Chairman Church opened the meeting and welcomed everyone. He talked about the County Commissioners’ efforts and concerns taken to the NCDOT officials about the widening of US Hwy 321 in the Grace Chapel area, especially the Grace Chapel Road and the intersection used by Merchants Distributors Incorporated (MDI).

Public Comment

Sharon Grindstaff (2 Morningside Drive, Granite Falls and employee of Sunlife) said she was speaking on behalf of residents in Grace Chapel concerning the NC Department of Transportation’s plan for a superstreet, widening project of US Hwy 321 through the County. Ms. Grindstaff said there was no support for a right-turn superstreet design. She provided Commissioners petitions with 1,000 signatures to stop the superstreet design and 220 signatures to stop the current design. Ms. Grindstaff acknowledged that Representative Destin Hall, Congressman Mark Meadows and others were getting involved, and said the residents deserved representation. She cited other cities in North Carolina that were concerned about a superstreet design and were able to get the projects changed. In closing, Ms. Grindstaff said the residents wanted US Hwy 321 to return to full movement intersections to allow safe and efficient travel.

John Dunn voiced his concerns about the superstreet design as well as the loss of access to his business property. Mr. Dunn requested Commissioners set up a meeting with NCDOT officials to allow residents to express their concerns. He said the project would totally eliminate access to the front of his business and an access road would have to be implemented behind his property to access his business as well as Hickory Sand and Sage Meadow Roads. Mr. Dunn said Grace Chapel residents and others needed an intersection directly accessing US Hwy 321 because currently 6400 vehicles travel through the intersection with most turning left toward Hickory. He noted MDI had only 3400 trucks per week (485 per day) and most accessed US Hwy 321 at night. Mr. Dunn cited other traffic statistics along the highway through Hudson and said he disagreed with Commissioners that they could not do anything else to prevent the project as designed because other municipalities had managed to get projects terminated or changed. Mr. Dunn urged the
Phillip Shell said he felt more could be done and said the City of Hickory as well was not pleased with the project. He encouraged a meeting of all concerned including NCDOT officials for discussion. Mr. Shell said he had been to and spoke at every public meeting concerning the project. He talked about Lakeview Park being isolated with no access and residents having to make a right turn to go to Hickory. Mr. Shell said he had been told it was a “guinea pig” project and he talked about the impact the highway design would have on school buses, firetrucks, and ambulances/emergency vehicles. He also said there were rumors the newer bridge was going to be left to be used as a pedestrian bridge. Mr. Shell said Caldwell County had experienced slow economic growth; however, it was beginning to turn around and the project would not be a benefit.

Irv Eurto (2412 Evans Street, Lenoir) talked about the cost of expansion of US Hwy 321 and related projects. He said the City of Lenoir recently approved the use of $900,000 for a sidewalk from Harper Avenue to US Hwy 321 with grant money from the State to fund the remainder of the cost. He said that was all taxpayers’ money and questioned if the expansion of US Hwy 321 was really necessary. Mr. Eurto said it seemed to him that the traffic lights were staggered and very seldom did he have to wait. He expressed his concern about the impact on businesses along the highway as well as US Hwy 321-A as a resulted of shifting traffic. Mr. Eurto asked what NCDOT’s intentions were and questioned the future expansion of Connelly Springs Road and its cost.

Mary Lanaville (121 Whispering Pines, Hudson) thanked Commissioners Potter and LaBrose for attending a recent meeting at the church. Ms. Lanaville said she had been in the County twenty-five years and talked about her distrust of the NC Department of Transportation. She said she got involved when she received the first notification (an informal newsletter) in 2008 and attended a NCDOT meeting. The department did a survey regarding the needs associated with traffic flow; improving access to businesses; improving highway safety; and, decreasing the number of auto accidents. Ms. Lanaville stated there was not another six-lane superstreet in North Carolina and the project for US Hwy 321 was probably an experiment by the NCDOT because they would do what they wanted anyway. She stated her disagreement with the widening project in any form and said she travelled the road every day and there were no traffic jams; however, sometimes there was more traffic than at other times but they were not traffic jams. Ms. Lanaville said the Commissioners could put a stop to the widening project in Caldwell County just as the Town of Matthews had done.

Shena Woods said she had the same concerns that had already been expressed and noted the Grace Chapel intersection impacted her life tremendously. Ms. Woods said that even though she only lives seven minutes to where she works and most of the time it takes twelve to fifteen minutes to get to where she works; however, sometimes it took twenty minutes when she had to travel via Geitner Road. Ms. Wood voiced her concern about the safety for school buses; the response times for sheriff officers/emergency workers; and the impact on businesses. She urged Commissioners to schedule a meeting with NCDOT officials to allow the residents to speak for themselves.

Commissioner Potter said the Board had listened to their concerns and he talked about his
discussions with Representative Destin Hall and Congressman Mark Meadows’ Deputy Secretary Wayne King. He assured the residents that the NCDOT was looking at tweaking the project proposal and it was not a “done deal.” He said the residents’ concerns had been heard and that there would be another meeting and another plan.

Commissioner LaBrose said he echoed Commissioner Potter’s comments and said he did not have an issue with the Board adopting a resolution. He said there would be more meetings and hoped officials with NCDOT would attend. Commissioner LaBrose talked about Congressman Meadows meeting with each Commissioners, individually, about the project as well as conversations with Representatives Destin Hall and Deanna Ballard. He assured the residents there would be “no shovels” before more meetings were held where open and honest dialog could be heard about the impact on each and every citizen.

Commissioner Wilkie also echoed the comments already made by Commissioners Potter and LaBrose, noting they had been working with elected officials. He talked about his discussion with Representative Destin Hall regarding the project and noted August 15th was the final date on the first draft. Also, he noted engineers were working on a plan to address the concerns. Commissioner Wilkie said Congressman Meadows informed him earlier in the day that he had talked to the NCDOT and officials said they were considering all the input from the public, commissioners, and representatives. Commissioner Wilkie said Caldwell County did not want to be a guinea pig (want to see it proven before it comes here) and he would support a resolution.

Chairman Church said the Board would continue to work diligently to address the concerns expressed about the expansion project for US Hwy 321.

Regular Session

Following a moment of silence to remember the lives lost and families impacted by the horrific tragedy on September 11, 2001, Commissioner LaBrose gave the invocation. Commissioner Potter led the Pledge of Allegiance. Chairman Church asked if there were any additions or amendments to the September 11, 2017 agenda. Commissioner Potter asked to remove Item #8 E (Library Meeting Room Policy). Commissioner LaBrose moved to approve the agenda as presented and amended. The motion carried unanimously.

Recognition of Former CCSO Major David Anderson

In recognition of Major David Anderson’s recent retirement from the Caldwell County Sheriff Office, the Board of Commissioners presented him, accompanied by his wife Julie, a plaque and extended appreciation for his 24+ years of service to the Sheriff Office.

Major Anderson thanked Commissioners for the plaque and recognition. He expressed his pleasure at the opportunity he had to service the citizens of Caldwell County and thanked Sheriff Jones for the department’s reception in recognition of his retirement as well as the support he received over the years.
Public Hearing—Road Names

Ms. Hannah Williams, GIS director/E911 addressing coordinator, requested the Commissioners to name two unidentified roads, an old portion of US Hwy 321 and a driveway off Blowing Rock Boulevard, in the Patterson Township. She recommended the naming of the old portion as Old 321 Loop and naming the driveway that provides access to three houses as Creekside Cabin Way.

Chairman Church declared the public hearing open. There was no public comment; therefore, he declared the public hearing closed.

Commissioner Branch moved to name the roads as presented and it carried unanimously.

Public Hearing--Proposed Text Amendments to the Zoning Ordinance

Planning Director Shelley Stevens provided an overview of two proposals for amendments to the County’s Zoning Ordinance: 1) approval of “temporary family health care structures (granny pods); and, 2) regulations concerning advertising signs and structures.

Chairman Church declared the public hearing open. There was no public comment; therefore, he declared the public hearing closed.

Because the amendments are consistent with the County’s Comprehensive Land Development Plan; and promote public health, safety and welfare because the amendments allows for safe living and care for the disabled and update sign regulations per Reed vs. Town of Gilbert, Commissioner Wilkie moved to adopt the text amendments which are hereby incorporated by reference and made a part of these minutes as recorded in Caldwell County Registry Book ______ Page_______.

Public Hearing—Economic Development Incentive for Exela Pharma Sciences, LLC

EDC Director Deborah Murray presented a request from Exela Pharma Sciences for an economic development incentive associated with an expansion, new private investment, and 40 new jobs. Ms. Murray said Exela had exceeded all of their growth plans and created far more jobs than identified in previous requests.

Exela is an international pharmaceutical manufacturer with research and development, manufacturing, distribution and headquarters located in Lenoir. The company has created more than 236 new well-paying, full-time jobs and occupies facilities totaling more than 350,000 square feet.

In July of 2016, Exela pledged to create 50 new jobs with the acquisition of its newest building where it would invest more than $25 million in machinery, equipment and renovations. The renovations are underway with completion expected in late 2017. The company has already created all previously pledged jobs and plans to add another 40 jobs by fall of 2018.

The company’s average wages, which are 40% higher than the county’s average wage, would predict a total new payroll for the new jobs to be in excess of $2.1 million annually.
Chairman Church declared the public hearing open. There was no public comment; therefore, he declared the public hearing closed.

Commissioner Potter moved to approve a Local Jobs Incentive of $80,000 for up to 40 new, full-time Caldwell County jobs to be created over a one-year period. The motion carried unanimously.

Proposed Industrial Site Development Fund

Ms. Murray presented a proposal to Commissioners and requested authorization to establish an Industrial Site Development (revolving loan) Fund to address the EDC’s and County’s mission to increase the tax base and increase job opportunities. She said it had been decades since any new industrial facilities had been built and there was nearly no existing manufacturing facilities available for new or expanding industries. Ms. Murray said the Fund would be self-sustaining and would be strictly used for revolving loans as incentive grants for construction of industrial buildings 50,000 sq. ft. or greater (excluding demolition, zoning). In addition to the loan fund, the owner/developer would annually pay only the property’s taxes prior to improvement for a period of five years or until it is sold or leased. It was noted the EDC would manage the grants just as it does the One North Carolina and Building Reuse Grants. Also, she noted all projects would be subject to the formal public hearing process.

Following positive comments by Commissioners, Chairman Church moved to approve the Industrial Site Development Fund Program and to approve the following budget amendment. The motion carried unanimously.

| Increase | 41.3000.391007.4970 | Interfund Transfer | $388,572.70 |
| Increase | 41.9000.444100.4970 | Site Development | $388,572.70 |
| Increase | 41.3000.397000 | Fund Balance Appropriation | $28,970.50 |
| Increase | 41.9000.444100.4970 | Site Development | $28,970.50 |
| Increase | 20.3000.397000 | Fund Balance Appropriation | $388,572.70 |
| Increase | 20.3000.498800 | Interfund Transfer | $388,572.70 |

Conveyance of Easement to Jesse Plaster

Mr. Kiser said Jesse Plaster approached him earlier in the year to request that the County grant an easement to his property adjacent to the County Office Plaza. Mr. Plaster is remodeling/renovating the building for use as an apartment on the upper level and as a retail space on the lower level. He needs ingress and egress to the building. Mr. Kiser said the County Attorney reviewed the plat map and recommended the following changes.

1) The "Easement Grant" document states only that the easement is for access from the ground floor to the second floor, but the plat map says the easement is also for utilities. They should be consistent.

2) Section 5 of the "Easement Grant" should read "The rule of strict construction does apply to this grant."
Commissioner Branch moved to approve granting an easement with the changes presented by the County Attorney and the motion carried unanimously.


Tax Administrator Monty Woods reported the following and requested the Board of Commissioners approve release of the delinquent taxes that are uncollectible. Mr. Woods said the action is in accordance with North Carolina General Statutes 105-378(a) for real property and 105-373(h) for motor vehicles.

- Real and personal property taxes for 2007 $155,396.76
- Motor vehicle taxes for 2011 $129,713.88

Commissioner LaBrose moved to formally release 2007 property taxes in the amount of $155,396.76 and 2011 motor vehicle taxes in the amount of $129,713.88. The motion carried unanimously.

Request for Approval of Two Additional CCSD Transport Officers

Mr. Kiser said there had been discussion about holding cells at the Courthouse and other options for some time and recently it had been decided the best solution at the current time was to buy an additional transport van which was approved during the Board’s meeting on August 21st. He said the request before them now was to hire two new officers which would have been necessary also had the County built holding cells. Mr. Kiser noted Major Marc Jardon advised the new positions would be for transport duties only unless they could be cross-sworn for other duties.

Commissioner Potter moved to approve the two new transport officer positions and approve the following budget amendment. The motion carried unanimously.

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<th>Description</th>
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Consent Agenda

1. Approval of Minutes
   The County Manager recommended the Board of Commissioners approve the minutes of the August 21, 2017 meeting.

2. Budget Amendments
   The County Manager recommended the Board of Commissioners approve the following budget amendments.
A. Sheriff Office (Asset Seizure Funds) $29,000.00
The following budget amendment is necessary use revenues from the Sheriff Office’s Asset Seizure Fund to acquire two K-9’s and to upfit the vehicles to carry/accommodate the K-9’s. The acquisition does not require any local tax dollars.

Increase 10.9000.331000.4313 Asset Seizure $29,000.00
Increase 10.9000.451000.4316 Capital Outlay $29,000.00

B. Water Fund (Cost of Master Water Meter for Waterfront Harbour) $60,000.00
The following budget amendment is necessary to appropriate Water Fund revenues to cover the cost of a master water meter, vault, and water taps to provide County water to Waterfront Harbor as approved previously by Commissioners on July 17, 2017.

Increase 60.3000.397000 Fund Balance Appropriation $60,000.00
Increase 60.7126.459602 Developer Reimbursement $60,000.00

3. North Carolina Public Employee Deferred Compensation Plan 457(b)
The State of North Carolina established the North Carolina Public Employee Deferred Compensation Plan, a qualified governmental Deferred Compensation Plan under the Internal Revenue Code, 457(b), for public employees of North Carolina. Mr. Kiser recommended the Board of Commissioners adopt the resolution which is hereby incorporated by reference and made a part of these minutes (Exhibit A) as provided by the Human Resources Director.

4. Wilson Creek Invasive Species Control Project
Mr. Kiser recommended the Board of Commissioners approve the agreement, Participating Agreement For Fuels or Noxious Weed Treatment between Caldwell County and the USDA, Forest Service Grandfather Ranger District Pisgah National Forest, which is hereby incorporated by reference and made a part of these minutes (Exhibit B) necessary to document the cooperation between the parties to control non-native invasive plant species along the Wilson Creek Visitor Center property, in consultation with the U.S. Forest Service and using herbicides and sprayer provided by the U.S. Forest Service.

5. Revised HCCBG Grant (Increase of $28,580.00)
Mr. Kiser reported the County received notice from Tina Miller, Council of Governments Director for the Area Agency on Aging, of additional grant funding available for Caldwell County in the amount of $28,580.00. He noted the County’s Council on Aging/HCCBG Advisory Committee voted to allocate the additional funding as follows and recommended the Board of Commissioners formally approve the revised Home and Community Care Block Grant for FY2017-2018.

- Adult Day Health $7,500.00
- Home Delivered Meals $3,911.00
- Senior Center Operations $5,767.00
- In-Home Aide Level II $3,800.00
- Housing & Home Improvement $3,800.00
- General Transportation $3,802.00

$28,580.00
6. Sole Source Exemption of Acquisition of DS200 Voting Equipment
It was noted the Board of Elections’ current voting machines were purchased using $288,000 in Help America Vote Grant funding in FY2005-2006 and, at that time, the machines were expected to last ten years; however, some of the voting machines and tabulators have required repairs over the last two years. In addition, the maintenance support for the machines is limited because the company has discontinued manufacturing them. Board of Elections staff and board members have recommended purchase of new voting equipment DS200 which is currently certified by the State Board of Elections. The total cost is $184,000.00.

Mr. Kiser recommended the Board of Commissioners authorize necessary acquisition of replacement equipment as identified; adopt the resolution for an exemption to sole source the purchase of Voting Equipment DS200 from Election Systems & Software (ES&S); to sole source the purchase of Express Vote Equipment from ES&S contingent upon final certification by the State Board of Elections; and, to sole source the purchase of a DS450 Ballot-on-Demand printer/scanner from Balotar which is hereby incorporated by reference and made a part of these minutes (Exhibit C); and, declare the existing voting equipment surplus and authorize it for trade toward the purchase of new equipment.

7. Sole Source Exemption for Acquisition of Stryker Stretcher/Loader Equipment
It was noted the Board of Commissioners previously approved the purchase of power lift stretchers for the EMS Department Director DiBernardi identified certain stretchers for purchase; however, there is only one company that sells/manufactures that specific stretcher. Mr. DiBernardi advised the department’s existing equipment and current Power-LOAD systems are STRYKER brand equipment and their apparatus manufacturer pre-designed the units to accept the STRYKER Power-LOAD system. The ability to utilize this manufacturer, make and model will allow for decreased costs associated with installation of the product and ease of use and training by mirroring the department’s current equipment. He advised compatibility was the overriding consideration for the sole source purchase. The total cost is $205,525.35.

Mr. Kiser recommended the Commissioners adopt the resolution which is hereby incorporated by reference and made a part of these minutes (Exhibit D).

8. Schedule Public Hearing re Proposed Amendments to the Fire Prevention and Protection Ordinance and to the Franchise Regulations for Pre-Hospital Medical Care Provisions
The County Manager recommended the Board of Commissioners schedule a public hearing for 6:00 p.m. on Monday, October 9, 2017 in the City-County Chambers to consider amendments to the Fire Prevention and Protection Ordinance and the Franchise Regulations for Pre-Hospital Medical Care Provisions Ordinance.

Commissioner Potter moved to approve the eight items on the agenda as presented and recommended by the County Manager. The vote was unanimous.
Appointments

The Clerk informed Commissioners of a current vacancy for a physician on the Board of Health and said applications were submitted from Terry C. Dodds, MD and Richard McBurney, MD. Commissioner LaBrose moved to appoint Dr. McBurney and the vote was unanimous.

Ms. Greene also informed Commissioners that Clerk of Court Kim Clark had requested the reappointment of Faye Higgins to the Jury Commission for another term. She advised Ms. Higgins had graciously agreed to continue service on that Board. Chairman Church moved to reappoint Faye Higgins and the motion carried unanimously.

Closed Session

At 7:25, Chairman Church moved to go into closed session pursuant to North Carolina General Statute 143-318.11(a)(6) to discuss a personnel matter and the motion carried unanimously.

A motion was moved by Commissioner Branch and carried unanimously to come out of closed session to regular session.

There being no further business to discuss, Commissioner Wilkie moved to adjourn and, by unanimous vote, Chairman Church declared the meeting adjourned at 8:06 p.m.