

The Alleghany County Board of Commissioners and the Alleghany County Board of Education met in special joint session on Wednesday, March 4, 2015, at 6:30pm in the Media Center of Sparta Elementary School, 450 North Main Street, Sparta, North Carolina.

Present: County: Chair Tom Smith, Vice-Chair Karen Leys, Commissioner Larry Davis, Commissioner Mark Evans, Commissioner Bobby Irwin, County Manager Don Adams, and Clerk to the Board Karen Evans.

Board of Education: Chair Brad Mabe, Vice-Chair Amy Bottomley, Jason Williams, Steven Williams, Superintendent Dr. Kim Mattox, and Sharon Lyons.

Brad Mabe called the Board of Education meeting to order at 6:35pm.

Steven Williams offered a prayer.

Chair Smith called the Commissioners' meeting to order at 6:37pm.

Jason Williams made a motion to approve the agenda. Amy Bottomley seconded the motion. Vote 4:0.

Brad Mabe welcomed everyone to this meeting.

Dr. Kim Mattox, Superintendent, explained that the Board of Education expressed an interest in having a joint meeting or two with the Board of Commissioners and opted to have the School Facilities Committee meet together first. She further explained after the School Facilities Committee meeting, Commissioner Irwin and Commissioner Evans have visited every school. She expressed their appreciation for the interest in the schools.

Brad Mabe talked about having an opportunity to get together.

Amy Bottomley talked about they appreciate the things that the Commissioners do for them, and it is good for the County also because children are the future.

Dr. Mattox presented the Alleghany County Schools annual report through a PowerPoint presentation showing their focus on academics, athletics and career development. She showed statistics for the State report card for each school and grades by school poverty percentage.

Commissioner Evans mentioned an article he saw recently about they recognize there are holes and trying to balance it out.

Dr. Mattox continued with the PowerPoint presentation including statistics for each of the schools and their focuses. She explained their focus on community service including their Hero Project success. She explained that they have developed community report cards and provided copies for the Commissioners.

Chair Smith thanked the Board of Education for having the Commissioners and having a good relationship between the two boards. He said he is proud of our schools. He said Commissioner Evans and Commissioner Irwin talked about the good shape the schools are in at the Commissioners' last meeting.

Commissioner Irwin talked about he was involved with the school system for several years and the facilities are great. He said he knows requests are coming in soon and money is tight. He explained that the Schools have almost doubled their physical space during the last 8-10 years and the need to make sure maintenance for buildings is a priority because maintenance on facilities is cheap if it is done early. He talked about the Schools had a maintenance staff of 3 20 years and it is a staff of 3 now.

Jason Williams talked about they have 3 staff members. He provided examples of maintenance duties that have contracted out, like mowing, because contracting is cheaper than adding staff.

Brad Mabe talked about it is trial and error and there may come a point they have to hire another person.

Commissioner Evans talked about the importance of people staying focused on their task they are doing.

Jason Williams explained the Board of Education had an extremely large fund balance and how they completed numerous maintenance projects to get their fund balance down. He stated that it is now at the point they have decided to stop using their fund balance.

Dr. Mattox and Commissioner Leys talked about \$119,000 had to be reverted back to the State and how they paid it back by not filling positions and reallocating positions. Jason Williams pointed out that they can't keep absorbing the monies that the State asks for back. Dr. Mattox and Commissioner Leys talked about asking for monies back twice in one year back in 2004, and Commissioner Leys had read that it is being considered.

Jason Williams explained that they are getting to a point to have to pay salaries out of the fund balance monies.

Brad Mabe reminded everyone that 3 years ago they did cut jobs in order to save monies. He gave an example of Grayson County is cutting 20 jobs at the end of this year.

Dr. Mattox and Chair Smith talked about Dr. Mattox did a review when people can retire and in the next 5 years, there are 90 people who can retire with 50 of those being teachers.

Dr. Mattox and Commissioner Leys talked about the masters' degree funding was cut and how people are obtaining their masters' through a grant. They talked about teacher assistants, teaching cadets program at Alleghany High School, teacher assistants going forward to get their teaching certificate. Commissioner Evans mentioned when bringing people from within the current system they already know the culture. Dr. Mattox gave examples of people that want to be here working.

Dr. Mattox and Commissioner Leys talked about upcoming capital needs.

Dr. Mattox and Commissioner Irwin talked about the current locking system. She showed an example of the key fob at Alleghany High School, how the entire High School can be locked down quickly, and they are looking at doing that at each school. Commissioner Irwin pointed out that the fire departments and sheriff's department also have a way to get in during an emergency.

Dr. Mattox talked about additional storage is needed at Piney Creek School and provided examples of their current operations. She further talked about the need for new windows and heating/air-conditioning in the 7th and 8th grade building at Sparta School. Jason Williams and Commissioner Evans talked about the condition of the windows in that building along with trying to heat or cool the building. Commissioner Evans and Commissioner Irwin talked about ideas for the heating and cooling for the building. Commissioner Leys gave examples of insufficient air cooling system when Sparta School was built.

Commissioner Irwin talked about the County's debt load is a lot of the schools and the amount of that debt. He said the Schools are also the biggest user of tax dollars. He urged them to take care of what they have.

Jason Williams and Commissioner Evans talked about the kids have this to come back to.

Commissioner Evans talked about the work on the economic development plan, having a concentrated focus and having several different committees working on it. Jason Williams talked about the focus on creating jobs.

Commissioner Leys said the internship program is great and how many people come back if there is something here for them to do.

Dr. Mattox explained Alleghany High School is keeping detailed records on following students to track the data about how many come back.

Chair Smith talked more about the economic development plan and a lot of his questions about it have been answered. He said he was glad to see the healthcare curriculum starting in the fall of 2015. He talked about the objectives in each of the areas in the economic development plan. He used agriculture as an example.

Brad Mabe provided examples about young farmers. Dr. Mattox talked about the heifer program provides exposure to all areas of farming for students. Steven Williams explained how the program works. Commissioner Irwin talked about Heifer International program does a lot more than cattle and provided examples.

Steven Williams talked about the value of the internship and provided an example of a student getting a full-time job.

Chair Smith talked about he is delighted about pursuing the healthcare industry. He asked about interns for healthcare. Dr. Mattox explained their thoughts about how this would work and their current work with Alleghany Memorial Hospital with interns. Commissioner Irwin talked about this is the fastest growing industry in the community college system, close to 50% of classes are related to the medical industry and the amount of money saved by taking community classes at the high school level.

Commissioner Leys talked about the challenge the Hospital faces is that people don't want to come here.

Chair Smith asked for additional comments. No one spoke.

Being no further business, Commissioner Evans made a motion to adjourn at 7:40pm. Commissioner Irwin seconded the motion. Vote 5:0.

Respectfully submitted,

Attest:

Karen Evans
Clerk to the Board

Tom Smith
Chair