

The Alleghany County Board of Commissioners met in regular session on Monday, January 7, 2008, at 6:30pm in the Board Meeting Room of the County Administration Building, 348 South Main Street, Sparta, North Carolina.

Present: Chair Ken Richardson, Vice-Chair Warren Taylor, Commissioner Randy Miller, Commissioner Doug Murphy, Commissioner Milly Richardson, County Attorney Donna Shumate, County Manager Don Adams, and Clerk to the Board Karen Evans.

Chair Ken Richardson called the meeting to order, led the Pledge of Allegiance and opened the meeting with a prayer.

Chair Ken Richardson stated that a budget amendment for the Sheriff's Department and a discussion about the Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP) needs to be added to the agenda under county business.

Commissioner Randy Miller made a motion to approve the amended agenda for this January 7, 2008, meeting. Commissioner Warren Taylor seconded the motion. Vote 5:0.

AGENDA  
Monday, January 7, 2008  
6:30 PM

- 6:30 Meeting Called To Order  
Pledge of Allegiance and Prayer  
Motion on Agenda for January 7, 2008, meeting  
Motion on Minutes for December 17, 2007, meeting
- 6:35 A. Public Comments—30 minutes  
B. Public Hearing  
RE: Community Transportation Program  
C. Alleghany in Motion Annual Report  
D. Mary Walker  
RE: Late-Use Application  
Debt Set-Off Program  
E. Sheriff David Edwards/Belva Miller  
RE: Governors Crime Commission Grant  
F. E-911/Mapping Annual Report  
G. Laurel Springs Volunteer Fire Department Annual Report  
H. County Business  
1. Reschedule January 21, 2008, Meeting  
2. Budget Amendment—Planning  
3. Inspections—New Procedure  
4. PEG Channel Grant Update  
5. Transfer Facility—OSHA  
6. FY 2008/2009 Budget Calendar  
7. Budget Amendment—Sheriff's Department (added)  
8. Transportation Improvement Plan Discussions (added)  
9. Other Business  
10. Closed Session—NCGS 143-318.11 (a) (6)—personnel  
11. Adjourn

Commissioner Milly Richardson made a motion to approve the minutes for the December 17, 2007, meeting. Commissioner Randy Miller seconded the motion. Vote 5:0.

Chair Ken Richardson opened the public comments' portion of the meeting and asked for public comments.

Gerald Davis, President of Alleghany County Home Builders Association, came before the Board to discuss a letter that was sent out last week about any building permits issued would have to go before the Planning Board. He talked about how this

would impact the building industry and discussing this action with them before making this final.

Chair Ken Richardson asked for further public comments.

Scott Smith talked about he went through the Planning Board, and it took four months to get approval. He talked about State standards and county ordinances. He further talked about if State standards are met, then that should be enough. He said he didn't see additional reasons to go through the Planning Board.

Chair Ken Richardson asked for further public comments. None were received. He closed the public comments' portion of the meeting.

Chair Ken Richardson stated that the County Manager had made him aware of the letter that went out, and it is slated for discussions later on the agenda. He further stated that things that have been pointed out will be discussed. He said that he recommends to the Commissioners not to adopt anything tonight until the County Manager, Randy Blankenship and Kathy Murphy work out the procedures.

April Choate, Allegheny in Motion (AIM) Director, presented the Community Transportation Program (CTP) Grant for 2008/2009. She talked about the request is primarily the same except she is requesting that one part-time billing clerk go to full time. She reviewed the budget in the amount of \$137,593 and read the justifications for the full-time position.

Chair Ken Richardson opened the public hearing regarding the CTP grant at 6:40pm.

Chair Ken Richardson asked for public comments. None were received.

Chair Ken Richardson closed the public hearing at 6:41pm and reconvened the regular meeting.

April Choate explained the capital portion of the grant of two lift vans slated for replacement.

Commissioner Warren Taylor and April Choate discussed the indirect costs line item.

County Manager Don Adams explained that it associates a cost to operate her department, for example, a percentage of the finance office, administration, maintenance expenses that don't actually come from the transportation budget.

Commissioner Warren Taylor stated that the reimbursement amount for the indirect costs almost covers the 15% match.

County Manager Don Adams reviewed the actual costs to the County is \$2,326 for this budget.

Commissioner Warren Taylor made a motion to approve the CTP grant application. Commissioner Milly Richardson seconded the motion. Vote 5:0.

Commissioner Milly Richardson asked about drivers offering assistance for passengers to get into the doctor's office.

April Choate explained that AIM has a door-to-door policy.

April Choate presented AIM's annual report including the number of staff members, number/types of vehicles, grant funding received, rates for transportation, contracts for transportation services, number of miles driven last year and number of hours staff spent driving last year.

Mary Walker, Tax Administrator, presented a late tax application for Mr. Handy. She explained that she received this application on December 31, the deadline for 2007 taxes. She reviewed the Board's options.

Commissioner Milly Richardson made a motion to approve the late application. Commissioner Doug Murphy seconded the motion. Vote 5:0.

Commissioner Doug Murphy, Commissioner Milly Richardson and Mary Walker discussed the deadline for current year taxes late applications are due December 31 of that year and regular 2008 applications are being accepted until January 31.

Mary Walker presented information about the North Carolina debt set-off program. She explained that this is a way to collect past-due taxes by attaching it through the Department of Revenue. She reviewed the steps that the County must follow to use the debt set-off program.

County Manager Don Adams reminded everyone that this was one of the justifications for Missy Smith to be put on as a full time person.

Mary Walker agreed and stated Mrs. Smith will be the manager of this program.

Commissioner Warren Taylor and Mary Walker talked about this has become law to allow this action and there is staff and equipment to do this.

Belva Miller talked about a Governors Crime Commission Grant that they are working on. She explained that they are asking for receivers, transmitter, guns, body armor, drug dog and automated fingerprint system for a total of approximately \$100,000 with the County match being around 25%. She further explained that they are still putting together pricing. She stated that they have been working with Kelly Coffey at High Country Council of Government to write the grant.

Sheriff David Edwards explained the importance of the live-scan with fingerprints. He said that hopefully this can be obtained through the SBI.

Commissioner Warren Taylor asked the Sheriff if they have the matching funds.

Sheriff David Edwards stated not right now.

County Manager Don Adams asked if this grant is awarded is the Sheriff willing to use funds that are available at that time.

Sheriff David Edwards agreed and stated that they will probably have it in time.

Commissioner Doug Murphy talked about the paperwork has to be in before the budget process.

Commissioner Randy Miller and Belva Miller talked about the most the County would spend would be \$25,000.

Commissioner Warren Taylor asked if this grant is awarded, will items be sold.

Sheriff Edwards stated yes. He explained that different deputies carry different weapons, and he wants all of them the same. He talked about surplus items.

County Manager Don Adams presented budget amendment General Fund #14 in the amount of \$500 to make a donation available in the Sheriff Department's supply line item.

Commissioner Milly Richardson made a motion to approve budget amendment General Fund #14 in the amount of \$500. Commissioner Doug Murphy seconded the motion. Vote 5:0.

Belva Miller stated that she plans to be on next agenda for final grant approval.

Wendy Williams, E-911 Coordinator/Mapper, presented the E-911/Mapping annual report. She reviewed the trainings, major accomplishments during the year, and statistics for each department.

Chair Ken Richardson asked about the 911 fee that changed on January 1.

Wendy Williams explained that the new law is a flat state-wide 911 fee instead of each county charging their own rate. She said the new rate is 75¢. She stated that she has been told that the County will not receive less revenues. She explained that the 911 fee was \$1.50 and now is 75¢.

Chair Ken Richardson stated that Item G needs to be rescheduled.

County Manager Don Adams discussed the Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP). He reviewed the County's priority listings. He explained the regional rankings of Alleghany County's main roads through the Rural Planning Organization. He reviewed the draft TIP schedule and how it affects Alleghany County. He talked about Alleghany County's priorities; Highway 21 South, Western Loop for Sparta Bypass. He explained why the feasibility study on Roaring Gap Mountain is a higher priority than Highway 18 South and Highway 93. He stated that the study was scheduled last time and will ask that NCDOT finish the study to put numbers on that project. He talked about the safety projects all are along Highway 18. He reviewed the list of all safety projects including responses to those projects. He talked about the bridge projects follow what the State recommends. He asked the Board if the Board's priorities are still the same and if there are any extra safety projects to add to the request. He stated that the public hearing is scheduled on January 22 in Dobson, and everyone has until the end of March to provide information.

Commissioner Warren Taylor stated that he normally attends the public hearing but he has a conflict on the 22<sup>nd</sup>.

Chair Ken Richardson talked about the County Manager can attend if no one else can.

County Manager Don Adams discussed long-term goals, and the County can have more immediate impacts with the safety projects and intersections.

Commissioner Doug Murphy and County Manager Don Adams discussed that the Board's priorities will be publicly presented at the public hearing on January 22 and the deadline for comments is the end of March.

County Manager Don Adams reminded everyone that the next meeting falls on a County holiday. He asked the Board about rescheduling the January 21 meeting.

The Board discussed dates. They decided on January 23 at 3:30pm.

Commissioner Milly Richardson made a motion to move the meeting to Wednesday, January 23 at 3:30pm. Commissioner Randy Miller seconded the motion. Vote 5:0.

County Manager Don Adams presented budget amendment General Fund #13 in the amount of \$807 for postage for the Planning Department. He explained why the money is needed.

Commissioner Warren Taylor made a motion to approve budget amendment General Fund #13 in the amount of \$807. Commissioner Doug Murphy seconded the motion. Vote 5:0.

County Manager Don Adams talked about a letter sent from the Inspections Department about permit procedures. He stated that the letter is effectively being

rescinded. He explained that the letter was sent out prematurely. He stated the need to talk to the builders. He further stated that it was never intended to make all building permits go before the Planning Board because conditional-use permits are the only thing that go before the Planning Board. He explained the purpose is to review projects to make sure they meet all of the County's ordinances. He further explained that he thinks it can be taken care of during the time it takes to get septic permit approval. He talked about the need for time to review what is going to be built to ensure that it meets the ordinances. He reiterated that it can be as simple as when you apply for a septic permit, fill out the building permit. He stated that there are no additional fees.

Commissioner Doug Murphy stated that people had some concerns about adding time and costs.

Chief Building Inspector Randy Blankenship stated that it will not cost more money because these are laws that have been in place. He stated that his office has always tried to be customer friendly. He further stated that requirements were brought to their attention, and they weren't aware of them. He gave an example of building in the floodplain, and actions another county had to take because they allowed homes to be built in the floodplain. He stated that his office and staff aren't qualified to determine whether the permits meet all of the regulations.

Commissioner Milly Richardson and Randy Blankenship discussed that the Mapping Department is working on adding a floodplain layer.

County Manager Don Adams talked about it would be more appropriate for the Planner to sign off on permits. He talked about the procedures and everything takes health department approval. He explained that instead of waiting on the septic permit then apply for the building permit to apply for a building permit when applying for a health department permit.

Commissioner Randy Miller explained that this is another person everyone will have to go through for everything.

Jason Williams used an example of getting a septic permit then the Planner turns it down, who will refund his septic permit monies.

County Manager Don Adams reviewed his idea about applying for a building permit when applying for a septic permit to allow time to review the project to make sure it follows the ordinances.

The Board of Commissioners talked about the need to have further discussions on this matter.

Jason Williams asked about a letter that he provided to the Commissioners. He further asked how many letters have been sent out.

Commissioner Doug Murphy talked about getting feedback from the people involved.

Chair Ken Richardson asked in the future to bring the letter to the County Manager.

Jason Williams stated that he wanted it brought to the Commissioners' attention.

Randy Blankenship talked about discussing the permit procedures further.

County Manager Don Adams informed everyone that Allegheny County was awarded the PEG channel grant in the amount of \$25,000. He explained the required match being \$15,000 from the County and \$10,000 from the Schools. He explained what the grant will be used for.

County Manager Don Adams explained that the Transfer Facility had an OSHA inspection in November. He reviewed the citations noted by OSHA including no forklift training, horn was not working and seatbelt was missing from forklift, no forklift checklist, open-sided floors at the White Goods building, exterior stairs not equipped with handrail, fire extinguishers not being visually inspected, circuit breaker box was not labeled, face plate on electrical outlet wasn't attached tightly, use of an electrical cord, and unlabeled containers. He talked about one citation for forklift training resulted in a fine of \$1,375. He explained that he and Gerald Leftwich, the safety officer, had an informal conference with OSHA about the inspection, and the fine was reduced to \$950. He further explained the reasoning for negotiating the fine.

Commissioner Milly Richardson made a motion to accept the settlement agreement. Commissioner Doug Murphy seconded the motion. Vote 5:0.

County Manager Don Adams presented the proposed budget calendar for 2008/2009. He asked about the calendar schedule working for the Board, and do they want to schedule a planning meeting before mid-March.

Chair Ken Richardson talked about scheduling the meeting for February.

Commissioner Milly Richardson asked for clarification on the proposed school bond payment being \$841,000 for the first payment and \$575,000 for the recurring costs; which is 9¢ on the tax rate.

County Manager Don Adams said yes that is correct if taxes are used to pay for it.

Commissioner Milly Richardson made a motion to enter into closed session at 7:55pm under NCGS 143-318.11 (a) (6)—personnel. Commissioner Randy Miller seconded the motion. Vote 5:0.

Commissioner Milly Richardson made a motion to adjourn closed session at 8:08pm and reconvene the regular meeting. Commissioner Warren Taylor seconded the motion. Vote 5:0.

Chair Ken Richardson stated that no decisions were made during closed session.

Commissioner Randy Miller asked about the schedule regarding the transfer tax going to a public vote.

Chair Ken Richardson stated that the Board hasn't scheduled a date yet.

Commissioner Warren Taylor stated that would be a good thing to discuss during the budget meeting.

Being no further business, Commissioner Milly Richardson made a motion to adjourn at 8:10pm. Commissioner Randy Miller seconded the motion. Vote 5:0.

Respectfully submitted,

Karen Evans  
Clerk to the Board

Attest:

Ken Richardson  
Chairman