

The Alleghany County Board of Commissioners met in regular session on Monday, April 1, 2013, at 6:30pm 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.

Chair Cox stated that a letter of support request from the Town of Sparta regarding Halsey Street needs to be added to the agenda under General Business as item 6.

Commissioner Goudreau made a motion to approve the amended agenda for this April 1, 2013, meeting. Commissioner Leys seconded the motion. Vote 5:0.

AGENDA  
Monday, April 1, 2013  
6:30 PM

- 6:30 Meeting Called To Order, Pledge of Allegiance and Silent Prayer  
Motion on Agenda for April 1, 2013, Meeting  
Motion on Minutes for March 18, 2013, Meeting
- 6:35 A. Karon Edwards – Alleghany Council on Aging Director  
RE: Annual Report – No action requested.
- 6:50 B. Brian Edwards – Cherry Lane Volunteer Fire Department Safety Officer  
RE: Annual Report – No action requested.
- 7:00 C. Susan Miles – Sparta Revitalization Committee Chairperson  
RE: Request from the Committee to make improvements to County property located adjacent to the courthouse (previously Dysart property). Action Requested – Vote to make and allow improvements to be made to the property.
- 7:10 D. Dennis Smith  
RE: Public Comments. Action Requested – Mr. Smith is requesting that the Public Comment portion of the Commissioners' meeting be moved back to the front.
- 7:15 E. General Business
1. Child Abuse Prevention Month Proclamation  
Action Requested – Vote on the Proclamation naming the month of April as Child Abuse Prevention Month.
  2. Juvenile Crime Prevention Council Electronic Signature  
Action Requested – Vote to approve the Finance Officer as the person designated to electronically sign program documents via email. It is recommended that both the County Manager and County Chairperson be named as backup.
  3. County Health Insurance—Special Called Meeting  
Action Requested – Vote to schedule a special called meeting on April 29, 2013, to hear a presentation from Mark III in regards to County health insurance.
  4. Social Services Building Space Analysis  
Information will be presented to the Board during the meeting. No action requested.
  5. Maintenance Worker Open Position (Grade 60, \$22,784.85)  
Action Requested – Vote on the request to fill the vacant position.
  6. Town of Sparta Letter of Support Request (added)
- F. Public Comments—30 minutes  
G. Closed Session—NCGS 143-318.11 (a) (3)—legal  
H. Adjourn

Commissioner Smith made a motion to approve the minutes from the March 18, 2013, meeting. Commissioner Goudreau seconded the motion. Vote 5:0.

Karon Edwards, Council on Aging Director, presented their annual report. She reviewed their accomplishments during 2012 including serving over 400 clients ranging from age 60 to 104. She talked about asking those who can afford to pay \$2 per meal to help with the budget cuts. She explained the importance of the contributions collected allowing them to continue to serve meals. She talked about their volunteers, clients and employees that help with the Council on Aging. She reviewed the statistics for the meals on wheels program, congregate meal program, Glade Creek center, Turkey Knob center, level I in-home aid services, level II in-home aid services, respite program, consumer-directed program, transportation services, information/referral services. She explained that the aging population is growing in North Carolina. She talked about activities they completed in 2012 including beginning a comprehensive plan for senior citizens. She read their mission statement.

County Manager Don Adams asked Karon Edwards to review Council on Aging's funding sources.

Karon Edwards reviewed the funding sources; federal/state block grant \$178,720, Alleghany County \$128,558, Alleghany Social Services \$8,000, Client Contributions \$7,894, Fundraisers/Grants \$10,270.

County Manager Don Adams explained that annually Council on Aging is appointed by this Board as the lead agency on the Home and Community Care Block Grant (HCCBG). He explained that Chair Cox serves on that board and what the HCCBG board does.

Chair Cox asked for an explanation of the involvement with High Country Council of Government.

Karon Edwards explained they are governed by the Council of Government, and Anita Davie is the area agency director. She reiterated that the area agency is the supervisor of the HCCBG funds. She explained that they are regularly reviewed. County Manager Don Adams talked about the \$178,720 in federal/state monies are ran through the Council of Government.

Commissioner Leys talked about the importance of Council on Aging, and they do a great job.

Karon Edwards talked about upcoming events.

The Board of Commissioners stated their appreciation.

Brian Edwards, Safety Officer for Cherry Lane Volunteer Fire Department, presented their annual report. He reviewed information for 2012 including the number of first responder calls, wrecks, fire alarm calls, brush fires, traffic control calls, structure fires, chimney fires, stranded motorist's calls, vehicle fires, assisted Sparta Fire Department and Glade Creek Fire Department for a total of 102 calls. He explained that in January they purchased a chassis for a new brush truck, and it will ready to put in service in June.

Commissioner Leys and Brian Edwards talked about the junior members and total number of members.

The Board of Commissioners stated their appreciation.

Susan Miles along with Johnnie Whitlow came before the Board to talk about the property next to the courthouse. Ms. Miles discussed items that the Sparta Revitalization Committee (SRC) is asking the County to do; replace the rotten wood, paint, replace gutter, replace roof, remove brush, replace stairs to match the main courthouse stairway, build a handrail. She talked about the items that the SRC will do; repair the rock wall, fund and plant a new landscape, fund and paint the two benches black, fund and hang a historical plaque. She said they are asking for the Commissioners' approval to do this.

County Manager Don Adams said that the bushes are already gone. He talked about items that he has talked to SRC about and making it presentable especially since it is on Main Street. He explained that this can fall in the budget process things like the concrete work. He talked about doing what falls in the normal maintenance of facilities and addressing the remaining items in the budget process.

Commissioner Smith and County Manager Don Adams talked about normal maintenance items.

Commissioner Goudreau said he would like to know what the long-term intent is for the building since it was purchased for the parking. County Manager Don Adams talked about the only concept he has came up with is a storage place for events held on Main Street. He explained that if the building is going to be used otherwise then he would recommend redoing the electrical. He further explained that there is no plumbing and the plaster has been damaged by water. He said that it is open space but doesn't know the long-term use.

Commissioner Goudreau talked about having to make it handicap accessible. The County Manager agreed if it is open to the public.

County Manager Don Adams explained the County's and Town's previous conversations about the building. The County Manager talked about fixing the exterior since it is on Main Street.

Chair Cox and County Manager Don Adams talked about the request from the SRC and why they are asking for permission to plant items around the facility along with the items the Maintenance will do.

Commissioner Leys said she serves on this committee, and this is what they came up with.

Commissioner Goudreau talked about the roof, stairs and handrail waiting until budget time. The County Manager agreed and said it will be part of Maintenance's budget request.

Commissioner Leys talked about approving the SRC responsibility items and put the other items in the budget.

Commissioner Goudreau made a motion for SRC to do their described work and the minor maintenance items. Commissioner Smith seconded the motion. Vote 5:0.

Dennis Smith talked about Chair Cox's motion at the last meeting to move the public comments to the end of the meeting. He said that the reasons he gave for doing this seem to be somewhat dishonest. He quoted comments by Chair Cox for the first reason. He used an example of the last two meetings. He asked Chair Cox what he means by the tone of the meeting will be better with public comments at the end of the meeting. He further asked if Chair Cox wants the room to be empty when someone speaks about how disappointed they are with you.

Chair Cox said no this is not what he wants. He stated that he did give three good reasons.

Dennis Smith said he has all of them right here.

Chair Cox reiterated that he gave three good reasons and the Board voted to move the public comments to the back of the meeting. He explained to Dennis Smith since you are on the business part of the agenda we can interact. He stated that public comments are where we only listen. Chair Cox and Dennis Smith talked about Dennis Smith is giving the Board reasons to move the public comments back to the beginning of the meeting. Chair Cox told him to proceed but to keep to the agenda. Dennis Smith asked what he is allowed to do. Chair Cox asked him isn't he asking the Board to move on this. Dennis Smith asked does he not want to hear what he has to say. Chair Cox reiterated that for him to keep on topic of requesting the comments be at the beginning. Dennis Smith asked is he not allowed to give the reasons for his request. Chair Cox said he has told him twice to proceed. Dennis Smith said do you not want to hear me because if not he will sit down. Chair Cox again said to proceed or he will rule him out of order. Dennis Smith asked him how he wants him to proceed. Chair Cox answered proceeding with the request he came here to present. Dennis Smith asked can he give the reasons. Chair Cox said to give the reasons and so far he has done nothing but quote him so give the Board the reasons.

Dennis Smith talked about one reason the Chair gave was to be efficient. He explained that he is asking who it is more efficient for. He said 30 minutes is 30 minutes and it shouldn't make any difference. He said that the reasons the Chair gave isn't right because they are not truthful.

Chair Cox said he doesn't want to get into this with him; he just wants him to get to the point.

Dennis Smith said he will speak in public comments.

County Manager Don Adams explained that this is something that has been done in the past. He further explained that this was done for 7, 8, 9 years then it was moved to the front. He provided an example of how it is more efficient by giving people times to appear on the agenda instead of everyone sitting through the entire meeting waiting their turn. He reiterated being respectful of other people's time. He explained that with longer agendas he can provide estimated times for people to come, which is the justification on efficiency.

Commissioner Goudreau said he doesn't think that it is efficient, just a convenience.

County Manager Don Adams said it's for their time. Commissioner Goudreau agreed.

Chair Cox said the Board has heard his request and asked what the pleasure of the Board is.

Commissioner Goudreau said the Board didn't hear his request so it is hard to decide on something, the Board knows how he voted last time, and he would love to have it at the front.

Chair Cox asked for additional comments.

County Manager Don Adams presented the Child Abuse Prevention Month proclamation for April. He read the last paragraph about calling upon everyone to increase participation in efforts to support families, thereby preventing child abuse and strengthening the community.

Commissioner Leys asked will this be in the newspaper. County Manager Don Adams said we can give it to the newspaper.

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

County Manager Don Adams presented information about the Juvenile Crime Prevention Council (JCPC) using electronic signatures. He reviewed how JCPC operates. He recommended the Finance Officer be the person to sign and have the County Manager and/or Chairman to serve as backup.

Commissioner Leys made a motion to approve the Finance Officer be the person to sign and have the County Manager and/or Chairman to serve as backup. Commissioner Goudreau seconded the motion. Vote 5:0.

County Manager Don Adams said he is requesting the Board to schedule a special-called meeting on April 29, for Mark III, Mark Browder, to present health insurance information to the Board. He explained that we can wait until the first week of May but another week is lost. He talked about already having the joint meeting with the Town scheduled for that night.

Chair Cox and County Manager Don Adams talked about this has to be decided in May. The County Manager explained that he is gathering proposals and he is needing direction from the Board about funding available for health insurance.

The Board discussed and decided to have the meeting at 5:30 on April 29<sup>th</sup>.

County Manager Don Adams talked about the building space analysis for Social Services. He said he isn't asking for a decision to be made today. He passed out a property description of 182 Doctors Street. He reviewed the highlights of the current Social Services building; monthly rent \$3,800 for an annual costs of \$45,600, 6,588 square feet, 22 individual offices, 3 file rooms, 2 receptionists work areas, 2 lobbies, 7 restrooms, 2 small storage areas, 1 copy room, 1 conference room, 1 kitchen, current lease expires September 30, 2013. He explained that John Blevins, Social Services Director, has itemized changes needed for Social Services. He further explained that Bill Blevins has agreed to provide the requested alterations with the lease staying the same. He talked about the actual costs to the County is \$1,520 per month after the State reimbursement. He stated that John Blevins needs additional storage space and Bill Blevins has agreed to build 400 square feet of storage area, replace carpets, replace HVAC for a portion of the building, replace the floor in a portion, remove spiral stairway, expand the front window reception, all offices painted, replace sink in bathroom, additional lighting, replace refrigerator, repair broken tile, repair awning, add windows in two offices. He talked about the last page from John Blevins is general statements about this location does not meet their needs, nature of their jobs have changed and things to consider. He passed out an analysis of the Daymark facility.

Chair Cox and County Manager Don Adams talked about Bill Blevins is proposing to do the items and keep the rent the same.

County Manager Don Adams provided an analysis of 102 Health Services Road. He reminded everyone that Alleghany County loaned New River Service Authority (NRSA) approximately \$250,000, NRSA was unable to repay the loan so the County foreclosed on the property. He explained that Daymark leases the facility for \$3,798 per month and the current lease expires on June 30, 2013. He talked about the main structures is 3,976 square feet, built in 1990, has multiple offices/conference rooms/restrooms. He talked about potential maintenance issues that may occur in the next few years; heating/cooling system and roof. He reviewed the information for the second structure; 2,700 square feet of completely finished space, 600 square feet of semi-finished space, 780 square feet for a garage, total square feet of 4,080, built in 2000, 12 offices, 1 storage/office, kitchen, 3 restrooms, 1 bathroom, 1 utility closet, break room. He talked about the semi-finished and unfinished space could easily handle 12-13 individual offices without major modifications. He mentioned that the current occupants stated that there have been some roofing issues. He said if the Board chooses to move Social Services there will be a need for some modifications including needing a main entrance/lobby area/storage area for an estimated cost of \$49,500. He explained that the need to connect the two buildings with a covered walkway is estimated to be \$9,500 and paint everything for \$8,750-\$11,000. He said that the renovations would be a grand total of approximately \$70,000 and some of the expenses will be eligible for reimbursement and won't know until the invoices are submitted. He explained that he is budgeting a lot of the labor out because he cannot commit the maintenance staff's time solely on this project and explained why. He said that the County has to give notice soon to Daymark if this is the way the Board wants to proceed. He passed out a financial analysis and reviewed it. He said that a straight cash-flow analysis shows to stay with the current arrangements. He talked about Daymark has agreed to a 3-year term and Bill Blevins is asking for a 5-year term. He continued reviewing the financial analysis. He stated that the analysis doesn't take into consideration the current needs for Social Services. He talked about the reimbursement rate in the last 16 years has gone from 65% to 60% and this analysis makes the assumption that the reimbursement rate will remain at 60%. He continued talking about what the analysis does not cover. He said that he recommending staying where we are and why is recommending that because he thinks it is worth the risk, saves the cash flow, spot fix the roof and HVAC system because once Social Services is in the building we can get reimbursed from the State.

Chair Cox said thank you for the information and his recommendation. He asked for questions.

Commissioner Goudreau said that he just got this information so he hasn't had time to review it. He asked John Blevins how the current location will restrict Social Services operations. John Blevins explained they can get by with the improvements by Bill Blevins for the next 5 years but it will be tough. He provided an example of the conference room space for meetings with families. He said that it's not the ideal situation. He explained that this is the State's way to work with the families in order to not take the children. He stated that Bill Blevins is great to work with. He provided an example of if something breaks he fixes it. He stated that he will make the storage area 500 square feet. He talked about needing another area for meetings, every office is full, but they can make it work for another 5 years but it isn't ideal. He further talked about the Daymark facility has a better setup than the current location.

County Manager Don Adams said this is the closes he has seen to fit the needs for Social Services to get into a permanent building.

County Manager Don Adams explained that Josh Greene has been promoted to the position of Public Works Director, which opened up a Maintenance Worker position at a grade 60, \$22,784.85. He stated that he is requesting to fill the position.

Commissioner Smith made a motion to fulfill the request. Commissioner Leys seconded the motion. Vote 5:0.

County Manager Don Adams talked about the request from the Town of Sparta including the revised Town resolution and the proposed letter that will be going to the Speaker of the House and the President Pro Tempore about Halsey Street. He explained that him and Bryan Edwards met with Representative Jeffrey Elmore and discussed Halsey Street, which suffered major damage during a January rain event. He further explained the importance of the road. He gave a history of the Department of Transportation came out and provided a price of \$80,000 to fix the road and they don't have money for the work. He explained that further conversations about the possibility of \$20,000 from the Town, \$30,000 from the House and \$30,000 from the Senate for a total of \$80,000. He further explained that Representative Elmore requested a letter from the County showing support. He said that the Town gets POW bill money and this amount is more than they get for maintenance on all of the Town roads.

Chair Cox and County Manager Don Adams talked about the street having over 900 vehicles daily. They talked about the request is to write a letter of support on County letterhead with the Chairman signing it.

Commissioner Goudreau made a motion to write the letter of support. Commissioner Davis seconded the motion. Vote 5:0.

Chair Cox said there has recently been action regarding New River Service Authority and asked for an update from the County Attorney.

County Attorney Donna Shumate stated that the Federal lawsuit was dismissed on March 28. She said that the five county attorneys appreciated the well reasoned order to dismiss the lawsuit and that the judge noted that it failed to identify any Federal statute or authority that was violated.

Chair Cox opened the public comments' portion of the meeting and asked for public comments. He asked how many people wanted to speak with 4 people raising their hands. He asked people to monitor their time for comments to allow everyone an opportunity.

Dennis Smith continued with his comments from the earlier portion of the meeting. He explained that the people are the business of the county. He quoted the Chairman's comments at the last meeting regarding moving public comments to the back of the meeting and taking up employees' time including respecting other people's time. He asked what does that mean and respecting people time includes the people who want to speak during public comments. He quoted the third reason provided by the Chairman at the last meeting of people that talk to him and the need to refine the public comments. He read the definition of refine. He asked who the Chairman sees as the impurities. He addressed the public's suggestions to move it to the end, the Chairman is listening and this is why he is putting out this proposal. He talked about 1,200 people that signed the petition to reinstate the vocal prayer that hasn't been done. He further talked about the steady stream of the people that talk to him too. He listed examples. He quoted Commissioner Leys about employees wasting hours, and asked does she really think the employees were really wasting their time, and, if so, then the Board should have both meetings at 6:30pm. He also quoted Commissioner Leys comments from the last meeting regarding Rocky Proffit. He said that it seemed that Commissioner Leys was acting on her own and asked the Board to vote on something they hadn't seen. He talked about the NC Community Foundation and listed out what the Alleghany County Community Foundation spent the money on in recent years. He stated that only Commissioners Smith and Goudreau seemed to understand the ramifications and voted against the request. He read information from the previous Press Secretary of the US, Robert Gibbs who served 2009-2011. He continued to quote him regarding a dishonest government, and a dishonest government leads to places you don't want to go. He said these items are

something for you to ponder on. He read a prayer that was offered by a North Carolina County Commissioner during a County Commissioners meeting.

Brandon Hawks talked about during the last meeting the Chair's comments regarding moving public comments after being approached by his constituents. He said that it is at the discretion of the each Board to decide where to place public comments on the agenda, which is not his concern. He explained that his concern was how the Chairman placed it. He paraphrased the Chairman's comments including that it is inconvenient for the audience to wait. He said that another inconvenient thing is the mid-month meeting which is during the morning and provided examples of why it is inconvenient. He said he thinks the Board doesn't want to hear what the public has to say and only wants to hear what you want. He talked about if you can't ban something, just regulate it. He asked who wants to wait until the end to say something other than him and a few others. He talked about if a person wants to come and express their first amendment right they have to wait to the end. He said there is still nothing about spoken prayer even though 77 other counties practice it. He stated there still is nothing real about budget growth, economic development and not upholding the Constitution like the 2<sup>nd</sup> amendment and even now the 1<sup>st</sup> amendment, while other counties and states have passed it. He talked about learning something from a previous band director about fear and anger are the two most human motivators and if you are angry about something you will actually do something.

Susan Miles stated her appreciation to the Board for their time and taking time to serve. She talked about years ago her recollection was that the day meeting was so staff would not get overtime. She said she would like that concept addressed sometime since she knows the Board only listens during public comments. She thanked the Board for having the silent prayer. She explained that she is coming to talk about the Take a Break from the Interstate project on April 13. She named all of the communities involved. She explained that they hope to get people returning to our area. She listed out what is available along the route. She talked about having brochures for everyone. She said that it is for classic and collectible vehicles. She said she hopes the Board can participate. She displayed a map that shows the route.

Diana Viers Booth talked about in this room about a year ago that she heard from a man that changed her life. She continued talking about Gene Jones speaking, his comments and he saw the writing on the wall. She stated that he was elected to the Chair of the Republican Party but he died before he could accomplish anything. She said she hoped the people will step up to accomplish his goals. She said she is doing this in memory of Mr. Jones and his love and concern for the people of Alleghany County and to let his family know that he was loved and admired and will be missed.

Chris Walker stated that he is not going to be a perfect speaker and has nothing written down. He said thank you to the Commissioners for the job they are doing and is looking out for the best interest of our community. He talked about he refer to some as the squeaky wheel club rather than idiots because he has been advised not to do that but he will say it is idiotic. He explained that this is not the place for national news because if he wanted that he will turn on CNN. He said that he doesn't want to hear about dead presidents because they are gone. He talked about he was born and raised here so he considers himself an Alleghanian. He explained that times have been tough here and provided examples. He said never in the history of Alleghany County have we laid down; we have always come back, so is proud to be an Alleghanian. He said that he would like to thank the squeaky wheel club and their idiotic gestures for stretching the meetings out way past what they should because that helps our children college fund grow.

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

Commissioner Goudreau made a motion to enter closed session at 8:21pm under NCGS 143-318.11 (a) (3)—legal. Commissioner Davis seconded the motion. Vote 5:0.

Commissioner Goudreau made a motion to adjourn closed session at 8:38pm and reconvene the regular meeting. Commissioner Smith seconded the motion. Vote 5:0.

Chair Cox stated that no action was taken during closed session.

Being no further business, Commissioner Leys made a motion to adjourn at 8:39pm. Commissioner Goudreau seconded the motion. Vote 5:0.

Respectfully submitted,

Attest:

Karen Evans  
Clerk to the Board

Larry Cox  
Chairman