

The Alleghany County Board of Commissioners met in regular session on Tuesday, January 22, 2013, at 10:00am in the Board Meeting Room of the County Administration Building, 348 South Main Street, Sparta, North Carolina.

Present: Chairman Larry Cox, Vice-Chair Tom Smith, Commissioner Larry Davis, Commissioner John Goudreau, Commissioner Karen Leys, County Manager Don Adams and Clerk to the Board Karen Evans. County Attorney Donna Shumate was present but arrived late.

Chair Cox called the meeting to order, led the Pledge of Allegiance and a silent prayer.

Commissioner Goudreau made a motion to approve the agenda for this January 22, 2013, meeting. Commissioner Davis seconded the motion. Vote 5:0.

AGENDA
Tuesday, January 22, 2013
10:00 AM

- 10:00 Meeting Called To Order, Pledge of Allegiance and Silent Prayer
Motion on Agenda for January 22, 2013, Meeting
Motion on Minutes for November 19, December 3, and December 12, 2012, Meetings
- 10:05 A. Public Comments—30 minutes
B. Rita Miller (Tax Administrator)- RE: December Releases and Refunds & December Collections Report. Standard release and refund of both automobile and real property taxes due to reasons listed on report. Monthly 2012 collection rates through December as compared to 2011 monthly collection rates. Action Requested – Vote on releases and refunds.
C. Dare Stromer, Blue Ridge Opportunity Commission – RE: 2013 -2014 Community Services Block Grant Application. Action Requested – Vote on whether or not to support the application.
D. Jim Heitzenrater, Alleghany Memorial Hospital – RE: Quarterly Financial Report for Alleghany Memorial Hospital. Action Requested – None.
E. John Blevins (Social Services Director) - RE: Income Maintenance Investigator II Position – Grade 67 (\$32,060.28). Position is vacant. Action Requested – Vote on whether or not the position can be filled.
F. General Business
1. Building Leases – Hold general discussions regarding building leases related to Social Services and Mental Health (Daymark). Action Requested – None.
2. Recreation Director's Position -- Grade 68 (\$33,663.02). Position is vacant. Action Requested – Vote on whether or not the position can be filled.
3. Lions Club Donation –Update about Donation from Lions Club for the Veterans Memorial Park in the amount of \$3,000. Action Requested – None.
4. Agreement for Housing Out of County Inmates – Agreement with Alexander County and Alleghany County for housing Alexander County inmates at a Costs of \$49 Per Inmate Per Day. Action Requested – Vote on whether or not to approve the agreement.
5. CDBG 2010 Scattered Site Committee Update – The Board needs to appoint a Commissioner representative to serve on this committee. Action Requested – Vote to appoint a County Commissioner representative to serve on the committee.
6. Bridge Naming Request – Continued discussions regarding the request to name North Carolina Department of Transportation Bridge Number 9 located on US 221 after Charles B. Shepherd. Action Requested – Discussion on the request.
G. Closed Session—NCGS 143-318.11 (a) (3)--legal
H. Adjourn

Commissioner Goudreau made a motion to approve the minutes for the November 19, December 3, and December 12, 2012, meetings. Commissioner Smith seconded the motion. Vote 5:0.

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

Dennis Smith talked about how on different occasions and at the last meeting the Board discussed legislative goals for the State legislature to consider. He explained what a goal is. He talked about a set of goals read in 1963 on the floor of the US Representatives and recorded in the

congressional record. He talked about 50 years later most have been achieved and the significance of that fact eludes many Americans. He read some of the goals and asked about their implications. He talked about the goals and how you can find news articles that these goals were accomplished. He talked about a speech in 1967 regarding losing freedom. He read a prayer offered by a NC County Commissioner at the beginning of a County Commissioners' meeting. He provided a DVD to each Commissioner that he said will solve a lot of the problems and gave them to the Clerk for distribution.

Chair Cox asked for additional public comments. None were received. He closed the public comments' portion of the meeting.

Rita Miller, Tax Administrator, presented the December auto releases and refunds.

Commissioner Leys made a motion to approve the December auto releases and refunds. Commissioner Smith seconded the motion. Vote 5:0.

Rita Miller presented the December real property releases and refunds.

Commissioner Leys asked for a brief explanation of releases and refunds. Rita Miller explained how the releases and refunds work and reviewed each one on this report.

Commissioner Smith and Rita Miller talked about her recommendation is to release these.

Commissioner Smith made a motion to approve the December real property releases and refunds. Commissioner Goudreau seconded the motion. Vote 5:0.

Rita Miller presented the December 2012 collections' report.

Rita Miller presented the enforced collection report for December.

Commissioner Goudreau talked about the payment agreements, and asked Rita Miller if she would let the Board know when someone misses a payment according to their agreement. Commissioner Goudreau and Rita Miller talked about making a list of people who miss their payment agreement.

Rita Miller updated the Board about the tax/tag law is moving forward. She explained that July renewals is when it will start. She explained that they will have to run both systems for 6 months so the Tax Office staff may be getting comp time.

Commissioner Leys and Rita Miller talked about the Tax Office being ready in July. Rita Miller said our data has passed the tests. They talked about the amount of training involved and how long Rita Miller is looking at comp time. They talked about the collections should be a 100% rate.

County Manager Don Adams and Rita Miller talked about for 6 months data will have to be entered in both systems.

Commissioner Leys and Rita Miller talked about the money will be collected at DMV then the State will pay the counties.

Jessica Prevette talked about their Community Services Block Grant Program for BROCC.

County Manager Don Adams reviewed what is in the Commissioners' packets.

Jessica Prevette presented information about their Grant Program. She reviewed information regarding their first priority for the Community Services Block Grant Program Fiscal Year 2013-14 Application for Funding Form 210 Agency Strategy for Eliminating Poverty for July 1, 2013 to June 30, 2014, Section I Identification of the Problem, Section II Resource Analysis including the community resources, Section III Goal and Strategy about long-range goal and strategies for achieving long-range goals. She continued reviewing the information including Form 212. She talked about the grant allows them to have a presence but not operational monies.

Chair Cox and Jessica Prevette talked about the number of people they anticipate serving. They talked about the percentage of poverty and how the formula is figured.

Jessica Prevette continued reviewing the grant application for priority number two including all of the sections she reviewed for priority number one.

Commissioner Smith and Jessica Prevette talked about how the 3-county area served 18 families.

Jessica Prevette continued reviewing the grant application.

Commissioner Leys and Jessica Prevette talked about how BROCC gets the families by working with Social Services and how it works. They talked about they support college tuition as a form of assistance. Jessica Prevette talked about how they work.

Chair Cox and Jessica Prevette talked about retention numbers other than people moving out of the area.

Jessica Prevette explained what they do to retain people in the program. She talked about the issues they deal with including exceeding the guidelines. She talked about how many completed the programs they assisted.

Commissioner Goudreau made a motion to support submitting the application.

Jessica Prevette talked about how they have to put what they are applying for and they are told what to submit. She explained that they were under the Department of Health and Human Services and now is under the Department of Social Services. She talked about it's a process and will feel like they are being phased out. She said that they are fighting to survive.

Commissioner Smith seconded the motion.

Commissioner Smith talked about on the complete application's page 20 of Alleghany's planning assistance. Commissioner Smith asked about the BREMCO round up program. Dare Stromer talked about the Alleghany office uses the money for assistance. They talked about citizens can be assured that their money is staying here.

Commissioner Leys and Dare Stromer talked about Ashe County Social Services receives their round up money.

The Board voted on the motion on the floor. Vote 5:0.

Jim Heitzenrater, CEO of Alleghany Memorial Hospital, introduced the new CFO Brett Liverman.

Brett Liverman presented a brief update on the financial situation of Alleghany Memorial Hospital. He reviewed the utilization of county support. He said there have been significant improvements. He reviewed the outgoing accounts payable and how much cash is on hand. He reviewed statistics through December.

Commissioner Goudreau and Brett Liverman talked about the Town of Sparta vendor is for water/sewer charges.

Commissioner Smith, Brett Liverman and Jim Heitzenrater talked about how hospital inpatient numbers have increased since September 1.

Jim Heitzenrater stated they are working very hard. He mentioned they received a grant from BREMCO for \$22,000 for cardiac rehab and explained the importance. He said they have received the first payment from Golden Leaf and have hired Dr. Greenfield. He explained that they are looking at adding a nurse practitioner and looking at going forward to 2020. He talked about their strategic plan. He talked about the January 15-17 community meetings where numerous people attended and where it goes from here. He discussed that they are in the process of recruiting 4 specialty clinics to the Hospital. He said they are moving forward to expand their services. He explained that they are in the process of doing a working plan and how to get the word out about their positives things and the need for a marketing plan. He said that he will have an update on that process including interviewing marketing firm at the end of this month. He further said if the Board wants him to report back before the next quarter he will be glad to.

Commissioner Leys said that she thinks that it is important to compete with the Elkin hospital in the local newspaper.

Commissioner Smith and Jim Heitzenrater talked about the timeline for the meetings in January and their strategic plan and an upcoming retreat.

Jim Heitzenrater talked about the amount of outpatient clients. He talked about having the outcome of the strategic plan to give it to the community some time in March.

Commissioner Leys and Jim Heitzenrater talked about him coming in April and coming back in two weeks to report on the clinics.

Commissioner Goudreau said thank you for the report and it sounds like the Hospital is on its way for financial stability.

Chair Cox talked about how it was nice to hear the 41% reduction in accounts payable. He talked about the recent sections about the plan.

Jim Heitzenrater talked about having a revenue cycle and making everyone understand the importance of their roles in the revenue cycle.

John Blevins, Social Services Director, presented a request for permission to fill a vacant permission. He said this is the third position recently and pay is the problem. He explained that DSS averaged 81 people a day in their offices upstairs. He talked about this position and the importance of this position, Income Maintenance Investigator/Food & Nutrition. He talked about the State is increasing their oversight and the requirement to increase the fraud amount. He explained that the salary is 50/50 and the amount of incentives we get back from this position's work. He compared Alleghany and Ashe counties. He explained that Alleghany County went live with the NC Fast program this past weekend. He further explained that their goal is to have people speaking to one person at Social Services. He explained the NC Fast program, and it is being a universal program. He talked about the current errors in the system. He said that Alleghany County is one of the last counties to switch over. He explained how this will affect the current caseload. He talked about impacts to Social Services after the Affordable Care Act goes into effect on October 1. He said that they expect the workload to increase greatly. He requested the Board to allow him to fill this possible.

Commissioner Goudreau talked about the growth of county government over 10 years is Alleghany County has added 18 employees. He talked about the report that compared all 100 counties. He further talked about since he has been on the Board, there have been 2 new positions added in Social Services. He talked about the need to find ways around it and think around the box. He further talked about looking at ways to start reducing the number of employees. He talked about the additional costs of the 18 people on the taxpayers. He said he understands times are tough and the need to have a program to help get people off of assistance.

Commissioner Leys asked what happens if the position is not filled. John Blevins explained that the caseload will go to the other workers; they wouldn't be able to fraud work and the possibility of having money withheld by the State.

Commissioner Goudreau talked about the fraudulent claims.

Commissioner Leys asked how we know they are fraudulent claims. John Blevins talked about they give Social Services false information up front, and he listed out examples.

Chair Cox and John Blevins talked about this person's position, through the State returning a portion of the fraudulent claims, collected about the amount that costs the County for this position.

Commissioner Leys and John Blevins talked about what happens if we don't do this. He explained the appeal process through the State for citizens and the fraud investigation process including how people apply for benefits in the beginning.

Chair Cox talked about the report that Commissioner Goudreau referred to and read from the report. He pointed out this isn't just Social Services employees.

Commissioner Leys made a motion to allow the position be filled. Commissioner Smith seconded the motion. Vote 4:1 (John Goudreau).

Chair Cox declared a brief recess at 11:27am

County Attorney Donna Shumate arrived at 11:27am.

County Manager Don Adams talked about the need to start having general discussions about space needs. He explained that Social Services' space is leased, and the current lease ends October 2013. He talked about it is approximately 6,500 square feet. He explained that the main issue is storage space and meeting space. He said that the County currently pays \$45,600 rent a year, which 60-65% is reimbursed from the State. He further said that the County budget impact is 35% of \$45,600. He explained that there is a real ADA issue because you have to drive to each floor. He talked about the County negotiating with Bill Blevins to expand the building, the need to look at everything. He further talked about since we need additional space and it doesn't look that easy at the current site then we are talking about more money. He explained the second issue is the County owns the facility at Daymark Mental Health Services. He reminded everyone that Allegheny County loaned money to New River Service Authority with a deed of trust, they couldn't pay the County back so the County foreclosed on the building. He explained that the County then worked out a lease with Daymark. He reviewed the square footage at that facility; 6,600 finished area, 1,380 semi-finished for a total of over 8,000 square feet. He talked about how much Daymark pays Allegheny County annually. He stated that this lease is until the end of June and he has spoken to Billy West about the lease. He talked about how there could be an interest for the County in that building. He explained that he cannot justify building a new structure but since we own this structure, and there could be justification for moving Social Services. He talked about the dilemma is the State mandate to provide mental services through Smoky but there is an opportunity here. He explained that there would need to be renovations to make the building work for Social Services including a waiting area. He further explained the semi-finished area would work for that and would need to connect the buildings to make it work. He said that he needs input from the Board whether to continue with this conversation.

Commissioner Goudreau said he thinks it is a good idea. He further said that we've talked about it in the past, and it makes sense. He stated that he understands there will be renovation costs. He explained that he is not saying we abandon Daymark. He talked about this is an excellent opportunity sitting out there, and we need to look at it but if the renovations expenses prohibit it then we do something else.

Commissioner Smith and County Manager Don Adams talked about the County Manager's conversations with Daymark and helping them find another space. The County Manager explained that they are depended upon funding and would like to see annual leases, and the problem is he isn't aware of 3,000 square feet finished and when someone does the finish work they want a long-term lease. The County Manager used the example of if Bill Blevins put money into Social Services building; he will put the money back into lease price.

Commissioner Goudreau talked about the size of Daymark.

Commissioner Leys talked about the timing because Daymark has too much space and Social Services don't have enough. She said she hopes the renovations prices are where we can do this.

County Manager Don Adams asked to make sure the entire Board is comfortable with this idea before moving forward.

Commissioner Davis said yes but he would like to see some numbers.

Chair Cox talked about the facility being next to the Health Department and Group Homes, and it makes sense to him. Chair Cox and the County Manager talked about the current arrangement with the State reimbursement and the State will reimburse us for the insurance costs, depreciation. The County Manager explained with real quick numbers everything being the same in County dollars we would pay out about \$10,000 more annually. County Manager Don Adams said he can get more detailed numbers.

The Board talked about wanting to proceed with the conversation.

County Manager Don Adams said that the Recreation Director has submitted a 30-day notice, and he is moving back to Wyoming. He explained that following County policy, he is requesting to fill the open position of the recreation director.

Commissioner Smith asked what type of responsibilities is there for the recreation director. The County Manager briefly reviewed the recreation director's responsibilities including youth sports

overseeing Duncan Recreation Center, fairgrounds/fairgrounds board, Sam Brown Park, summer maintenance crews for the fields and County lawn maintenance, boat landing at Farmers Fish Camp.

County Manager Don Adams talked about the County does have a master recreation plan that needs updating. He explained that he hopes to get funding for updating the plan.

Commissioner Goudreau asked can the County Manager see merging the position into the maintenance department. County Manager Don Adams said the short answer is no and explained that he even looked at the Wellness Center but he explained that if you are going to make him responsible for it make him in charge. The County Manager said he doesn't think the skills are there in maintenance department for the recreation department, provided examples and thinks it falls outside of the skills of the current maintenance.

Commissioner Leys and County Manager Don Adams talked about if this position is allowed to be filled that the recreation plan is the main task.

Chair Cox and County Manager Don Adams talked about any possible combining of positions.

Commissioner Goudreau talked about giving the youth sports to the Wellness center then just having the maintenance of the fields and may need to look at that.

County Manager Don Adams explained that he has seen recreation both ways; a line item in the budget to a complete department. He said he doesn't think we are running the same programs now as 30 years ago and the volunteer base is gone.

Commissioner Goudreau talked about this might be an opportunity for them.

County Manager Don Adams said on field maintenance there is nothing that comes close. He talked about the Recreation Department's budget with part-time salaries goes to field maintenance, lifeguards and utilities. He explained that the wellness center couldn't charge enough for field maintenance. He used an example of saving money in Recreation Department, and he doesn't know how the fields would be maintained. He said if the Board is looking at saving money then it would be the position.

Commissioner Smith said that little league has around 500 kids and he can remember it before the Recreation Director.

Commissioner Smith made a motion to fill the position. Commissioner Goudreau seconded the motion.

Commissioner Goudreau said he just wanted to have a discussion about it to see if there are any other ways.

The Board voted. Vote 5:0.

County Manager Don Adams informed the Board that the Lions Club has made a \$3,000 donation commitment for the Veterans Memorial Park.

Chair Cox talked about his conversation with Clarence Crouse.

Commissioner Leys and County Manager Don Adams talked about not knowing what the actual dollars are going to be used for.

Commissioner Leys asked for an update on the project.

County Manager Don Adams explained the work that has been performed on the project at this point; applying for numerous permits. He explained that the first thing he is going to do is to take County employees and rented equipment to dry up the areas that are not wetland areas. He said hopefully in the spring this project will be in the bidding phase.

County Manager Don Adams talked about the agreement with Alexander County to house their inmates here in our jail. He said we have been taking these inmates since September. He said this is temporary. He talked about approving this agreement, which goes to January 31, and give the Chair permission to extend it as necessary until their jail is completed. He talked about we are getting \$10,000-\$20,000 per month. He explained Alleghany County's responsibility in the agreement.

Commissioner Smith and County Manager Don Adams explained there are two pods in the Jail which allows current staff to watch both areas.

Commissioner Goudreau made a motion to approve and allow Chair Cox to extend the agreement month to month through this budget year. Commissioner Smith seconded the motion. Vote 5:0.

County Manager Don Adams stated the County is accepting applications for the emergency repairs program. He explained this program and that this is part of the Scattered Site program, and this is for smaller projects. He reviewed the application process including the selection committee. He said that he requests that a County Commissioners be appointed to this committee.

Commissioner Goudreau said he will do it.

Commissioner Smith made a motion to appoint Commissioner Goudreau to the committee. Commissioner Davis seconded the motion. Vote 5:0.

County Manager Don Adams talked about at the last meeting there were questions on the bridge naming regarding whether this a line-of-duty issue and if not how would the Department of Transportation respond. He explained that he spoke to Sam Halsey, Mike Pettyjohn and Sandy Woodie. He talked about how Mrs. Woodie talked to different people about their recollections of the incident. He explained his conversations with Sam Halsey about if we couldn't prove it. He talked about having enough evidence including he is on a local memorial and a national memorial. He said that Sam Halsey said he has no problem taking this to the DOT board.

Commissioner Goudreau made a motion to support the resolution. Commissioner Smith seconded the motion.

County Manager Don Adams talked about the public input section requirements. He further talked about bringing the resolution to the next meeting. He stated that the next Department of Transportation board meeting is that following Thursday.

Commissioner Goudreau withdrew his motion until the next meeting.

Chair Cox said this will allow for public comments at the next meeting during public comments section of the agenda.

Commissioner Davis made a motion to enter closed session at 12:33pm under NCGS 143-318.11 (a) (3)--legal. Commissioner Goudreau seconded the motion. Vote 5:0.

Commissioner Smith made a motion to adjourn closed session at 1:15pm and reconvene the regular meeting. Commissioner Goudreau seconded the motion. Vote 5:0.

Chair Cox stated that no decisions were made in closed session.

Being no further business, Commissioner Leys made a motion to adjourn at 1:16pm. Commissioner Smith seconded the motion. Vote 5:0.

Respectfully Submitted,

Karen Evans
Clerk to the Board

Attest:

Larry Cox
Chairman