

The Alleghany County Board of Commissioners met in regular session on Monday, June 21, 2010, at 3:30pm in the Board Meeting Room of the County Administration Building, 348 South Main Street, Sparta, North Carolina.

Present: Chair Ken Richardson, Vice-Chair Randy Miller, Commissioner Doug Murphy, Commissioner Milly Richardson, Commissioner Steve Roten, County Attorney Donna Shumate, County Manager Don Adams and Clerk to the Board Karen Evans.

Chair Ken Richardson called the meeting to order.

Commissioner Milly Richardson led the Pledge of Allegiance and opened the meeting with a prayer.

Chair Ken Richardson stated item D, cafeteria plan, needs to be deleted and Ann Crisp and Donna Watts will be here for Blue Ridge Opportunity Commission (BROC).

Commissioner Milly Richardson made a motion to approve the amended agenda for this June 21, 2010, meeting. Commissioner Doug Murphy seconded the motion. Vote 5:0.

AGENDA  
Monday, June 21, 2010  
3:30 PM

- 3:30 Meeting Called To Order, Pledge of Allegiance and Prayer  
Motion on Agenda for June 21, 2010, meeting  
Motion on Minutes for June 7, 2010, meeting  
Motion on May Tax Releases and Refunds
- 3:35 A. Public Comments—30 minutes  
B. Public Hearing  
RE: Scattered Site Grant Closeout  
C. Blue Ridge Opportunity Commission (Donna Watts/Ann Crisp)  
RE: Family Self-Sufficiency Program  
Weatherization Program  
D. Joy Hines  
RE: Smoky Mountain Quarterly Report  
Cafeteria Plan Resolution (deleted)  
E. Brandon Jones  
RE: Rescue Squad Request  
F. County Business  
1. Glade Creek Water/Sewer Engineering Contract  
2. Farmland Preservation Board Appointments  
3. Land Development Plan Resolution  
4. Year-End Budgets  
5. Other Business  
6. Adjourn

Chair Ken Richardson asked that the minutes of June 7 indicate his opposition to the motion changing the insurance for Commissioners.

Commissioner Milly Richardson made a motion to approve the minutes for the June 7, 2010, meeting with the change. Commissioner Steve Roten seconded the motion. Vote 5:0.

Commissioner Milly Richardson made a motion to approve the real and auto refunds for May. Commissioner Doug Murphy seconded the motion. Vote 5:0.

Commissioner Doug Murphy made a motion to approve the real and auto releases for May. Commissioner Milly Richardson seconded the motion. Vote 5:0.

Chair Ken Richardson asked for public comments.

Brandon Hawks stated that has reviewed the proposed budget and has questions about some of the items in the budget including \$22,500 for a 4x4 SUV with

145,000 miles and the transmission is going bad. He said he understands that some things are passed down but why does it take \$32,920 for changing light bulbs, 2 mini-vans costing \$27,925 each, desk for \$360. He talked about in the upcoming future months to question department heads about spending money. He further talked about the budget, and department heads coming before the Board to ask for pay raises because the job descriptions have changed. He stated that local/state/federal governments are and should always be seen as a community service.

Chris Huysman came before the Board to further elaborate his previously mentioned thoughts. He talked about reducing non-essential employees to 32 hours a week, which would allow maintaining raises, insurance, retirement and could be simply reinstated later. He further talked about reducing non-essential groups; library, wellness center and chamber; contracting with local contractors to repair Fender Mountain Road and repair/move the antenna. He explained reducing some hours to some staff, currently looking at 14% unemployment, should always have reserves during this time, need to reduce the expenses and add items back when things get better.

Bobbie Jo Haydt stated that she has heard many comments back and forth by the Board about not having a tax increase because of the unemployment rate, people living on a fixed income and the percentage of mortgage foreclosures. She said the Board is to be commended for those discussions including rewarding employees for their hard work and education but the flip side is finding the money to pay for the necessary expenses. She further said it doesn't seem logical to add something at one meeting then cutting it at another meeting. She talked about the Board doesn't want to raise taxes because of the hardship that it could cause to people in this county. She further talked about not raising taxes and the ways it will hurt the citizens. She said the Board has to decide which cuts to make. She provided examples of how cuts can impact programs. She said that one Commissioner will have to show what she is made of; Commissioner Milly Richardson didn't want to raise taxes to help the groups or raise our taxes a little to meet the needs of our senior citizens and children to provide the services needed. She asked the Board to review the budget, and please consider the revenues that are needed for this year and future years. She asked the Board to consider a few cents this year rather than a higher tax increase later. She thanked the Board for all of the hard work on the budget especially the County Manager.

Commissioner Milly Richardson answered she hasn't advocated taking away from the needy; this budget can be balanced without taking from those who need it the most and without a tax increase.

Chair Ken Richardson stated that this is a comment section not a discussion section.

Michelle Ball with High Country Council of Governments came before the Board to discuss the closeout of the 2007 Scattered Site grant. She explained the process of the grant, the current expenditures status for the grant, information provided was accurate as of Thursday morning, received a phone call from a homeowner about a well that has a lot of iron in the water, which needs to be fixed. She further explained that the State will allow using some additional money to pay to fix it with a filtration system. She asked the Board to continue with the public hearing but wait until July to close the grant.

Chair Ken Richardson opened the public hearing at 3:51pm regarding the Scattered Site Grant Closeout. He asked for public comments. None were received. He closed the public hearing and reconvened the regular meeting.

County Manager Don Adams and Michelle Ball discussed the closeout reports will change due to the filtration system.

Commissioner Milly Richardson made a motion to sign off on the closeout report when those modifications are made. Commissioner Steve Roten seconded the motion.

Commissioner Milly Richardson thanked Michelle Ball for her work on this grant.

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

Donna Watts came before the Board regarding the BROOC weatherization program. She introduced Ann Crisp, who is the manager at the BROOC office here.

Ann Crisp came before the Board to explain the programs that are available to people in Alleghany County including crisis intervention, weatherization and heating assistance. She explained each of their programs. She asked the Board to help get the word out about these programs.

Donna Watts explained the weatherization program funded by the ARRA that will help people with weather stripping around windows/doors, insulation, smoke detectors. She talked about the income guidelines for the program being based on the number of people in the home, requirements for the program, hours she is here and being available for assistance at any time. She stated their appreciation for the opportunity to speak with the Board and hear about how to help the community.

Chair Ken Richardson talked about people will be watching this on the public access channel.

Commissioner Milly Richardson asked for a phone number for the TV audience. Ann Crisp provided the number; 372-7284.

Commissioner Doug Murphy and Ann Crisp talked about this information has been left at Council on Aging.

Joy Hines, Finance Officer, presented the quarterly report for Smoky Mountain Center. She explained the report.

Commissioner Doug Murphy and Joy Hines talked about client fees being 75.68% is the rate the money is coming in.

Brandon Jones with the Rescue Squad thanked the Board for allowing him to present information to the Commissioners. He talked about the purpose is to update their contract. He explained that the current contract doesn't state what the rescue squad is supposed to be doing, and they wanted to put a contract in place that states the level of service that the rescue squad is to provide including "the squad will be the primary rescue provider for Alleghany County and if any other department wishes to provide rescue services that department shall meet the same standard as the squad, set forth by the North Carolina Association of Rescue and Emergency Medical Services, Office of Emergency Medical Services, Office of State Fire Marshal and the North Carolina Department of Insurance." He talked about having a fire department express concerns that the squad isn't providing sufficient personnel and response times. He further talked about the services that the squad provides for the citizens including providing backup to EMS. He talked about the rescue squad and the fire departments fall under two separate categories of State requirements. He stated that he has provided a copy of this contract to the County Attorney.

County Manager Don Adams stated that he had requested Brandon Jones go to the fire commission to list out the concerns; response time and certified, trained personnel. He explained that there are different levels of rescue. He said he asked Gerald Leftwich to go through the different levels of rescue plus requirements and the responsibility of the County Commissioners.

Gerald Leftwich, Emergency Management Coordinator, explained that Alleghany County works under an emergency operation plan which is updated annually in August and each department/organization follows the guidelines from the State including that each unit or squad must comply with the North Carolina General Statutes and Fire/Rescue Emergency Services. He further explained the trainings and certifications required for the different levels of rescue. He talked about courses required for fire departments and rescue squads. He stated that everyone works together for mutual aid for the people in the county. He talked about larger areas and how they are equipped for emergencies.

County Manager Don Adams and Gerald Leftwich reviewed the different levels of

rescue and what each level of rescue provides including vehicle extraction and the Jaws of Life.

County Manager Don Adams asked Gerald Leftwich what happens if someone provides services with or without certifications and with or without the Commissioners support.

Gerald Leftwich answered stating that no one is ever to go beyond their scope of training because then they are liable and then the County is liable. He talked about that would be opening the door for liability.

County Manager Don Adams said the main question is if they are properly trained or not because we have one fire department, and potentially two, that are interested in offering this level of service. He talked about listing out the trainings and see if they are interested and capable of obtaining the trainings. He explained the funding side which will involve the Commissioners in regards to long-term funding, and what if all five fire departments offer this then is the County going to fund all of them for the same level of service. He talked about the next steps will be clarifying what is the required training and see if they are willing and able to obtain the training and see if the County will provide funding. He asked can people be members of both; rescue squad and fire departments.

Brandon Jones stated that they have changed their bylaws to allow people to be members of both, and some of the fire departments are working to make that change.

Gerald Leftwich talked about the requirements for each level of service, equipment must be on each vehicle and the equipment cannot be somewhere else.

County Manager Don Adams talked about the need to clarify what is required to provide the services legally and see if they have personnel willing to get the certifications and meet the minimum number of people.

Chair Ken Richardson asked are we talking about two separate issues.

Gerald Leftwich talked about one is updating the 1985 contract to show what services are provided.

Brandon Jones stated that the rescue squad would like have the franchise for rescue services, and if others want to comply with the requirements; that's fine.

Commissioner Doug Murphy and Brandon Jones talked about workers comp on the contract is just for the rescue squad, and it is up to others to provide the same coverage.

County Attorney Donna Shumate stated that she has reviewed this but thinks there are things that can make it better.

Brandon Jones stated that's fine and agreed to discuss this with her further.

County Manager Don Adams talked about this was to start having the discussions about what is required and can these be separated. He further talked about the contract before the Board is to make the rescue squad primary, and the contract says others cannot provide these services without the training.

Commissioner Milly Richardson talked about they have to have the trainings to provide the services. She said she doesn't know what else there is to discuss without going to the fire commission meeting.

County Manager Don Adams provided the Board an update on the Glade Creek water/sewer contract including final approval by USDA is sitting in Washington for signatures. He reminded the Board that the County is already proceeding with some of the work; pits have been dug, soil scientist report complete and State health department is scheduled to be here the week of July 5, which is needed to get a final go ahead to move forward.

County Manager Don Adams presented a letter from the Farmland Preservation Board requesting that the Commissioners reappoint Bobby Evans, Bobby Gambill and Milly Richardson to serve on the Farmland Preservation Advisory Board for a three-year term ending June 30, 2013, and the appointment of Amy Lucas to fill the unexpired term of David Isner.

Commissioner Steve Roten made a motion to approve the request. Commissioner Doug Murphy seconded the motion. Vote 5:0.

County Manager Don Adams presented a resolution to reaffirm the Alleghany County Land Development Plan. He explained the purpose for reaffirming the adoption of the Land Development Plan is because of the NCDOT is preparing to start the Alleghany County's Comprehensive Transportation Plan in the fall.

Commissioner Milly Richardson made a motion to approve the resolution. Commissioner Doug Murphy seconded the motion. Vote 5:0.

County Manager Don Adams presented budget amendment General Fund #49 in the amount of \$4,763 for medical examiner expenses. He explained that this is based upon the number of autopsies that are required to be performed.

Commissioner Milly Richardson made a motion to approve budget amendment General Fund #49 in the amount of \$4,763. Commissioner Steve Roten seconded the motion. Vote 5:0.

County Manager Don Adams presented budget amendments General Fund #50 in the amount of \$280 and Single Family Rehab Fund #1 in the amount of \$280. He explained that these budget amendments go together and are to close out the Single Family Rehab Fund.

Commissioner Milly Richardson made a motion to approve budget amendments General Fund #50 in the amount of \$280 and Single Family Rehab Fund #1 in the amount of \$280. Commissioner Steve Roten seconded the motion. Vote 5:0.

Being no further business, Commissioner Randy Miller made a motion to adjourn at 4:40pm. Commissioner Steve Roten seconded the motion. Vote 5:0.

Respectfully Submitted,

Karen Evans  
Clerk to the Board

Attest:

Ken Richardson  
Chairman