

The Alleghany County Board of Commissioners and the Alleghany Board of Education met in special session on Monday, October 15, 2007, at 5:30pm in the Commissioners Meeting Room of the County Administration Building, 348 South Main Street, Sparta, North Carolina. The purpose of this meeting is to discuss school facilities and the QZAB projects.

Present: County—Chair Ken Richardson, Vice-Chair Warren Taylor, Commissioner Randy Miller, Commissioner Doug Murphy, Commissioner Milly Richardson, County Manager Don Adams, and Clerk to the Board Karen Evans. Board of Education—Chair Clarence Crouse, Vice-Chair Betsy Dillon, Faron Atwood, Mitch Franklin, and Superintendent Dr. Jeff Cox. Joel Souther was present but arrived late.

Chair Ken Richardson called the Commissioners' meeting to order at 5:43pm.

Clarence Crouse called the Board of Education meeting to order and asked for a moment of silence.

Chair Ken Richardson informed the Board of Education that the Commissioners passed a resolution about the \$2,000,000 QZAB project to move forward. He turned the meeting over to the Board of Education.

Clarence Crouse talked about information handed out by Dr. Cox.

Dr. Jeff Cox reviewed the revised Schools Facilities Plan starting with the instructional program.

John Farrelly talked about middle school personnel needs and the reduction in staff needs for total recurring costs of \$675,000. He further talked about the costs to add the middle school programming without building a new building would be around \$1,000,000. He explained the program expansion and benefits in a middle school.

Dr. Cox talked about the reduction in the recurring costs. He continued reviewing the Schools Facilities Plan with the immediate capital needs, a letter from the architect about cost estimates for a new middle school for \$6,324,413 and renovating classroom space in the auditorium building for \$1,167,354. He reviewed the need for acquiring land for sewer needs at Glade Creek Elementary School.

Joel Souther arrived at 5:55pm.

Dr. Cox continued reviewing the 3-5 year facility needs and 5-10 year facility needs. He talked about the auditorium building being a community effort. He further talked about the water and sewer needs at Glade Creek Elementary School. He stated that the remaining items on the Schools Facilities Plan are being taken care of through the QZAB projects.

Clarence Crouse stated that the architect provided numbers based on a delayed construction start time; therefore, if the project could be started soon, it could save a lot of money.

Betsy Dillon talked about the importance of providing the middle school curriculum. She further talked about the need to be prepared to deal with enrollment increases that they may have.

Faron Atwood stated that they wanted to provide numbers to the Commissioners for the total package from the beginning until the time the children walk in the doors.

Mitch Franklin reiterated the need to move forward as soon as possible for the benefit of the kids in the future as well as saving money.

Joel Souther stated that not only does this give the Commissioners an idea of the immediate needs but the 3-5 year needs, too. He stated his appreciation for the Commissioners' consideration.

Commissioner Doug Murphy asked does the 3-5 year needs and 5-10 year needs take in consideration inflation.

Dr. Cox, Faron Atwood, Joel Souther talked about these are today's figures.

Mitch Franklin reminded everyone that these are estimates, not bid prices.

The Board of Education explained that the immediate needs figure are for a turn-key job. Dr. Cox talked about the parking area changes.

Commissioner Doug Murphy asked if this is a list of programs that will be offered at the middle school.

John Farrelly stated that yes it is.

Clarence Crouse stated that he thinks all of the surrounding counties have the middle school concept, and these programs are enhanced programs that will help with test scores.

Commissioner Doug Murphy and Dr. Cox talked about drop-out rates and the drop-out probability starts in the middle school grades.

Chair Ken Richardson talked about the bond referendum timing for the primary election. He asked that the County Manager and Dr. Cox present numbers about the costs for a bond referendum.

Clarence Crouse stated that it would help the school system to have it earlier than May. He explained why it would help to have it earlier.

Mitch Franklin talked about they have looked at it from all aspects and the importance of moving forward as fast as possible. He further talked about the construction costs increasing.

Chair Ken Richardson stated that he thinks that is for the Board of Education to request to the Board of Commissioners then it is up to Dr. Cox and the County Manager to see if that is feasible and see if that can be worked out.

County Manager Don Adams talked about a referendum can't be held within so many days before a scheduled election. He talked about backing up the timeline and it would have to be decided within the next month in order to have it in March. He further talked about the costs will be for the election will be around \$12,000 to \$15,000 and an additional \$5,000 to \$7,500 for legal fees. He reminded everyone that if the referendum is joined with the May primary the costs wouldn't be much other than the programming costs.

Dr. Cox talked about it is more of an issue to get the project done by August for the beginning of school.

Commissioner Warren Taylor asked if the County will have to go to the Local Government Commission again.

County Manager Don Adams answered yes. He talked about if assuming the referendum passes, then it will be 2 to 3 months to get to where money can be spent. He explained that the County will have to go before the Local Government Commission to get approval. He further explained that there are several decisions that have to be made by the County Commissioners if the referendum passes. He reiterated that it could take 3 months to get the finances in place.

Dr. Cox explained on the Board of Education's side that once they get a yes for the project to go forward that it will probably be 3 months before they can start construction.

County Manager Don Adams talked about the importance of the final number being accurate and the number that is on the referendum is important. He reviewed the process to sell bonds and the importance of the exact number if bonds are going to be sold.

Dr. Cox asked how the land-transfer-tax issue will be presented to the public in relation to the middle schools.

Commissioner Warren Taylor stated that was his issue exactly at the last meeting and that was his reason for wanting another meeting.

Chair Ken Richardson stated that they are two separate issues, and the Commissioners haven't acted yet on the transfer-tax issue. He talked about the earliest it would go to

referendum would be May or even November.

Clarence Crouse stated that they see the need to pay current debt but their job is to keep the schools as the number issue in the county. He further stated that hopefully the people in the county would see their needs.

Mitch Franklin stated that he thinks that if the transfer tax is tied to a middle school it would help it pass.

Clarence Crouse reiterated that the Board of Education needs to formally request an earlier referendum date and ensure that their numbers are firm. He talked about he understands that this needs to be done quickly to have an earlier referendum.

County Manager Don Adams agreed.

Faron Atwood asked where to go from here.

Clarence Crouse stated that the Board of Education will have another meeting.

Dr. Cox talked about they need to formally request the number. He further talked about he thinks about how this and the transfer tax will be presented to the public. He explained how each issue could help each other. He stated that everyone is going to have to come to a decision about how this is going to be presented to the public.

Chair Ken Richardson talked about this is an important consideration. He further talked about the Commissioners have to consider all needs.

Clarence Crouse stated that they certainly want to work together.

Dr. Cox talked about the tight timeline and asked when the Commissioners want to have the discussions about how all of this fits together like the Medicaid monies and land transfer tax with these projects.

Chair Ken Richardson stated that the next discussion should be whether to put it on a referendum or not and the other discussions will come later.

Commissioner Doug Murphy talked about his understanding is the Commissioners are waiting on the Board of Education to come back with their request about when to put this on a referendum.

County Manager Don Adams stated that the first decision that the Commissioners need to make is if this is going to a referendum and if so, when is the referendum. He further stated that he hasn't heard any formal plans for the transfer tax and the Board hasn't had that type of discussions. He talked about the need for the formal request and when they want it on a referendum.

Chair Ken Richardson talked about Dr. Cox and the County Manager will work with Board of Elections to get the answers about the referendum.

Clarence Crouse and Chair Ken Richardson talked about the next regular Commissioners meeting is on November 5.

Clarence Crouse stated that they will have the official request at that meeting.

Being no further Board of Education's business, Mitch Franklin made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 6:28pm. Joel Souther seconded the motion. Vote 5:0.

Being no further Commissioners' business, Commissioner Randy Miller made a motion to adjourn at 6:29pm. Commissioner Doug Murphy seconded the motion. Vote 5:0.

Respectfully Submitted,

Karen Evans
Clerk to the Board

Attest:

Ken Richardson
Chairman