

The Alleghany County Board of Commissioners met in regular session on Monday, June 15, 2015, at 10:00am in the Board Meeting Room of the County Administration Building, 348 South Main Street, Sparta, North Carolina.

Present: 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. County Attorney Donna Shumate was present but arrived late.

Chair Smith called the meeting to order, led the Pledge of Allegiance and offered the Invocation.

Chair Smith stated that closed session for (a) (6) personnel needs to be added to the agenda.

Commissioner Davis made a motion to approve the amended agenda for this June 15, 2015, meeting. Commissioner Leys seconded the motion. Vote 5:0.

AGENDA  
Monday, June 15, 2015  
10:00 AM

- 10:00 Meeting Called To Order, Pledge of Allegiance and Invocation  
Motion on Agenda for June 15, 2015, Meeting  
Motion on Minutes for March 30, Joint Meeting and June 1, 2015, Regular Meeting
- 10:05 A. Rita Miller, Tax Administrator
1. May Releases and Refunds - Standard release and refund of both automobile and real property taxes due to reasons listed on the report. Actions Requested – Vote on releases and refunds.
  2. May Collections Report - Monthly 2015 collection rates through May as compared to 2014 monthly collection rates. No action requested.
  3. Enforced Collections Report – Summarizes enforced collections for the month of May 2015. No action requested.
  4. Payment Agreement Report - List of people with payment agreements who did not make payments. No action requested.
  5. Motor-Vehicle Appeals – Two appeals will be presented. Action Requested – Vote on the appeals.
  6. 2015 Board of Equalization and Review minutes – Action Requested—Vote on the minutes.
- B. General Business
1. 2014/15 Year-End Budget Amendments  
These year-end budget amendments are needed to clean up certain expenditures that occurred throughout the year. Action Requested – Vote on budget amendments.
  2. Retiree Health Insurance  
Discussions in regards to retiree insurance for Medicare eligible employees.
  3. Drivers' License Office  
NCDMV is proposing changes in operations for the local Driver's License Office. General discussions regarding these proposed changes.
  4. NCDOT Priorities  
Discussions regarding Alleghany County priorities for 2017-2017 NCDOT State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP)
- C. Commissioner Business
1. July 6 Commissioners' Meeting—Chair Tom Smith will discuss the possibility of cancelling the July 6 meeting. Action Requested—Vote on the July 6 meeting.
- D. Public Comments—30 minutes
- E. Commissioners Comments
- F. Closed Session – NCGS 143-318.11 (a) (3)—legal, (a) (5)—contracts and (a) (6)—personnel (added)
- G. Adjourn

Commissioner Irwin made a motion to approve the minutes from the March 30, 2015, joint meeting and the June 1, 2015, regular meeting. Commissioner Evans seconded the motion. Vote 5:0.

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

Commissioner Davis made a motion to approve the May auto releases. Commissioner Evans seconded the motion. Vote 5:0.

Rita Miller presented the May auto refunds.

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

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

Commissioner Evans made a motion to approve the May VTS auto refunds. Commissioner Irwin seconded the motion. Vote 5:0.

Rita Miller presented the May real property releases.

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

Rita Miller presented the May real property refunds.

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

Rita Miller presented the May 2015 reports; enforced collection report, collection rate report and the payment agreement report.

Rita Miller presented a vehicle appeal for a 2013 Ford CMAX. She reviewed the assessed value, NADA value, Kelly Blue Book, CarMax appraisal, Department of Revenue schedule value, owner's requested value and her recommendation of \$17,975.

Commissioner Evans and Rita Miller discussed why the Department of Revenue is so high is because they use a 12-year schedule.

Commissioner Davis made a motion to approve the appeal with the Tax Administrator's recommended value. Commissioner Leys seconded the motion. Vote 5:0.

Rita Miller presented a vehicle appeal for a 2012 Keystone trailer. She reviewed the assessed value, NADA value, Camping World value, owner's requested value and her recommendation of \$16,750.

Commissioner Leys made a motion to approve the appeal with the Tax Administrator's recommendation of \$16,750. Commissioner Irwin seconded the motion. Vote 5:0.

Rita Miller presented the Board of Equalization and Review minutes.

Commissioner Davis made a motion to approve the Board of Equalization and Review minutes. Commissioner Irwin seconded the motion. Vote 5:0.

Commissioner Evans and Rita Miller discussed the qualification for high mileage adjustments.

County Manager Don Adams presented budget amendment General Fund #16 in the amount of \$13,000 for a transfer to the Transportation Fund for the ED expenses as previously discussed. He presented budget amendment Transportation Fund #1 in the amount of \$13,000 that budgets these monies in the Transportation Fund.

Chair Smith and the County Manager discussed the differences between the ED van and the EDTAP program.

Commissioner Evans made a motion to approve budget amendment General Fund #16 in the amount of \$13,000. Commissioner Leys seconded the motion. Vote 5:0.

Commissioner Irwin made a motion to approve budget amendment Transportation Fund #1 in the amount of \$13,000. Commissioner Leys seconded the motion. Vote 5:0.

County Manager Don Adams presented budget amendment General Fund #17 and School Capital Project Fund #2 in the amounts of \$50,000 each. He explained that this is to budget for additional sales tax monies received and transferring the monies to the schools for capital as mandated by State law.

Commissioner Davis made a motion to approve budget amendment General Fund #17 in the amount of \$50,000. Commissioner Evans seconded the motion. Vote 5:0.

Commissioner Leys made a motion to approve School Capital Project Fund #2 in the amount of \$50,000. Commissioner Evans seconded the motion. Vote 5:0.

County Manager Don Adams presented budget amendment General Fund #18 in the amount of \$6,000 for the medical examiner. He explained what these monies are used for; additional autopsies, unclaimed bodies, on-scene medical examination.

Chair Smith and the County Manager discussed why this is needed at this time.

Commissioner Evans and the County Manager talked about this adds money to that line item and the amount of the original budget.

Commissioner Leys made a motion to approve budget amendment General Fund #18 in the amount of \$6,000. Commissioner Davis seconded the motion. Vote 5:0.

County Manager Don Adams presented budget amendment General Fund #19 in the amount of \$30,000 for vehicle tax collection charges. He explained that these monies have been taken out of the revenues when they are received. He said that the auditors requested this change.

Commissioner Evans made a motion to approve budget amendment General Fund #19 in the amount of \$30,000. Commissioner Leys seconded the motion. Vote 5:0.

County Manager Don Adams presented budget amendment General Fund #20 in the amount of \$4,440 for CSC fines and forts. He said these are pass-through monies to the schools.

Commissioner Davis made a motion to approve budget amendment General Fund #20 in the amount of \$4,440. Commissioner Leys seconded the motion. Vote 5:0.

County Manager Don Adams mentioned that he has one other item that may come before the Board at a special-called meeting following the budget public hearing. He explained the item resolves around installing the safety cameras and items that are being installed at the pool, tennis courts, etc. He further explained the timing of the billing and may need to transfer the monies to the Economic Development Fund.

Chair Smith and the County Manager talked about this is the only thing the County Manager is aware of at this time but others may arise before the end of the year.

County Manager Don Adams said that the County Attorney should be here around 11 due to having to be in court this morning. He stated that he would like to go to item #3 while waiting on the County Attorney.

County Manager Don Adams presented information from Angie Sawyer about possible changes to the DMV office. He reviewed the State is looking at a new mobile solution for drivers'

licenses. He talked about the space is not a problem. He explained that she cannot answer what the hours the office would be open. He said that he isn't concerned about how they get their equipment in the facility. He stated that he thought the biggest concern would be the hours the office would be open. He said that he is just letting everyone know.

Chair Smith said it sounds like a solution looking for a problem. He talked about the move to the BDC building, and he would like to see a lesser wait time.

Commissioner Irwin asked if a study had been done on the wait time. County Manager Don Adams said he doesn't have that. Commissioner Leys said that it should be easy to get because everyone has to sign in. The County Manager said it would depend upon how the statistics are viewed.

The County Manager explained that we have accommodated their needs including moving them from the Law Enforcement Center to the Business Development Center, which costs monies. He urged people to talk to the legislators about this including would the Commissioners like to send a letter about this. Chair Smith said he thinks that is a good idea. Commissioner Irwin talked about the need to address it as quickly as possible before any decision is made. Commissioner Leys said she contacted Jeffrey Elmore and he wasn't aware of any changes.

Commissioner Leys made a motion to have the County Manager write a letter and have the Chair sign it about not changing anything.

Commissioner Davis and Commissioner Leys talked about only having one person come here currently.

Commissioner Irwin and Chair Smith talked about having the Town write a letter too.

Chair Smith mentioned that the entire board should sign it.

Commissioner Leys said she would like the letter to go to the Governor, our senator, our representative and DMV.

Commissioner Irwin asked about NCACC because they represent all of the counties.

Commissioner Irwin seconded the motion on the floor.

Commissioner Irwin mentioned the need to send it to as many people as possible.

Commissioner Leys talked about this is an important function of the election process now because of the voter ID requirements.

Commissioner Evans said he doesn't go there because of the time factor. He stated they may up the hours to include more time. Commissioner Davis mentioned having another person to help reduce the wait time.

County Manager Don Adams said that the tone of the letter will be like his email with additional information about the elections.

Commissioner Leys mentioned to maintain what we have or gain hours.

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

County Manager Don Adams explained that we are part of the High Country Rural Planning Organization (RPO), and he is on the non-voting board and Commissioner Davis is on the voting board. He reviewed the process that they go through, and the process is beginning again. He reviewed Projects Funded in Draft with the Sparta Western Loop that is scheduled to begin in 2016, Roaring Gap Mountain will be re-prioritized by the NCDOT. He reviewed the projects that have been removed. He said that the County is being asked to submit a project for ranking. He reviewed the points from the last ranking. He explained the process after the project is submitted to RPO. He reminded everyone that Roaring Gap Mountain will be added to be

ranked and the #2 project will get ranked also. He said there may be some logic to resubmit a project with higher ranks. He reiterated that the County needs to submit a project to get ranked.

Commissioner Irwin and County Manager Don Adams talked about this is the beginning of getting something on the ranking.

County Manager Don Adams talked about ways to look at these projects. He provided examples of putting a roundabout showing that it is a priority of the county and get it completed faster because it is a lower money amount.

Commissioner Irwin talked about changes on 21 is an economic development plus. He further talked about what else can benefit in that area. County Manager explained that the Roaring Gap Mountain would be the next highest priority.

The County Manager talked about each of the projects that have been removed and reasons to look at those projects to determine what to submit to the RPO.

Commissioner Irwin mentioned Highway 93 issues including it is a rough and narrow road.

Chair Smith talked about the roundabouts.

County Manager Don Adams stated that our next priority is due by July 8. He said that this could be an agenda item for the June 24 meeting or the Board can decide now.

Commissioner Leys made a motion to move this to the June 24 meeting to allow time for more consideration.

Commissioner Evans talked about roundabouts and safety issues. He asked when they got on the list. County Manager Don Adams explained that the roundabouts were added to the plan by NCDOT, not by the county. Commissioner Evans asked are the roundabouts built for tractor-trailer traffic. The County Manager answered yes and explained NCDOT put the roundabouts on the plan to be ranked, and there is some value about putting projects submitted by NCDOT as the County priorities.

Commissioner Davis mentioned that 113 needs to be widen.

County Manager Don Adams talked about needing to get the Commissioners the 20-year plan to show what is on the plan, and it is hard to deviate from the 20-year plan.

Commissioner Leys talked about the regional points and division points. Chair Smith said just by looking at points then Andrews Ridge Road is the highest. County Manager Don Adams explained that we don't compete well regionally. The County Manager explained the ranking system between the regional points and division points and division points are extremely important.

Commissioner Evans seconded the motion on the floor. Vote 5:0.

Chair Smith talked about the July 6<sup>th</sup> Commissioners' meeting. He explained that for the last couple of years that meeting has been cancelled. He asked the Board what their feelings are about cancelling the July 6<sup>th</sup> Commissioners' meeting.

Commissioner Leys said the Board has cancelled the meeting the last two years.

County Manager Don Adams mentioned one time someone walked in with an emergency.

Commissioner Irwin asked if a meeting is needed, how much notice time is needed. County Manager Don Adams answered 48 hours.

Commissioner Leys made a motion to cancel the July 6<sup>th</sup> meeting. Commissioner Davis seconded the motion. Vote 5:0.

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

Lonnie Joines, VFW Commander, explained projects that the VFW does including one project of placing flags on veterans' graves; 1431 flags in 77 cemeteries for a cost of \$1,900. He stated that a request might be coming in the fall requesting assistance on the purchase of the flags. He explained their fundraisers have to be used for the purpose of that fundraiser. He provided information about what their fundraisers go for. He said he would like to come back in the fall to formally request the money. He said he appreciates everything the county does. He showed everyone a flag that is placed on the graves.

Chair Smith thanked him.

Commissioner Irwin and Lonnie Joines talked about all of the flags are made in North Carolina, and they normally order 1,500 because there is a price break at 1,440. Commissioner Irwin asked has he asked the Town. Lonnie Joines stated no he hasn't been there.

Commissioner Irwin asked can this be added to the budget or does it have to wait until next year. County Manager Don Adams said it is the Commissioners' budget now to add or delete items.

Commissioner Irwin and Lonnie Joines talked about the number of WWII vets in the county.

Lonnie Joines mentioned that the funding for the flags comes out of their emergency relief funds. He explained what the emergency relief funds are used for.

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

County Manager Don Adams reminded everyone that in his budget message he talked about retiree insurance for new hires. He reviewed the proposal; new hires that retire from Alleghany County with 20+ years and when become eligible for Medicare they will no longer receive County insurance. He explained that the second portion of this is current retirees switching to a Medicare supplement. He talked about this portion requires more research and a legal opinion. He said we won't see any savings in this year's budget. He explained that he would like to see us continue with this including sometime in August get it finalized because of the need for an educational session. He stated that we also need a legal opinion about whether we can do this. He explained that he thinks the County can offer them better than what they have now. He said hopefully can we move forward on this.

Commissioner Leys asked will BSBC agree to this change.

County Manager Don Adams said it does impact our rates by \$85,000.

Commissioner Irwin asked if there are any negatives. County Manager Don Adams said he won't know that until he sees the plan.

Chair Smith mentioned that Mark Browder said he would have answers by this summer. He talked about the need to listen to him and our counsel.

County Manager Don Adams said he doesn't know that we will have answers by the time the Board has to adopt the budget. He mentioned that the policy change about new hires is to be considered and needs to be adopted when the Commissioners are adopting the budget, if the Board wants too.

Chair Smith and County Manager Don Adams talked about the current proposal is strictly on new hires. The County Manager said he needs to know if the Board is interested in doing that.

Commissioner Irwin said he is interested.

Chair Smith said he would be interested in pursuing it for new hires. Commissioner Leys and Commissioner Evans agreed.

County Manager said he will have the information available at the June 24 meeting. Commissioner Evans asked to get the wording to them before that date in order to have time to review it.

Commissioner Evans said the Board is fixing to start into challenging issues, and small changes can have huge impacts on people's lives. He further said he wants all of the Commissioners to be diligent and encouraged the Board to not lose faith during the process.

Commissioner Leys informed everyone that Kim Caudill is replacing Barbara Lucier, who recently retired.

Commissioner Irwin asked about any parades on the schedules. Commissioner Leys said that Sparta Revitalization Committee had nothing in that about the recent Memorial Day parade.

Chair Smith reminded everyone about the grand opening tomorrow night at the Veterans Memorial Park.

Chair Smith and County Manager Don Adams talked about the Board can go into closed session but cannot talk about the legal issue without the attorney present.

Commissioner Irwin said he doesn't like going into closed session without an attorney.

County Manager Don Adams said he has a personnel issue that he needs to talk to the Commissioners about.

Commissioner Davis made a motion to enter into closed session under NCGS 143-318.11 (a) (6)—personnel at 11:30am. Commissioner Leys seconded the motion. Vote 4:1. (Bobby Irwin).

County Attorney Donna Shumate arrived at 12:02pm.

Commissioner Leys made a motion to adjourn closed session at 12:03pm and reconvened the regular meeting. Commissioner Davis seconded the motion. Vote 5:0.

Chair Smith stated no action was taken during closed session.

Commissioner Leys made a motion to enter into closed session under NCGS 143-318.11 (a) (3)—legal, (a) (5)—contracts and (a) (6)—personnel at 12:04pm. Commissioner Evans seconded the motion. Vote 5:0.

Commissioner Davis made a motion to adjourn closed session at 12:30pm and reconvened the regular meeting. Commissioner Leys seconded the motion. Vote 5:0.

Chair Smith stated no action was taken during closed session.

Being no further business, Commissioner Evans made a motion to adjourn at 12:31pm. Commissioner Davis seconded the motion. Vote 5:0.

Respectfully submitted,

Attest:

Karen Evans, Clerk to the Board

Tom Smith, Chair