

The Alleghany County Board of Commissioners met in regular session on Monday, May 16, 2011, at 10:00am in the Board Meeting Room of the County Administration Building, 348 South Main Street, Sparta, North Carolina.

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

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

Commissioner Goudreau made a motion to approve the agenda for this May 16, 2011, meeting. Commissioner Cox seconded the motion. Vote 5:0.

AGENDA
Monday, May 16, 2011
10:00 AM

- 10:00 Meeting Called To Order, Pledge of Allegiance and Silent Prayer
Motion on Agenda for May 16, 2011, meeting
Motion on Minutes for April 29 & May 2, 2011, meetings
- 10:05 A. Public Comments—30 minutes
B. Paul Edwards Presentation
C. Rita Miller
RE: April Releases and Refunds
April Collections Report
Board of Equalization and Review Minutes
Solid Waste Fee Appeal
- D. Bob Bamberg
RE: Sunshine Sunday Proclamation
- E. Joy Hines
RE: Smoky Mountain Center Quarterly Financial Report
- F. Elections Annual Report
- G. Cascade Highlands Annual Report
- H. County Manager's Business
1. Chamber of Commerce Budget Amendment
2. Social Services Child Development Budget Amendment
3. Rural Center Planning Grant Application for Piney Creek Elementary School's septic system
4. Budget Meetings Schedule
5. Health Insurance
- I. County Commissioners' Business
1. Other Business
- J. Adjourn

Commissioner Cox made a motion to approve the minutes for the April 29 and May 2, 2011, meetings. Commissioner Smith seconded the motion. Vote 5:0.

Chair Richardson asked for public comments.

Dennis Smith discussed his previous conversations regarding TSA and the personal touching/searching in their regulations. He further discussed as a result of those regulations, Texas passed a bill against the personal violations and also last week Indiana ruled that there is no fourth amendment. He read the fourth amendment. He explained that he brought these things up to show that there are people that will stand up for people's rights and there are people that will change things. He asked the Board which group of people will the Commissioners stand with. He read a prayer that was offered in the State Senate.

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

Chair Richardson, on behalf of the Board, made a presentation to Paul Edwards for his dedication and years of service to the Sparta-Alleghany Fire Department.

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

Commissioner Roten made a motion to approve the April auto releases and refunds.

Commissioner Roten and Rita Miller discussed the adjustment of fee releases.

Commissioner Smith seconded the motion. Vote 5:0.

Rita Miler presented the April real releases and refunds.

Commissioner Cox made a motion to approve the April real releases and refunds. Commissioner Roten seconded the motion.

Commissioner Cox and Rita Miller discussed the receipt numbers show which years the tax bill was for.

Commissioner Goudreau and Rita Miller talked about the Olde Beau appeal that the Tax Office has been working on and has been previously discussed.

Commissioner Roten and Rita Miller talked about audit adjustments.

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

Rita Miller presented the April collection report including the collection rate, amount billed and uncollected for real property and motor vehicles.

Rita Miller presented the 2011 Board of Equalization and Review minutes to the Board.

Commissioner Roten made a motion to approve the minutes from the 2011 Board of Equalization and Review. Commissioner Cox seconded the motion. Vote 5:0.

Rita Miller presented a solid waste fee appeal. She explained that a letter was sent, form completed, Tax Office employee visited the property, electricity has been turned off, and structure hasn't been occupied since 2009. She explained that their release request is for this year and prior years.

Commissioner Roten made a motion to grant his request starting this year and deny releasing prior years. Commissioner Cox seconded the motion. Vote 5:0.

Bob Bamberg came before the Board to discuss the suicide rates for all of the counties in North Carolina and Alleghany had the highest rate until recently. He talked about suicides often follow a bout of depression. He further talked about depression, "Alleghany Lives" and their purposes. He explained Sunshine Sunday and presented a proclamation for the Board's consideration.

Commissioner Cox made a motion to approve the proclamation regarding Sunshine Sunday. Commissioner Goudreau seconded the motion. Vote 5:0.

Joy Hines, Finance Officer, came before the Board to present the fiscal monitoring report for quarter ending March 31, 2011, for Smoky Mountain Center. She explained their current report for revenues/expenditures and the explanation of variances.

Commissioner Roten and Chair Richardson talked about the amount each county contributes to Smoky Mountain Center including the counties that are in New River Behavioral Healthcare (NRBH) where those counties' monies go directly to NRBH.

Kate Cosner, Director of Elections, presented their annual report; voter registrations, highlights from the recent elections including having instant runoff voting, training, administrative tasks of the Living History project/Chief Judge seminar/polling places inspections/list maintenance/ArcGIS to maintain Geocde records and Kids Voting activities.

Commissioner Smith and Kate Cosner discussed the fundraising efforts by Kids Voting and matching the funds provided by the County Commissioners. She explained that their goal is to become self-supportive.

Chair Richardson stated his appreciation for the written version of the report.

Kate Cosner updated the Board about action in the General Assembly regarding House Bill 366. She read the text of the bill and explained why she thinks this is good news since special elections are completely funded by the County.

County Manager Adams and Kate Cosner talked about the bill before the General Assembly to reduce the amount of time of one-stop voting, which would reduce Election's budget.

Commissioner Smith, Commissioner Roten and Kate Cosner talked about the bill regarding photo identification and how that could impact the local Board of Elections.

Kate Cosner talked about the approved House budget includes a reduction in force for the State Board of Elections and how that impacts Alleghany County.

Brandon McCann, Executive Director, with Cascade Highlands presented their annual report. He provided handouts to the Commissioners. He explained a brief history on how they were created. He reviewed items where Cascade Highlands has benefited Alleghany County; grants, hosting free webinars, marketing, travel maps, media relations and their new website.

Commissioner Goudreau stated his appreciation for the work on behalf of Alleghany County.

County Manager Adams provided more history on the creation of the Cascade Highlands and how Alleghany County became involved.

Commissioner Smith and Brandon McCann discussed the free webinars being posted online.

Chair Richardson called a brief recess at 11:06am.

County Manager Adams presented budget amendment General Fund #23 in the amount of \$4,000 to budget the funds for the Chamber of Commerce that was discussed at the last meeting.

Commissioner Smith made a motion to approve budget amendment General Fund #23 in the amount of \$4,000. Commissioner Cox seconded the motion. Vote 5:0.

County Attorney Donna Shumate arrived at 11:09am.

County Manager Adams presented budget amendment General Fund #24 in the amount of \$14,235 for Social Services. He explained that the budget amendment is to budget for funds received from the State for daycare monies.

County Manager Adams presented information about receiving a Notice of Violation regarding Piney Creek School's septic system. He talked about the need to find a temporary solution for the school to be able to open next school year and then find a permanent solution. He talked about applying to the Rural Center for a grant in the amount of \$20,000, which requires a \$10,000 match from Alleghany County. He explained the purpose of the grant and grant process. He reviewed the application packet including the project description, anticipated budget, certification page, projected outcome, memorandum of understanding and commitment of other funds. He explained that the engineer has already been on-site. He talked about possible temporary solutions.

Commissioner Smith, Commissioner Cox and County Manager Adams talked about the current pump/haul situation, flow meters being installed, looking for surface water and the Notice of Violation.

Commissioner Goudreau and County Manager Adams talked about the worst-case scenario.

Commissioner Roten and County Manager Adams talked about the Notice of Violation.

Commissioner Cox made a motion to apply to the Rural Center for the grant monies. Commissioner Goudreau seconded the motion. Vote 5:0.

County Manager Adams talked to the Board about additional dates for budget meetings. He reminded the Board there is a budget meeting scheduled for June 1 at 6:30pm where he will

present his budget message. He talked about normally the Board schedules a couple of meetings after June 1 to allow departments an opportunity to talk to the Commissioners.

Chair Richardson talked about additional possible dates.

The Board talked about possible dates and times to meet and decided on June 15 at 4:00pm and June 16 at 6:30pm. They discussed dates for the public hearing and decided on June 27 at 6:30pm.

County Manager Adams asked the Board if they want him to review the insurance summary.

Chair Richardson asked if the Board wanted to discuss any type of insurance listed on the front page of the insurance summary. No one spoke.

County Manager Adams talked about the overall health insurance increase of 12.7%, and he reviewed the order of the department heads preferences if changes are made to the plan.

Chair Richardson asked if there is a motion to leave health insurance as is. No one spoke.

Chair Richardson asked if there is a motion to change the first two options; office co-pay and drug card.

Commissioner Roten asked about the rest of the options.

Chair Richardson asked if there is a motion to implement all of the changes.

Commissioner Roten asked about the co-insurance amount. County Manager Adams stated that is taking it to a 90/10 plan.

Commissioner Cox talked about his conversations with employees and how employees are underpaid in comparison to surrounding counties.

Commissioner Cox said he would like to propose to look at the office co-pay and drug card changes.

Commissioner Cox made a motion to reduce the increase by 5% by increasing the office co-pay and drug card.

Commissioner Roten and Commissioner Cox talked about the motion.

Commissioner Smith seconded the motion.

Commissioner Roten said that he doesn't think the County has the finances to fund this increase so he cannot support it.

Commissioner Goudreau talked about this is going to be a tough budget year and thinks it needs to be looked at more.

Commissioner Smith talked about comparing surrounding counties and our employees are among the lowest paid and the insurance is what allows the County to retain the employees which is the reason he supports the office co-pay and drug card changes.

The Board voted on the motion on the floor. Vote 3:2 (Commissioner Goudreau, Commissioner Roten).

County Manager Adams explained why he had to bring this before the Board now because everything has to be completed by June 10 in order for employees to have their insurance cards by July 1.

Commissioner Cox updated everyone about their recent school facilities meeting where a large part of the discussions was about the Piney Creek School septic system along with Glade Creek School should be complete by February or March of next year.

County Manager Adams stated that the water and sewer should be complete by December of this year.

Being no further business, Commissioner Goudreau made a motion to adjourn at 11:46pm.
Commissioner Cox seconded the motion. Vote 5:0.

Respectfully submitted,

Karen Evans
Clerk to the Board

Attest:

Ken Richardson
Chairman