

The Alleghany County Board of Commissioners met in regular session on Tuesday, January 19, 2010, at 3:30pm in the Board Meeting Room of the County Administration Building, 348 South Main Street, Sparta, North Carolina.

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

Chair Ken Richardson called the meeting to order.

Commissioner Doug Murphy led the Pledge of Allegiance and opened the meeting with a prayer.

Chair Ken Richardson stated that Item H needs to be removed from the agenda.

Commissioner Randy Miller made a motion to approve the amended agenda for this January 19, 2010, meeting. Commissioner Milly Richardson seconded the motion. Vote 5:0.

AGENDA

Tuesday, January 19, 2010
3:30 PM

- 3:30 Meeting Called To Order, Pledge of Allegiance and Prayer
Motion on Agenda for January 19, 2010, meeting
Motion on Minutes for January 4, 2010, meeting
Motion on December Tax Releases and Refunds
- 3:35 A. Public Comments—30 minutes
B. Mary Walker
RE: Tax Appeal
C. John Blevins
RE: Income Maintenance Position
D. Mapping/911 Annual Reports
E. Wilkes Community College Annual Report
F. Maintenance/Transfer Facility Annual Report
G. Dr. Jeff Cox
RE: Glade Creek School
H. Travis Dalton (Removed)
RE: Final Plat Approval
I. County Business
1. Smoky Mountain Center Request
2. Joint Meeting Dates for 2010
3. Budget Amendment—Economic Development
4. Budget Amendment—Social Services
5. Budget Status Update
6. Farmers Market Request
7. Solid Waste
8. Other Business
9. Closed Session—NCGS 143-318.11 (a) (3)—legal
10. Adjourn

Commissioner Milly Richardson made a motion to approve the minutes for the January 4, 2010, meeting. Commissioner Randy Miller seconded the motion. Vote 5:0.

Commissioner Randy Miller made a motion to approve the real refunds and releases for December. Commissioner Milly Richardson seconded the motion. Vote 5:0.

Commissioner Milly Richardson made a motion to approve the auto refunds and releases for December. Commissioner Doug Murphy seconded the motion. Vote 5:0.

Mary Walker, Tax Administrator, presented a tax appeal from Steve Mitchell on behalf of Harold Mitchell. She explained that the Tax Office is required to complete audits on 10% of the elderly exemptions. She further explained that Mr. Mitchell completed the disabled veterans form. She talked about the application that he presented after the filing period. She further talked about these are two different applications; elderly exemption and disabled veterans exemption. She provided the NCGS regarding the reason why the exemption was denied. She talked about he does not live in his residence which is part of the exemption criteria. She asked the Board for direction on this appeal.

Chair Ken Richardson and Mary Walker talked about whether the Board of Commissioners has the authority to approve this appeal.

Commissioner Doug Murphy, Mary Walker and Steve Moxley discussed how long Harold Mitchell has lived with his son, Steve Mitchell.

Commissioner Milly Richardson made a motion to approve the exemption. Commissioner Randy Miller seconded the motion. Vote 5:0.

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

John Blevins, DSS Director, came before the Board to discuss an open position of the Income Maintenance Caseworker. He asked for permission to fill this position. He presented information regarding the caseload of this position, and this position's salary is covered by the Health Department and the State of North Carolina.

Commissioner Milly Richardson made a motion to allow John Blevins to fill this position. Commissioner Doug Murphy seconded the motion. Vote 5:0.

Wendy Williams, E-911 Coordinator/Mapper, presented the annual report for the Mapping Department including the number of parcels transferred, deeds processed, combinations and splits. She further presented information for the E-911 Department including the number of public hearings held, new road names, road signs made, road signs salvaged and replaced, addresses assigned, phone numbers verified and the number of 911.

Commissioner Milly Richardson and Wendy Williams talked about road signs.

Wendy Williams updated the Board about the status of the new 911 system.

Commissioner Doug Murphy and Wendy Williams talked about the County cannot use 911 monies for signs. She estimated that each sign costs \$75.

Jayne Phipps-Boger came before the Board to present the Wilkes Community College annual report. She thanked the Board for their work. She reviewed their accomplishments for 2009-2010 including the Learn and Earn program, number of registrations for the Fall and Spring, continuing education classes, career readiness certification, business/industry programs, Tech Smart program, floor replacement project, landscaping completed, collaboration with the Alleghany County Schools, FASFA workshops, Student Government Association and DANA trainings.

Commissioner Milly Richardson talked about the need for the college and the employees for the college. She stated that the college has changed a lot of lives and is a great asset.

Commissioner Doug Murphy stated the kids talk about they are taking their parents with them to college so the parents are learning, too.

Chair Ken Richardson talked about this Board will be discussing legislative goals soon for the General Assembly but one of the things will be to support legislation for the community college for the high school students.

Jayne Phipps-Boger stated that she fully supports anything the State can do to support the high school students. She explained that the more the State can do, the better educated workforce we will have.

Larry Davis, Public Works Director, came before the Board to present the annual report for the Maintenance Department including taking care of 12 buildings, servicing around 34-40 vehicles and the equipment at the Transfer Facility. He presented information regarding the Transfer Facility for the amount of scrap tires, white goods/scrap metal, garbage, used motor oil, gallons of wastewater and recycling collected. He stated that Animal Control had 91 complaints and 118 impounded.

Chair Ken Richardson and Larry Davis talked about the problems that the cold weather has caused including the water/sewer issues at Sparta Florist, heating problems at the college and the Administration Building.

Commissioner Doug Murphy stated that on one of the coldest days Larry and his crew were shoveling snow off roofs and sidewalks. He stated his appreciation for doing that.

Larry Davis talked about the radio towers, the problems associated with communications and how his crew and Blue Ridge Electric worked to restore the power.

Commissioner Steve Roten and Larry Davis talked about the loader has worked out well. Larry Davis talked about he had 63 people to apply for the Equipment Operator's position, and he is interviewing 7.

Dr. Jeff Cox, Superintendent, came before the Board to discuss the revised plans for Glade Creek School. He reviewed plans discussed by the school facilities committee, and this is their final version. He explained how they got to this point. He said that he is here to answer any questions that the Board may have. He reviewed the highlights of the changes; relocate the cafeteria to the gym, build a new gym, four new classrooms would join the media center, four new classrooms at the front of the school, relocate the office area to a portion of the current cafeteria area. He talked about the amount of renovations to the existing facility. He further talked about the new entrance.

County Manager Don Adams talked about the facility committee met last week. He explained that the County has received initial notification from the Rural Center that we did not get early approval for the water/sewer which is not a flat out denial but the County won't know if the funding has been granted until April. He further explained that the committee started talking about alternatives if the County doesn't get the \$500,000 grant. He talked about the alternatives that were discussed, and these will be bid out as alternatives. He explained that he has spoken to USDA and they will accept and review an environmental scoping, which is the same process/funding as the training facility. He further explained that this is a new fiscal year for USDA, and he has actually submitted an environmental scoping to the State clearinghouse that will be done by February 15 then he can sit down with USDA. He further explained that it will be 35% of \$750,000. He talked about additional conversations with Dr. Cox about using QZAB monies for Glade Creek School that was allocated to Glade Creek.

Commissioner Milly Richardson and Dr. Cox talked about bidding the entire project then bid alternatives. He reiterated the alternatives for the project.

Commissioner Doug Murphy talked about the sewer/water is a must.

County Manager Don Adams talked about everyone wants to have this facility but we can't wait until we know about the water/sewer grant.

Dr. Cox talked about they are looking into another QSCB option, if possible. He reiterated that this is the plan, a lot of thought has been given and that this is what the school needs.

Chair Ken Richardson thanked Randy Miller and Doug Murphy who has spent the additional time needed on this project. He talked about if we are going to do this, let's do it right and take care of that community.

Commissioner Randy Miller stated that he likes this plan but on the other hand had to ask about the alternatives. He talked about the need to do this for the community and students.

Commissioner Doug Murphy talked about they worked really hard on this, this plan will satisfy the needs of the school and community but need to look at alternatives in case the monies don't come through.

Commissioner Doug Murphy made a motion to move forward on this plan and if the money doesn't come through then look at alternatives. Commissioner Randy Miller seconded the motion. Vote 5:0.

Dr. Cox thanked Randy Miller and Doug Murphy for participating in this process and hoping we can continue on further projects like this.

County Manager Don Adams presented a letter written to Commissioner Murphy requesting the Board of Commissioners approve the attached resolution where Smoky Mountain purchased two condos in Boone and the Local Government Commission (LGC) requested something from the local governments showing approval.

Commissioner Doug Murphy reiterated that this is for all of the local governments represented by Smoky showing their knowledge and support of this purchase. He stated that the purchase of two condos has already been completed and this paperwork is for the LGC.

Commissioner Steve Roten and County Attorney Donna Shumate talked about the condos are used as office suites for use by the Center.

Commissioner Doug Murphy made a motion to adopt this resolution as presented by Smoky. Commissioner Milly Richardson seconded the motion. Vote 5:0.

County Manager Don Adams presented the Joint Meeting Dates in 2010 with the Town of Sparta.

Commissioner Milly Richardson made a motion to approve the joint meeting dates. Commissioner Randy Miller seconded the motion. Vote 5:0.

County Manager Don Adams presented budget amendment Economic Development #3 in the amount of \$24,000. He explained that this to budget a Rural Center Grant for Ollie's Small World Daycare.

Commissioner Randy Miller made a motion to approve budget amendment Economic Development #3 in the amount of \$24,000. Commissioner Milly Richardson seconded the motion. Vote 5:0.

County Manager Don Adams presented budget amendment General Fund #15 in the amount of \$15,236 to budget for an increase in Public Assistance.

Commissioner Randy Miller made a motion to approve budget amendment General Fund #15 in the amount of \$15,236. Commissioner Milly Richardson seconded the motion. Vote 5:0.

County Manager Don Adams provided a budget status update including the analysis of the property taxes collections are up, sales tax is down, inmate revenues are down, service fees are coming on budget, investment earnings are down and lottery proceeds are up. He explained that the budget last year and this year are about the same at this point. He talked about the amount of fund balance used last year and this year's estimated fund balance appropriation. He reminded the Board that the County is

at about 22% of fund balance, which is better than anticipated during the budget process.

Commissioner Milly Richardson talked the Board will need to continue our fiscal prudence.

County Attorney Donna Shumate stated that Mary Walker has been aggressively collecting back taxes.

County Manager Don Adams talked about the letter from the Farmers Market stating their appreciation for use of the parking lot for 2009 and requesting it for 2010.

Commissioner Milly Richardson made a motion to approve. Commissioner Randy Miller seconded the motion. Vote 5:0.

County Manager Don Adams talked about the current solid waste policy is that the solid waste becomes the obligation of the property owner if the renter does not pay it then goes on the taxes of the property owner if not paid. He explained that letters are sent out quarterly to property owners to notify them of their renters' bills. He further explained that it is our responsibility to collect these fees until the policy is changed. He said that the Tax Office must apply tax payments to solid waste fees before it is applied to taxes. He talked about he told this one individual that talked to him that they could appeal to the Board but he would talk to the Commissioners about this policy.

Commissioner Milly Richardson made a motion to table this until the next meeting.

Chair Ken Richardson talked about one reason the County goes to the expense of mailing these letters is so the property owner knows. He said that he agrees with Commissioner Milly Richardson to table it to another meeting.

Commissioner Doug Murphy talked about Joe Roberts who recently passed away. He further talked about he was a Sheriff for three terms and served a brief time as County Commissioner. He said that the County could come up with some recognition for his years of service to this County.

Chair Ken Richardson talked about having some type of recognition of Commissioners who have passed away then have something at the Law Enforcement Center and something for the family regarding Joe Roberts.

Chair Ken Richardson explained that he has been selected to represent Alleghany County for the teaching fellow program in February.

Chair Ken Richardson talked about having some additional workshops dealing with the budget. He explained that Randy Miller and he will continue to work on salaries. He suggested the Commissioners to meet individually with him and the County Manager, and to arrange times to meet with each one to accomplish the things that we need to talk about as a board.

Commissioner Milly Richardson made a motion to go into closed session at 4:52pm under NCGS 143-318.11 (a) (3)—legal. Commissioner Randy Miller seconded the motion. Vote 5:0.

Commissioner Milly Richardson made a motion to adjourn closed session at 5:25pm and reconvene the regular meeting. Commissioner Randy Miller seconded the motion. Vote 5:0.

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

County Manager Don Adams identified a piece of property that the Board of Education is looking at purchasing located on Trojan Avenue.

Commissioner Randy Miller made a motion to allow the Board of Education to purchase the property. Commissioner Milly Richardson seconded the motion. Vote 5:0.

Being no further business, Commissioner Randy Miller made a motion to adjourn at 5:30pm. Commissioner Milly Richardson seconded the motion. Vote 5:0.

Respectfully Submitted,

Karen Evans
Clerk to the Board

Attest:

Ken Richardson
Chairman