

The Alleghany County Board of Commissioners met in regular session on Monday, February 17, 2014, 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 Attorney Donna Shumate, County Manager Don Adams and Clerk to the Board Karen Evans.

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

Commissioner Davis made a motion to approve the agenda for this February 17, 2014, meeting. Commissioner Goudreau seconded the motion. Vote 5:0.

AGENDA
Monday, February 17, 2014
10:00 AM

- 10:00 Meeting Called To Order, Pledge of Allegiance and Silent Prayer
Motion on Agenda for February 17, 2014, Meeting
Motion on Minutes for February 3, 2014, Meeting
- 10:05 A. Rita Miller - Tax Administrator
1. January Releases and Refunds - Standard release and refund of both automobile and real property taxes due to reasons listed on report. Actions Requested – Vote on releases and refunds.
 2. January Collections Report - Monthly 2014 collection rates through January as compared to 2013 monthly collection rates. No action requested.
 3. Enforced Collections Report – Summarizes enforced collections for the month of January 2014. No action requested
 4. Payment Agreement Report - List of people with payment agreements who did not make payments. No action requested.
 5. Solid Waste Appeals Action Requested – Vote on the appeals.
 6. Board of Equalization and Review Schedule – Request to set dates for Board of Equalization and Review on Tuesday, April 15 starting at 6:30pm. Action Requested – Vote on the request.
- 10:20 B. Clark Hunter – Blue Ridge Development Center Manager / Alleghany County Economic Development Corporation Director
RE: Mr. Hunter will be appearing before the Board to discuss recent economic development activities and to update the Board on the economic development planning process. No action requested.
- 10:30 C. Travis Dalton – County Planning Director
RE: Cell tower application for placing a cell tower in the County.
Action Requested — Vote on cell tower application.
- 10:45 D. General Business
1. Planning Board Appointments
Discussion about two Planning Board members' terms that expire March 5, 2014. Action Requested – Vote on appointments or appointment procedures.
 2. Board of Elections Previous Laptop Request
Enclosed in packets is a lease quote in the amount of \$4,812 to lease 10 laptop computers for the primary and run-off elections. Currently there is \$2,400 budgeted for this request. Action Requested – Vote on approving the \$4,812 lease.
 3. NCACC District Meetings
The closest North Carolina Association of County Commissioners district meeting will be held on April 3, 2014 in Catawba County. No action requested.
 4. Wellness Program Drawing
Drawings for employees who have obtained 125 points, completed Preventive Care portion of Wellness Program and obtained the most points.
Action Requested – Draw 8 employees' names for a chance to win a \$25 Chamber gift certificate. Draw 2 employees' names for a chance to win a \$100 Chamber gift certificate. Draw 1 employee's name for a chance to win a \$200 Chamber gift certificate.
- E. Commissioner Comments
F. Public Comments—30 minutes
G. Adjourn

Commissioner Leys made a motion to approve the minutes from the February 3, 2014, meeting. Commissioner Smith seconded the motion. Vote 5:0.

Rita Miller, Tax Administrator, presented the January auto releases.

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

Rita Miller presented the January auto refunds.

Commissioner Leys made a motion to approve the January auto refunds. Commissioner Davis seconded the motion. Vote 5:0.

Rita Miller presented the January auto refunds under the vehicle tax system (VTS).

Commissioner Smith made a motion to approve the VTS January auto refunds. Commissioner Leys seconded the motion. Vote 5:0.

Rita Miller presented the January real property releases.

Commissioner Leys made a motion to approve the January real property releases. Commissioner Goudreau seconded the motion. Vote 5:0.

Rita Miller presented the January real property refunds.

Commissioner Goudreau made a motion to approve the January real property refunds. Commissioner Leys seconded the motion. Vote 5:0.

Rita Miller presented the January 2014 collections' report, the enforced collection report and the payment agreement report.

Rita Miller presented a request for release of solid waste fees for property located at 43 Barr Road. She explained that she did visit the property, mobile home will be torn down and has a permanent disconnect according to Blue Ridge Electric.

Chair Cox and Rita Miller talked about the taxes are current.

Commissioner Smith made a motion to approve the release. Commissioner Goudreau seconded the motion. Vote 5:0.

Rita Miller presented a request for release of solid waste fees. She explained that this property recently had a fire and there is a new mobile home for living. She said that she did visit the property, and it is now used for storage.

Chair Cox and Rita Miller talked about she did not see electricity at the property when she visited it.

Commissioner Leys made a motion to approve the release. Commissioner Goudreau seconded the motion. Vote 5:0.

Rita Miller talked about setting the dates for Board of Equalization and Review for 2014. She explained that it must be between the first Monday in April and no later than the first Monday in May. She talked about she recommends April 15 or April. 17.

County Manager Don Adams explained the reason for his recommendation is April 15 is because April 17 doesn't allow time for additional meetings, if needed.

Commissioner Smith made a motion to set the Board of Equalization and Review on April 15 at 6:30pm. Commissioner Davis seconded the motion. Vote 5:0.

Clark Hunter came before the Board to provide an update about the technology activities at the BDC. He talked about at their last meeting they decided to update equipment to continue operating their public access center. He further talked about a technology grant to assist businesses by providing training to update their web presence.

Commissioner Leys talked about we are moving forward. She stated that it amazes her how far behind we are and we can only go forward.

Clark Hunter stated that the BDC is 90% filled and reviewed the recent tenants including ACTV installed new equipment and expanded. He explained that they offer free business start-up services and consultations. He talked about a program that the Rural Center has reinstated. He explained he is continuing to work on the economic development plan and getting close to having the draft version. He reviewed the top 8 areas for the plan and working on a plan of action.

Commissioner Smith and Clark Hunter talked about opportunities for the youth. Clark Hunter explained he would like to bring the youth together to educate them about the community.

Chair Cox and Clark Hunter talked about internships for the youth.

Commissioner Leys and Clark Hunter talked about putting internships in the grant.

Travis Dalton, Planner, explained that the cell tower application is for the Shawtown Tower, which is proposed to be a 120-foot monopole constructed at 7323 US Highway 21 S. He explained the application has received a Conditional-Use Permit from the Planning Board with the condition that the tower be painted sandy brown. He further explained that this tower has an 85 foot fall zone, so it will be a breakaway tower.

Dave Pokela presented a PowerPoint presentation showing information about the tower including the need, existing tower sites, additional proposed tower sites and the location of this tower.

Commissioner Leys and County Manager Don Adams talked about the tax value after the tower is constructed.

County Manager Don Adams and Dave Pokela talked about this tower is close to the Blue Ridge Parkway, additional information was submitted to the Parkway and a balloon test was performed to make sure the tower wouldn't be in the Parkway's view shed, which it isn't.

Commissioner Goudreau made a motion to allow Commissioner Davis to recuse himself from the vote. Commissioner Leys seconded the motion. Vote 5:0.

Commissioner Goudreau made a motion to approve the proposed cell tower. Commissioner Leys seconded the motion. Vote 4:0.

County Manager Don Adams talked about the planning board membership. He reviewed the list. He reminded everyone that the Planning Board was originally set up for staggered 3-year terms. He stated that the ordinance created goals to have county-wide representation and the terms were set by the Commissioners. He explained that two appointments are up. He further explained the Commissioners have two options, reappoint or start the process looking for additional people. He said that Wayne Miles and Bill Caudill are the people whose terms are expiring. He further said that they have indicated their willingness to continue. He reiterated the options; appoint them or open up the process.

Chair Cox asked if there are any names to put forth. No one spoke

Commissioner Smith made a motion to reappoint Wayne Miles and Bill Caudill. Commissioner Davis seconded the motion. Vote 5:0.

County Manager Don Adams reviewed the quote from Rush Computer Rentals for laptops for poll workers. He talked about the Election Director previously asked for 17 and explained why she is asking for only 10 now. He further talked about they researched purchasing versus rental including a couple of things looked at is how many. He explained that there is \$2,400 already budgeted; therefore \$2,400 is needed. He said he doesn't recommend purchasing the computers because the leased computers come with the software already loaded. He talked about this is an educational election versus waiting until it is a requirement. He explained that it will be \$4,800 now and \$4,800 for the general election. He said that we may have to look at our entire voting system in the near future.

Commissioner Leys said that she has taken the training and laptops are much more efficient, and it is easier for the poll worker; therefore, it's more efficient.

Commissioner Leys and County Manager Don Adams discussed the laptops will arrive with the software loaded on the machines. The County Manager said that this company is doing this in other locations also. They discussed Elections need \$2,412 this budget year and the amount needed for next budget year.

Commissioner Smith and County Manager Don Adams talked about Kate Cosner is comfortable to have these for the poll workers not for the provisional ballots.

Commissioner Goudreau made a motion to approve the request. Commissioner Davis seconded the motion. Vote 5:0.

County Manager Don Adams let the Board know that North Carolina Association of County Commissioners will be holding their district meetings in late March-early April. He talked about the closest one to us is on April 3 in Catawba County. He said if anyone is interested in attending to let Karen Evans know.

Chair Cox and Clerk to the Board Karen Evans talked about there aren't any fees associated with the meeting but they still require registrations to have an accurate count.

County Manager Don Adams talked about the wellness program, and we've had a very successful program with 100% compliance. He further talked about 85% exceeded the minimum 125-point requirement with 50% having 200 points or more and 10% of employees over 300 points. He said this is the last of the drawings. He explained that 8 \$25 Chamber gift certificates will be drawn out of everyone who achieved the minimum of 125 points, 2 \$100 Chamber gift certificates will be drawn out of the people who had completed the preventive care portion and 1 \$200 Chamber gift certificate will be drawn out of the employees that had the most points.

Chair Cox talked about having healthier employees and hopefully save money with Blue Cross/Blue Shield.

County Manager Don Adams stated that the preliminary insurance quote has been received of 6.16%. He talked about percentage increases normally seen and our rate would have been double if not for the wellness credit. He said that we have received almost a \$70,000 credit, which is a direct cash savings. He talked about the quote is contingent upon participating in the next wellness program. He said that we had a good claims year and wellness program participation. He stated that the goal is to get employees healthier. He talked about Blue Cross/Blue Shield looks at it as a long-term goal. He further talked about we have good baseline data that will allow us to target our health issues. He talked about having an upcoming webinar, department head meeting and the next wellness program needs to target our health issues.

Chair Cox said this is good news in all areas, and he appreciates all of the work.

County Manager Don Adams talked about the good participation from the employees. He further talked about if leadership supports the new wellness program, then it will have a snowball effect.

The Board of Commissioners conducted raffles for employees that have completed the required 125 points, completed the Preventive Care portion of the program and obtained the most points for the County's wellness program.

County Manager Don Adams said he is going to try to come up with a new game plan and present it later.

Commissioner Goudreau wished everyone a Happy Presidents' Day.

Commissioner Leys read a thank you note from Social Services regarding the donation to the foster children's program. She read an email from Don Adams about the uncollected taxes, insolvents, that the Board released at the previous meeting stating that year's collection rate was 99.636%.

Chair Cox talked about the work done on collecting those taxes over 10 years.

County Manager Don Adams explained that we bank on collecting those taxes. He talked about the Tax Office is doing an excellent job.

Commissioner Leys talked about having more people for the long term care committee that we should be seeing soon.

Chair Cox stated his appreciation to Josh Greene and his crew for working on the parking lots from the recent snow/ice.

Chair Cox opened the floor for public comments. None were received. He closed that portion of the meeting.

Being no further business, Commissioner Leys made a motion to adjourn at 11:13am. Commissioner Davis seconded the motion. Vote 5:0.

Respectfully submitted,

Attest:

Karen Evans
Clerk to the Board

Larry Cox
Chairman