NHC CommissionersObsCorps April 17,2017

A very interesting meeting with request for support of YWCA Stand Against Racism week, a report and request for funding for NHC Juvenile Crime Prevention Council by Honorable Judge J. A .Corpening, Annual report from Community Child Protection Team, and a presentation on the need for affordable housing in NHC.

The regular meeting of the New Hanover County Board of Commissioners was held at the Court House from 9 a.m. to 11:30 am. All commissioners were present.

Katie Tate, Interim Executive Director and Kelly Williams, Community Outreach Manager of the Wilmington YWCA asked the Commissioners to support efforts to eliminate racism during its Annual Stand Against Racism Week April 24-30, 2017. This is part of a national strategy to empower women to stand up for social justice. The YWCA received a proclamation in support from the Commissioners.

Judge Corpening, chair of NHC Juvenile Crime Prevention Council requested approval of funding for Fiscal Year 2017-2018. NHC’s program is highly respected throughout the state and recognized as a model to follow. The priorities of the Council are psychological services, community service, restitution, Teen Courts, home based family services, and parent skill building programs. Ben David, NHC District Attorney discussed how the opioid epidemic is affecting all of our youth and the community. The request was approved.

Judge Corpening and Ben David asked us to support HB280 that would raise the age of juvenile jurisdiction in NC to 18 for low level felony and misdemeanor charges. NC is one of the few states that uses the age of 16 to be tried as an adult.

The Community Child Protection Team gave its Annual Report. They stated there was a lack of consistent, accessible, effective mental health services available to our children. There is an increased need for mental health funding due to opioid epidemic and its effects and teen suicide. Other issues are substance abuse and how it affects the involved families, lack of affordable non-subsidized housing, and barriers for undocumented families.

A very enlightening report and recommendations was given by the Joint City of Wilmington/New Hanover County Affordable Workforce Housing Ad-hoc Committee. There is a huge need for affordable housing for this area. Many workers who support our rapidly growing population are making lower than national average wages and cannot find affordable housing close to their place of work.

A league member, Donna Ringlestein, was appointed to the NHC Nursing Home Community Advisory commission.

Loraine Buker, Observer