

The Alleghany County Board of Commissioners met in regular session on Monday, November 17, 2008, 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 Warren Taylor, Commissioner Randy Miller, Commissioner Doug Murphy, Commissioner Milly Richardson, County Attorney Donna Shumate, County Manager Don Adams and Clerk to the Board Karen Evans.

Chair Ken Richardson called the meeting to order, led the Pledge of Allegiance and opened the meeting with a prayer.

Commissioner Milly Richardson made a motion to approve the agenda for this November 17, 2008, meeting. Commissioner Doug Murphy seconded the motion. Vote 5:0.

AGENDA
Monday, November 17, 2008
3:30 PM

- 3:30 Meeting Called To Order, Pledge of Allegiance and Prayer
Motion on Agenda for November 17, 2008, meeting
Motion on Minutes for November 3, 2008, meeting
Motion on October Tax Releases & Refunds
- 3:35 A. Public Comments—30 minutes
B. Mary Walker
RE: Present-Use Value Appeal
C. EMS Annual Report
D. Health Advisory Council Annual Report
E. Health Department Annual Report
F. County Business
1. Fire Commission—Communications
 2. Jail Study Contract
 3. Soil & Water Budget Amendments
 4. Social Security Administration Office
 5. Board Appointments
 6. EMS Request Recommendations
 7. Planning Issues
 8. Other Business
 9. Adjourn

Commissioner Randy Miller made a motion to approve the minutes for the November 3, 2008, meeting. Commissioner Milly Richardson seconded the motion. Vote 5:0.

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

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

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

Linda Edwards presented the Emergency Medical Services annual report. She provided the Board statistics regarding the activities of EMS including total number of calls, transports and patient miles. She talked about their web-based reporting system. She explained their trainings and benefits of having a part-time training officer. She updated the Board about their new medical protocols and the current number of employees. She talked about the hydraulic stretchers helping with lifting injuries. She thanked all of the Commissioners for their support.

Commissioner Doug Murphy thanked EMS for their work.

Mary Walker, Tax Administrator, presented a letter from Allen Blevins regarding an appeal for farm-use. She explained that Mr. Blevins qualifies for farm-use. She further explained that the General Statutes allows for this appeal.

Commissioner Milly Richardson made a motion to approve the appeal. Commissioner Warren Taylor seconded the motion. Vote 5:0.

Lee Cornett came before to the Board to present the Health Advisory Council annual report. She talked about the Council's function of promoting health and dental awareness in Alleghany County. She explained that they try to get information out to the community. She talked about issues that they are focusing on. She further talked about having a location on Main Street to help them get the message out. She explained that they assist with the High School's health fair, and it has been requested that each school hold a similar health fair, which they will be doing this year.

Commissioner Doug Murphy and Lee Cornett talked about the man that goes to the elementary schools to talk about tobacco use.

Chair Ken Richardson stated that he serves on this board, also, and Lee does a lot for that board as their chair and also serves with her on the regional community child protection team.

Danny Staley, Director, presented the annual report for the Appalachian District Health Department. He reviewed the State of the District report regarding public health priorities including obesity, tobacco use, radon exposure, deaths due to injury. He continued reviewing their annual report including suicide rates, Eat Smart Move More, dental clinic, tobacco use policies and community health survey. He talked about having two members from the Board serving on the District Health Board. He recognized Commissioner Warren Taylor for his service on the District Health Board since 2002.

Commissioner Milly Richardson stated that the Fire Commission is working on gathering their information for the next topic. She asked that this topic be placed on the mid-month agenda in December.

County Manager Don Adams talked about a contract that he presented earlier regarding THM & Associates to apply to get more federal inmate monies. He explained that the contract is for \$3,000 to help the County put the application together. He stated that #4 Term needs to be stricken from the contract. He explained why the term length was needed if the County elected to obtain additional services from THM & Associates. He further explained that his services are to put together the application for requesting higher inmate reimbursements.

Chair Ken Richardson and County Manager Don Adams talked about how this can impact Alleghany County. They discussed the daily reimbursement rate in the surrounding counties with Alleghany County's being one of the lowest rates.

Commissioner Doug Murphy and County Manager Don Adams talked about the frequency of the application. County Manager Don Adams explained that the County must show significant increases in costs before asking for the reimbursement increase, and it will be several years before the County can ask again.

Commissioner Doug Murphy made a motion to approve the contract and pay the \$3,000 fee. Commissioner Warren Taylor seconded the motion. Vote 5:0.

County Manager Don Adams presented budget amendment General Fund # 18 in the amount of (\$1,039) and Soil & Water Fund #1 in the amount of (\$1,039) regarding the eco enhancement expenses and coop expenses. He explained that these lines were estimated during the budget process. He further explained that this budget amendment accurately reflects the amount available in those lines.

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

County Manager Don Adams presented a letter from Sandra Myers from the Social Security Administration stating they will not be coming to Alleghany County once a quarter. He reviewed the letter showing the staff travels to Ashe and Alleghany once a quarter traveling 110 miles with walk-in traffic averaging around 12 for Ashe County and 15 for Alleghany County, and the visits are not cost effective. He stated that his recommendation is to allow him to write a letter to our legislators and the Social Security Administration. He further stated that he doesn't understand why they will not come to Alleghany County once a quarter. He said that he has contacted Dan McMillan in Ashe County. He talked about he talked with the Wilkes office, who told him that the services provided at the quarterly visits can be obtained via mail, phone and electronically.

Commissioner Milly Richardson and Commissioner Doug Murphy stated that they don't understand why they can't come here.

The Board agreed for the County Manager to send letters about the quarterly visits.

County Manager Don Adams stated that he thought he would go ahead and pass out information on the board appointments prior to the next meeting. He reiterated that the next meeting is the Board's organizational meeting.

Chair Ken Richardson talked about Commissioner Warren Taylor would welcome comments or questions anyone has regarding the boards that he serves on.

County Manager Don Adams reminded everyone about EMS's issue recruiting a paramedic. He stated that he met with the shift supervisors regarding this recruitment. He said they cannot recommend a starting salary higher than 2% above the starting salary. He explained his policy recommendation of transferring sick leave from other government entities with a cap of 500 hours.

Chair Ken Richardson talked about this is not changing the policy for this person but changing the policy across the board.

County Manager Don Adams explained that he needs to know how long to go back to allow for the transfer of sick leave hours. He further explained that he knew of four to five people with around 1,500 hours.

Commissioner Warren Taylor asked how much time the County Manager is recommending going back.

County Manager Don Adams stated that three years would catch everyone.

Chair Ken Richardson reiterated that this policy doesn't cost Alleghany County money unless the employee is sick.

Commissioner Warren Taylor and County Manager Don Adams talked about sick leave is a privilege that the Commissioners provide.

Commissioner Doug Murphy talked about at the last meeting, the Board talked about addressing the employees who this could apply to.

County Manager Don Adams talked about making this retroactive for three years and affecting four employees.

Commissioner Milly Richardson made a motion to amend the sick leave policy. Commissioner Doug Murphy seconded the motion. Vote 5:0.

Chair Ken Richardson asked if anyone has a problem with 2% above the starting salary for this person.

Commissioner Milly Richardson made a motion to approve the salary being 2% more than the starting salary. Commissioner Randy Miller seconded the motion. Vote 5:0.

County Manager Don Adams explained that researching this matter allowed him to review other examples, and he has discovered that some adjustments are needed on annual leave for employees who left then came back. He talked about a couple of examples where the employees came back and allowing their time to be accumulated.

Commissioner Warren Taylor talked about making everyone follow the amended policy.

County Manager Don Adams asked does the Board want to wait until the next meeting to schedule a special meeting regarding the planning issues.

The Board agreed.

County Manager Don Adams reviewed the timeline for the Transfer Facility scales starting on December 1 through January. He said that he will have more conversations with the newspaper to make the public aware. He explained that this will require changing the traffic flow because there will be one-way traffic since they need the entire right side to repair the scales. He further explained that this impacts those who are required to use the scales.

Commissioner Doug Murphy and County Manager Don Adams talked about the temporary scales will weigh all of the trucks coming in with the exception of the County's tractor trailer that hauls the garbage down the mountain.

Commissioner Milly Richardson reminded everyone that she isn't happy that concrete is going to be poured in December.

County Manager Don Adams explained the plan to keep heat on the concrete so that it won't freeze. He talked about the good side to this is there is a lot less weight traffic in the winter than in the summer.

Chair Ken Richardson talked about Commissioner Taylor and his service to the community.

Susie Long with Smoky Mountain Mental Health came before the Board to express their appreciation to Commissioner Taylor for his service to their board.

Ralph Castillo came before the Board to express their appreciation for Commissioner Taylor's service on the Hospital Board

Bryan Edwards came on behalf of the Water Authority, the Town of Sparta and the Mayor. He stated their appreciation for Commissioner Taylor's commitment, appreciations for the work completed, enjoyed working with him, and he considers him as a mentor. He further stated that it has been a pleasure to work with him.

Chair Ken Richardson stated that two other boards couldn't be here and the County Manager will read information from them.

County Manager Don Adams presented information from Cliff Vinson with Blue Ridge RC&D. He stated that he sends his regards, and Commissioner Taylor served 14 years on the Blue Ridge RC&D board, and offers their sincere appreciation.

County Manager Don Adams presented information from Craig Hughes with the High Country Council of Governments regarding Commissioner Taylor's service on the Rural Transportation Advisory Committee (RTAC) since it was organized in 2002 and serving as chair from 2006-2008. He reviewed items that Commissioner Taylor assisted in while serving on the RTAC, and he has been a valuable member of the High Country RPO and his leadership/input will be greatly missed by the RTAC. He read Mr. Hughes comments regarding Commissioner Taylor's assistance in establishing priorities and regional cooperation have helped to make the High Country RPO a strong and unified organization.

Chair Ken Richardson, on behalf of the County Commissioners, presented a

plaque to Commissioner Warren Taylor for his 14 years of service to Alleghany County citizens and painting by Harry Tepker.

Commissioner Warren Taylor stated his appreciation for the kind words and efforts. He talked about not missing all the work of being a commissioner but will miss the people. He thanked everyone that he has been associated with while being a County Commissioner.

Commissioner Doug Murphy talked about working with Commissioner Taylor, and he will be missed at this table.

Commissioner Randy Miller talked about times when Commissioner Taylor was called Coach T. He stated that he has always looked up to him and people look up to him. He stated his appreciation for Commissioner Taylor.

Commissioner Milly Richardson talked about Commissioner Taylor and her working together in the 90's. She further talked about she is thankful for him running for Commissioner again but was surprised when he did. She stated that the person that she compares Commissioner Taylor to is her dad and that is the highest compliment that she can give.

Chair Ken Richardson talked about serving as a Commissioner is a family commitment as well as the person serving the elected office. He further talked about his time serving with Commissioner Taylor has been an honor and a privilege.

Chair Ken Richardson wished Commissioner Warren Taylor, wife Brenda and their two sons much happiest to come.

Being no further business, Commissioner Doug Murphy made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 4:37pm. Commissioner Milly Richardson seconded the motion. Vote 5:0.

Respectfully Submitted,

Karen Evans
Clerk to the Board

Attest:

Ken Richardson
Chairman