

The Alleghany County Board of Commissioners met in regular session on Monday, July 20, 2009, 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 that Dr. Cox regarding QSCB and closed session for legal needs to be added to the agenda.

Commissioner Doug Murphy made a motion to approve the amended agenda for this July 20, 2009, meeting. Commissioner Milly Richardson seconded the motion. Vote 5:0.

AGENDA  
Monday, July 20, 2009  
3:30 PM

- 3:30 Meeting Called To Order, Pledge of Allegiance and Prayer  
Motion on Agenda for July 20, 2009, meeting  
Motion on Minutes for July 6, 2009, meeting  
Motion on June Tax Releases & Refunds
- 3:35 A. Public Comments—30 minutes  
B. Carol Booth / Quilters Guild  
RE: Presentation  
C. Mary Walker  
RE: Appeal Letters  
D. Public Information Session  
RE: Safety Training Facility  
E. BROC Annual Report  
F. Planning Committee Annual Report  
G. Glade Creek Volunteer Fire Department Annual Report  
H. Dr. Jeff Cox  
RE: Qualified School Construction Bond (QSCB) Application  
(added)  
I. County Business  
1. Virginia/Carolina Water Authority Invitation  
2. Dispatch Console Installation Schedule  
3. Review Officer Appointment Resolution  
4. Introduction/Discussion on Proposed Revised Floodplain Ordinance  
5. Mental Health—Health Benefits  
6. Other Business  
7. Closed Session—NCGS 143-318.11 (a) (6)—personnel  
NCGS 143-318.11 (a) (3)—legal (added)  
8. Adjourn

Commissioner Doug Murphy made a motion to approve the minutes for the July 6, 2009, meeting. Commissioner Randy Miller seconded the motion. Vote 5:0.

Commissioner Milly Richardson made a motion to approve the real refunds and releases for June. Commissioner Randy Miller seconded the motion. Vote 5:0.

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

Chair Ken Richardson opened the public comments' portion of the meeting. He asked for public comments.

Kate Cosner came before the Board to invite the Commissioners and County Manager to attend the Board of Elections' meeting on Tuesday at Noon and the reception for Rudy McKnight immediately following.

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

Carol Booth came before the Board to present the heritage quilt made by the Quilters Guild. She explained the blocks on the quilt depicting several structures/topics in Alleghany County. She further explained the people who were involved in designing and making the quilt. She talked about the quilt will be displayed in the County Administration Building's stairway.

Chair Ken Richardson stated on behalf of the Commissioners and the citizens his appreciation to the Quilters Guild for this quilt.

Commissioner Doug Murphy and Commissioner Milly Richardson agreed and stated that the quilt is very impressive and very nice.

Delta Peterson talked about other courthouses have historical quilts in frames with glass.

Mary Walker, Tax Administrator, came before the Board to present two appeal letters. She explained that one is a late application. She reviewed the General Statutes regarding late applications. She said it is her recommendation to approve the late application.

Commissioner Randy Miller made a motion to approve. Commissioner Doug Murphy seconded the motion. Vote 5:0.

Mary Walker talked about Mr. Clubb's discovery, and explained that a camper had been there since 2006. She further explained that they are requesting the Board to release the penalties and interest plus the solid waste fee. She said that the solid waste fee has already been taken care of. She reviewed the General Statutes regarding discoveries. She said that her recommendation is to not release the penalties and interest.

Commissioner Doug Murphy made a motion to deny the request. Commissioner Randy Miller seconded the motion. Vote 5:0.

County Manager Don Adams presented information regarding the Safety Training Facility that will be located on the Armentrout property next to the Fairgrounds. He reviewed the proposed drawing of the training facility, and equipment on the property; training tower, flashover, propane tank. He talked about the wetland area which has been delineated by the Army Corps of Engineers. He reviewed the preliminary costs and proposed funding.

Chair Ken Richardson asked if anyone has comments or questions on this project. None were received.

County Manager Don Adams explained the resolution of intent to reimburse for the safety training facility project.

Commissioner Doug Murphy made a motion to grant permission to move forward on the project. Commissioner Randy Miller seconded the motion. Vote 5:0.

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

County Manager Don Adams talked about having the preliminary application into USDA this week and having the final documents in the within the next couple of meetings.

Commissioner Milly Richardson talked about this is one of the priorities from the

volunteer fire departments and the firemen are excited about this.

Agnes Joines presented the BROCC annual report. She provided handouts that review their activities and functions.

Commissioner Doug Murphy and Agnes Joines discussed how people can donate to the Planning Committee instead of BROCC.

Chair Ken Richardson urged each Commissioner to visit BROCC to see how much they do.

Agnes Joines talked about the Commissioners' representative is Mike Parlier, and he does an excellent job.

Commissioner Milly Richardson stated her appreciation to Agnes Joines for her hard work.

Agnes Joines presented the annual report for the Planning Committee. She reviewed handouts for the Committee including their activities and functions. She talked about the Hillbilly Show fundraiser on October 17.

David Higgins with the Glade Creek Volunteer Fire Department came before the Board to present their annual report. He thanked the Board for their efforts. He handed out a folder of information and reviewed it. He reviewed the upcoming fundraisers, special events, community service activities, financial statement, number of calls/types, and fire rating inspection. He explained that they want to extend the five-mile district to a six-mile district. He further explained that a lot of their district is past the five mile line and people don't get the insurance benefits of being in the five-mile district. He said that the department already serves this area, and this would help people on their insurance rates. He asked would the Commissioners grant them six-mile district. He said that the man from Raleigh will be here the first week in August for the fire rating inspection. He reiterated that the fire department line will stay the same but this will help the people in the outlying area.

County Attorney Donna Shumate stated that she would like to look at the General Statutes first.

County Manager Don Adams stated that he doesn't know the procedures to do this and would need to find out what is involved before any action.

Chair Ken Richardson talked about bring it back at the first meeting in August.

Commissioner Steve Roten asked if other departments are looking at this.

David Higgins explained that Laurel Springs is because Ashe County is doing it, and Cherry Lane is discussing it. He said that this is road miles. He further said that this is something to think about, and he will give the County Attorney and Gerald Leftwich the information.

Chair Ken Richardson and County Manager Don Adams discussed putting this on the agenda.

County Manager Don Adams and David Higgins talked about the requirement of entering into a written automatic contract with the adjoining districts specifying that "a piece of fire apparatus" capable of carrying a minimum of 1,000 gallons of water will be dispatched simultaneously is already standard procedures.

County Manager Don Adams talked about some insurance companies are moving away from insuring properties out of the five-mile district.

David Higgins agreed and said that the six-mile rate will be the same as the five mile rate. He said that he will get with Gerald Leftwich and Donna Shumate about this matter. He thanked the Board for helping them with money this year.

Dr. Jeff Cox came before the Board to discuss that they are in the process of applying for the Qualified School Construction Bonds (QSCB). He explained that this is similar to QZAB but the monies can be used for new construction, also. He further explained that the initial amount of funding is \$1,119,935.24. He further explained that the State had provided a proposed allocation amount to every county and not every county will be in a place to do something then the State will reallocate the money to counties like Alleghany.

Commissioner Doug Murphy and Dr. Cox talked about this is eligible for anything short of purchasing technology.

Dr. Cox stated that what they need is authorization by the Commissioners initially of the \$1,119,935.24 because the application requires the Board Chair and Clerk's signature.

Commissioner Randy Miller and Dr. Cox talked about the money will be used for the Glade Creek Elementary School project that would renovate the building and add a substantial addition.

Dr. Cox talked about this is a \$3,000,000 project and the County Manager is applying for water/sewer grants because that has to be addressed before anything can be done with classrooms. He stated that it will be around \$700,000 for the water/sewer. He talked about in order to turn in the application for \$1,119,935 he will need authorization from the County that the Board will support that amount of funding. He reiterated that when the money is reallocated then can apply for more funding. He explained that his recommendation is that the Commissioners consider allowing the Chairman to sign up to the \$3,000,000. He said that they will have to have a called school board meeting. He reminded the Board that this will be 0% for a 12-year period.

County Manager Don Adams talked about the repayment.

Commissioner Doug Murphy talked about this is more suitable for the needs.

Commissioner Milly Richardson talked about QZAB is more restrictive.

County Manager Don Adams stated that the application is due July 31, and they meet the first week in August. He further stated that they could be coming back the second week of August asking for additional monies.

Dr. Cox explained that he had spoken to Ben Matthews, and they want a pretty quick turnaround because the feds want the bonds issued by December 31, 2009. He reiterated that this deadline is tight.

Commissioner Doug Murphy, County Manager Don Adams and Dr. Cox talked about being a tier 1 county doesn't help in this situation.

Dr. Cox explained that he thinks what will help Alleghany County is a lot of the counties aren't ready to move forward with a project. He reminded everyone that the QZAB interest free loan saved the County about \$1,000,000.

Commissioner Randy Miller and Dr. Cox talked about the projects have not been presented to the Board of Education but either project is approaching \$3,000,000.

Commissioner Doug Murphy and Commissioner Randy Miller stated that they haven't talked about this with the Commissioners since this is the first Commissioners' meeting since the subcommittee met. They talked about everyone knows the water and sewer needs fixing.

Commissioner Randy Miller made a motion to allow the Chair to sign off on the \$1,119,935. Commissioner Doug Murphy seconded the motion.

Chair Ken Richardson talked about this is making application for the availability of the funds.

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

Chair Ken Richardson commended Commissioner Randy Miller and Commissioner Doug Murphy for their efforts on the subcommittee working on this to save the County over \$1,000,000.

Dr. Cox thanked the Board for recognizing the need and stated that he will come back to the Commissioners at the August 17<sup>th</sup> meeting for an update.

County Manager Don Adams invited the Board to attend the Virginia/Carolina Water Authority groundbreaking event on July 27 at 3:30pm at the pavilion site.

County Manager Don Adams discussed the Dispatch Console installation schedule. He talked about previous discussions about relocating dispatch. He reminded the Board that the County is already in contract for a new console. He said that the equipment has arrived and is ready to be installed. He talked about being asked about wasting money to reinstall the console if dispatch is moved. He said that the County will still have to pay for the equipment now. He further said that it costs \$6,800 to install it.

Commissioner Milly Richardson talked about going ahead and installing because it has been needed for some time.

Chair Ken Richardson talked about having the console installed now. He said that the situation that the County gets into after spending the \$6,800 will be nothing when it is spread out over 20 years if dispatch is moved. He further said that the Board needs to seriously look at moving dispatch.

Sheriff David Edwards stated that Law Enforcement uses dispatch 90% of the calls. He talked about the amount the fire departments and EMS use dispatch. He said that this will be very political if the Board moves it. He further said that he thinks it is where it needs to stay.

Chair Ken Richardson said that he thinks what the Sheriff is talking about is a later discussion to move dispatch or not.

Commissioner Steve Roten made a motion to install the console per the quote. Commissioner Milly Richardson seconded the motion.

Commissioner Steve Roten stated that he is not in favor of moving dispatch at all.

Sheriff Edwards talked about reasons he is not in favor of moving dispatch.

Chair Ken Richardson talked about whatever the Board decides to do will affect the county for the next 20 years regarding communications.

Sheriff Edwards and County Manager Don Adams talked that they discussed this and the Sheriff told the County Manager that he didn't want to move it which is what the County Manager told the Board. County Manager Don Adams stated that this meeting's discussion is about when to install the dispatch console.

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

Chair Ken Richardson told the Sheriff that he assures him that he will be invited to participate in the discussion about moving dispatch.

Sheriff Edwards asked when that discussion will be.

Commissioner Milly Richardson stated that the Board is waiting on the insurance company on the building prices.

Commissioner Doug Murphy stated that he would like to hear from the dispatchers if this comes back up.

Sheriff Edwards said that this affects his office, and he should know.

Chair Ken Richardson stated that the Board will let the Sheriff know when the discussion will occur.

Mike Rowe talked about the recent reorganization at dispatch and moving forward to make them more organized than before.

Commissioner Steve Roten stated his appreciation for what the dispatcher do, and doing an outstanding job. He further stated that the complaints are unfounded.

Chair Ken Richardson stated that he is proud of this Board making decisions based on what is best for the entire county.

County Manager Don Adams explained that he and Mike Rower have talked numerous times, having space limitation, supervision and issues at hand.

Commissioner Milly Richardson said that no one is saying that dispatch isn't doing a good job.

County Manager Don Adams presented a resolution naming Wendy Williams, Mary Rector, Travis Dalton, Vickie Moyer and himself as review officers.

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

County Manager Don Adams presented the proposed Floodplain Ordinance. He said that there is a public hearing scheduled for August 3. He talked about areas of the ordinance that the Board needs to decide on; regulatory flood protection elevation and who variances will go to. He stated that he recommends two on the regulatory flood protection elevation.

Chair Ken Richardson asked does the County Manager have any recommendations about whether variances go before the Commissioners or Planning Board.

County Manager Don Adams stated that he recommends that the board that adopts the ordinance hear variances.

County Attorney Donna Shumate stated that either board can hear variances legally.

County Attorney Donna Shumate and County Manager Don Adams explained that the Planning Board did not express an opinion about the variances.

County Manager Don Adams stated that if an ordinance is not adopted by September 1 then no one can get flood insurance.

Commissioner Milly Richardson stated that a situation has been brought to her attention about New River Behavioral Healthcare. She explained that they have 53 techs, and their health insurance has been taken away and have been reclassified as part time. She talked about looking into reinstating health benefits for the three techs in Alleghany County.

Commissioner Doug Murphy stated that this has not been brought before Smoky Mountain because the next meeting isn't until August. He asked how this affects the clients.

Commissioner Milly Richardson asked should we wait until Smoky meets.

Commissioner Doug Murphy stated that he is not sure how to proceed on this or if a request needs to be made from New River.

Commissioner Steve Roten, Commissioner Milly Richardson and Commissioner Doug Murphy discussed the employees affected by this action.

Chair Ken Richardson explained the reasons New River looked at changes. He further explained that the money goes to Smoky and then reallocated. He said that once the fund balance is spent then you have to review all of the options available. He explained that the full time people were converted to hourly and taken all of their benefits away. He explained that services to clients are not impacted and that the people are working the same amount of hours, and they are trying to save the jobs. He said he doesn't have a problem to discuss this and the benefits are around \$6,000-\$7,000 per employee. He suggested having the County Manager check with the other counties to see what they are doing.

Commissioner Milly Richardson stated that she wanted to bring this out into the public's eye to see what the Commissioners can or cannot do.

Commissioner Doug Murphy said he will be glad to bring this up to Smoky but he needs some clarification from New River.

Chair Ken Richardson talked about it is hard until everyone knows what the State is doing. He reiterated that they are trying to save the organization. He talked about the number of people/counties served.

Commissioner Milly Richardson talked about revisiting this at the next meeting.

Commissioner Milly Richardson made a motion to go into closed session at 5:22pm under NCGS 143-318.11 (a) (3)—legal and (a) (6)—personnel. Commissioner Doug Murphy seconded the motion. Vote 5:0.

Commissioner Milly Richardson left the meeting at 5:35pm.

Commissioner Doug Murphy made a motion to adjourn closed session at 5:50pm and reconvene the regular meeting. Commissioner Steve Roten seconded the motion. Vote 4:0.

Chair Ken Richardson stated no decisions were made during closed session.

Being no further business, Commissioner Doug Murphy made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 5:51pm. Commissioner Randy Miller seconded the motion. Vote 4:0.

Respectfully Submitted,

Karen Evans  
Clerk to the Board

Attest:

Ken Richardson  
Chairman