to qualify to participate in the pilot program. The R.E.S.T.A.R.T. team will be able to bring in other stakeholders to use the data collected. This program will be used to bridge the gaps and collect better data.

Director Powell then briefed the Board on another initiative in collaboration with VAYA health. This initiative is Sequential Intercept Mapping and focuses on individuals with mental illness and co-occurring disorders involved with the criminal justice system. It will allow both agencies to map out where the gaps are.

Director Powell also told the Board that R.E.S.T.A.R.T. has been actively working on a response to homelessness as well. This effort has been in collaboration with other agencies.

Director Powell ended the presentation by showing a commercial for R.E.S.T.A.R.T. that is now on streaming services and local broadcast.

Director Powell thanked the Board for their time. The Board thanked Director Powell for the updates.

3. **Operation Green Light**

Chairman Church read the Resolution supporting Operation Green Light. Commissioner Potter made the motion to adopt the Resolution for Operation Green Light.

The motion carried unanimously.

4. **Emergency Operation Plan Revisions**

Emergency Management Chief Vic Misenheimer came to the podium to present the recent changes to the Emergency Operations Plan.

Chief Misenheimer told the Board that EOP is now 167 pages and Emergency Services is required to review the plan each year. The current plan is through E Plan LLC and the owner has retired and only makes changes on a case by case contractual basis and it was not cost effective. This new plan allows designated County employees to update the EOP as needed. Chief Misenheimer told the board that the EOP does comply with North Carolina GS 166A and abides by FEMA planning. Commissioner Branch thanked Chief Misenheimer for making the updates to the EOP. Commissioner Potter echoed those sentiments. The County Manager told the Board that the EOP was initially 434 pages and it's been condensed to 167.

Commissioner Wilkie made the motion to adopt the Plan as Chief Misenheimer had presented.

The motion carried unanimously.

Consent

Chairman Church turned the meeting over to the County Manager to present the Consent Agenda.

5. **Request for Approval of Equipment Donation**

Emergency Services wishes to donate fire turnout gear that has expired to Gamewell Fire Department's Junior Fire Academy to use for training purposes.

6. **Grant Funding for Vaccines- Health Department**

The Health Department has received \$357,507.00 in grant funding for vaccines.

7. **Evergreene Park Capital Project Adjustment**

The County received an ARC grant in the amount of \$513,425. This grant is a 50/50 match and it will allow for rough grading, water, and sewer for the site.

8. **MDI Incentive**

MDI brought in more tax base than anticipated. The revision will award MDI another \$80,500 in incentives that have already been agreed to.

9. **Town of Sawmills Fireworks Application**

The Town of Sawmills is requesting a fireworks display on October 21st.

10. **Appointment of Beverly Ruppard to Council on Aging**

Beverly Ruppard is requesting to be appointed to the Council on Aging.

11. **Minute Matter Project**

The Sheriff's Office is requesting approval to submit a grant application for bleeding control on the scene.

12. BJA Bulletproof Vest Partnership

The Sheriff's Office is requesting acceptance of a grant for bullet proof vest reimbursement in the amount of \$22,396.57.

13. AXON- Taser Upgrade

The Sheriff's Office is requesting approval of an upgrade for their tasers. Many of the current tasers are irreplaceable. This will replace all of the current tasers and put them under warranty and the County would see approximately \$83,000 in cost savings.

14. Donation of Quantar VHF Radio Equipment

The County has 18 units of Quantar VHF Radios to donate back to the State. The State will use these to have a mobile VHF system.

15. NC 911 Board Portable Radio Grant

16. Appointment of Brian Barnes and Nikki Wofford to the Library Board of Trustees

Brian Barnes and Nikki Wofford have submitted applications requesting appointment to the Library Board of Trustees.

17. Revised MOU for Opioid Settlement Funds

The Resolution must be updated each time the County adds a new opioid response service. This version reflects recent additions.

18. Minute Amendments

The Civic Clerk software does not automatically include attendees in the generated minutes. This item revises the minutes that did not have the attendance included.

19. Approval of Minutes from September 11, 2023 Meeting

The approval of the September 11, 2023 meeting minutes is requested.

20. Reappointment of Hannah Romero to Blue Ridge Community Action

Vice Chairman LaBrose made the motion to accept the Consent Agenda as the County Manager presented.

The motion carried unanimously.

Adjourn

Commissioner Branch made the motion to adjourn at 6:53 PM.

The motion carried unanimously.

RESOLUTION

27-2023



SUPPORTING OPERATION GREEN LIGHT FOR ACTIVE MILITARY SERVICE MEMBERS IN TRANSITION TO CIVILIAN LIFE (VETERAN STATUS)

WHEREAS, the residents of Caldwell County have great respect, admiration, and the utmost gratitude for all of the individuals who have selflessly served their country and this community in the Armed Forces; and

WHEREAS, the contributions and sacrifices of the men and women that served in the Armed Forces have been vital in maintaining the freedoms and way of life enjoyed by our citizens; and

WHEREAS, Caldwell County seeks to honor these individuals who have paid the high price for freedom by placing themselves in harm's way for the good of all; and

WHEREAS, there are approximately 700,000 Veterans in the State of North Carolina, with approximately 5,000 of those being in Caldwell County; and

WHEREAS, Veterans continue to serve their community in the American Legion, Veterans of Foreign Wars, church groups, civil service; and

WHEREAS, approximately 200,000 service members transition to civilian communities annually; and

WHEREAS, an estimated 20% increase of service members will transition to civilian life in the near future; and

WHEREAS, studies indicate that 44% to 72% of service members experience high levels of stress during transition from military to civilian life; and

WHEREAS, Active Military Service Members transitioning from military service are at high risk for suicide during their first year after military service; and

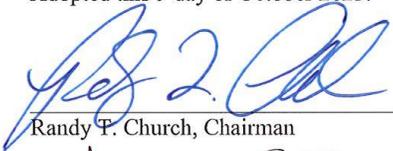
WHEREAS, the Caldwell County Board of Commissioners appreciates the sacrifices our United States Military Personnel made while defending freedom and believes specific recognition be accorded to them in appreciation of their service and to demonstrate the honor and support, they have earned;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, with designation as a Green Light for Military Service County, Caldwell County hereby declares November 6, 2023 through November 12, 2023 a time to salute

and honor the service and sacrifice of our men and women in uniform transitioning from Active Service;
and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that in observance of Operation Green Light, the Caldwell County Board of Commissioners encourages its citizens in patriotic tradition to recognize the importance of honoring all those who the immeasurable sacrifices helped to preserve freedom by displaying a green light in a window of their place of business or residence.

Adopted this 9 day of October 2023.



Randy T. Church, Chairman



Abigail Rich, County Clerk

RESOLUTION

28-2023



**A RESOLUTION BY THE COUNTY OF CALDWELL
TO DIRECT THE EXPENDITURE OF OPIOID SETTLEMENT FUNDS**

WHEREAS, Caldwell County has joined national settlement agreements with companies engaged in the manufacturing, distribution, and dispensing of opioids, including settlements with drug distributors Cardinal, McKesson, and AmerisourceBergen, and the drug maker Johnson & Johnson and its subsidiary Janssen Pharmaceuticals; and

WHEREAS, the allocation, use, and reporting of funds stemming from these national settlement agreements and bankruptcy resolutions (“Opioid Settlement Funds”) are governed by the Memorandum of Agreement Between the State of North Carolina and Local Governments on Proceeds Relating to the Settlement of Opioid Litigation (“MOA”) and the Supplemental Agreement for Additional Funds from Additional Settlements of Opioid Litigation (“SAAF”); and

WHEREAS, Caldwell County has received Opioid Settlement Funds pursuant to these national settlement agreements and deposited the Opioid Settlement Funds in a separate special revenue fund as required by section D of the MOA; and

WHEREAS, section E.6 of the MOA states:

E.6. Process for drawing from special revenue funds.

- a. Budget item or resolution required. Opioid Settlement Funds can be used for a purpose when the Governing Body includes in its budget or passes a separate resolution authorizing the expenditure of a stated amount of Opioid Settlement Funds for that purpose or those purposes during a specified period of time.
- b. Budget item or resolution details. The budget or resolution should (i) indicate that it is an authorization for expenditure of opioid settlement funds; (ii) state the specific strategy or strategies the county or municipality intends to fund pursuant to Option A or Option B, using the item letter and/or number in Exhibit A or Exhibit B to identify each funded strategy, and (iii) state the amount dedicated to each strategy for a stated period of time.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, in alignment with the NC MOA, Caldwell County authorizes the expenditure of opioid settlement funds as follows:

- 1. First strategy authorized
 - a. Name of strategy: Post-Overdose Response Team
 - b. Strategy is included in Exhibit A
 - c. Item letter and/or number in Exhibit A or Exhibit B to the MOA: Exhibit A, Strategy 8
 - d. Amounted authorized for this strategy: \$46,322.89
 - e. Period of time during which expenditure may take place:

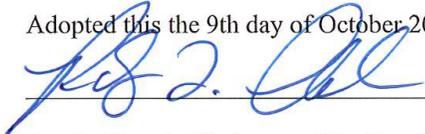
Start date January 01, 2023 through End date June 30, 2023

f. Description of the program, project, or activity: Standup resources specific to establishing a Post Overdose Response Team derived from the previously grant funded Caldwell County R.E.S.T.A.R.T. Program. Provide services as a PORT, outlined by the NCDHHS PORT Toolkit. The Caldwell County R.E.S.T.A.R.T. PORT will actively connect persons who have experienced non-fatal drug overdoses to addiction/mental health treatment, recovery support, harm reduction services, primary healthcare, and/or other services or supports needed to improve the overall health or well-being.

g. Provider: Caldwell County R.E.S.T.A.R.T.

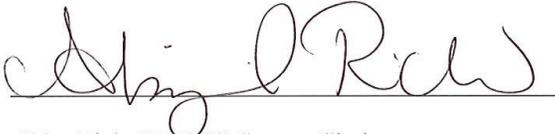
The total dollar amount of Opioid Settlement Funds appropriated across the above named and authorized strategies is \$46,322.89.

Adopted this the 9th day of October 2023.



Randy Church, Chairman of the Board
Caldwell County Board of Commissioners

ATTEST:



Abby Rich, NCCCC County Clerk