

The Alleghany County Board of Commissioners met in regular session on Monday, December 17, 2012, at 10:00am in the Board Meeting Room of the County Administration Building, 348 South Main Street, Sparta, North Carolina.

Present: Chairman Larry Cox, Vice-Chair Tom Smith, Commissioner Larry Davis, Commissioner John Goudreau, Commissioner Karen Leys, County Attorney Donna Shumate and County Manager Don Adams. Clerk to the Board Karen Evans was absent.

Chair Cox called the meeting to order, led the Pledge of Allegiance and a silent prayer.

Chair Cox stated that Northwestern Regional Housing Authority needs to be added to the agenda.

Commissioner Goudreau made a motion to approve the amended agenda for this December 17, 2012, meeting. Commissioner Davis seconded the motion. Vote 5:0.

AGENDA
Monday, December 17, 2012
10:00 AM

- 10:00 Meeting Called To Order, Pledge of Allegiance and Silent Prayer
Motion on Agenda for December 17, 2012, Meeting
- 10:05 A. Public Comments—30 minutes
- B. Rita Miller (Tax Administrator) - RE: November Releases and Refunds & November Collections Report. Standard release and refund of both automobile and real property taxes due to reasons listed on report. Monthly 2012 collection rates through November as compared to 2011 monthly collection rates. Action Requested – Vote on releases and refunds.
- C. Gerald Leftwich (Emergency Management) & Travis Dalton (Planning Director) – RE: High Country Regional Hazard Mitigation Plan. Required FEMA plan that covers Alleghany, Ashe, Watauga and Wilkes Counties. A copy of the plan can be downloaded at http://www.alleghanycounty-nc.gov/emergency_management.php . Action Requested - Schedule a public hearing.
- D. John Blevins (Social Services Director) – RE: Social Worker IAT Position – Grade 72 (\$40,917.69). Position is vacant. Action Requested – Vote on whether or not the position can be filled.
- E. Jacob Perry – RE: House fire at 300 Westview Street, Sparta, NC
Mr. Perry's house burned in October 2012. He is requesting that the solid waste fee be released for the cleanup on this site. Action Requested – Vote on whether or not to release the solid waste fee.
- F. April Hamm (Transportation Director) – RE: Community Transportation Program Grant & 5310 "ED" Grant. Public Hearings held on both grant proposals during the December 3, 2012 Commissioner meeting. Video of Public Hearings may be seen at <http://www.alleghanycounty-nc.gov> . Action Requested – Vote on whether or not to approve the proposed grant applications.
- G. General Business
1. Radon Action Month – Proclamation naming January 2013 as "Radon Action Month". Action Requested – Vote on whether or not to approve the proposed proclamation.
 2. General Fund Budget Amendment - In the amount of \$1,770. These are additional funds to be added to Tax Office foreclosure fees. These funds have already been recouped through the foreclosure of property. Action Requested – Vote on whether or not to approve the budget amendment.
 3. January 21, 2013 Regularly Scheduled Commissioner's Meeting – This meeting falls on the Martin Luther King Jr. Holiday. County offices are closed. Action Requested - Reschedule this meeting.
 4. North Carolina Association of County Commissioners (NCACC) Legislative Goals Conference – Conference to be held January 24-25, 2013 in Raleigh, NC. Future Action Requested – The Board needs to appoint at the next meeting a Commissioner who is planning on attending this event as the Voting Delegate to represent Alleghany County.
 5. Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing – Required plan to operate the Community Development Block Grant Scattered Site Housing program. Future Action Requested – This plan will be put onto the next agenda to be voted upon.
 6. Planning Session – General discussions amongst the Commissioners to see if there needs to be a planning session scheduled in January 2013 to discuss 2013 goals and objectives.
 7. Northwestern Regional Housing Authority (added)

H. Adjourn

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

Dennis Smith talked about the last meeting where conversation occurred to make people jump through more hoops. He said it was also interesting that the connections that link everything have been ignored. He talked about it is 8 days before Christmas. He told a story about a friend whose unmarried daughter was pregnant and was concerned about what people thought then decided it didn't matter what people thought, the baby was born and is now the joy of his friend's life but she will live with the guilt of the thoughts of making the problem go away. He talked about abortion follows people for years. He further talked about the number of children killed per year. He talked about the thoughts of death are glorified through video games, movies, TV programs and music. He further talked about a conversation between a young man and an older man about abortion and euthanasia. He stated that recently a US District court judge ruled that North Carolina can no longer have a choose life license plate. He talked about the tragic event last week. He said that every problem our country faces can be traced back to disobeying the Lord's instruction. He further said that we as a country have turned our backs to the Lord. He used an example of the National Convention in Charlotte. He talked about a vocal prayer may seem like a small thing but in the eternal thing it is all there is. He reminded everyone that at the last meeting he said 77 North Carolina counties have a vocal prayer before their meeting. He read one of those prayers.

Travis Hamm said that he, his wife and his father run a business in Sparta. He talked about his concern of the Transportation program purchasing a brake lathe, which is probably around \$7,500-\$8,000 and having certified personnel to do it. He further talked about having a small business and would like an opportunity to do the work. He said he doesn't see how it will benefit the county to do that.

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

Rita Miller, Tax Administrator, presented the November auto releases and refunds.

Commissioner Goudreau made a motion to approve the November auto releases and refunds. Commissioner Smith seconded the motion. Vote 5:0.

Rita Miller presented the November real property releases and refunds.

Chair Cox asked about the garnishment fee. Rita Miller explained the reason that the garnishment fee should not be added

Commissioner Leys made a motion to approve the November real property releases and refunds. Commissioner Goudreau seconded the motion. Vote 5:0.

Rita Miller presented the November 2012 collections' report.

Chair Cox and Rita Miller talked about the new vehicle system timeline starting in July of 2013.

Commissioner Goudreau asked if Rita Miller could include a summary about the outstanding taxes. Rita Miller said she will.

Gerald Leftwich, Emergency Management Coordinator, came before the Board to talk about the High Country Regional Hazard Mitigation Plan. He presented a PowerPoint presentation. He talked about there is already a county-wide plan in place. He explained that FEMA is requiring that Allegheny, Ashe, Watauga and Wilkes counties combine their plan into one regional plan. He talked about the importance of the regional plan and mitigation. He explained that the plan isn't costing Allegheny County anything.

County Manager Don Adams talked about the funding that was available for the local plans are know only funding the regional plans.

Gerald Leftwich continued with the PowerPoint presentation talking about the regional plan and it covers everything in the five-county region. He reviewed the key objectives to the regional plan. He talked about the need for a public hearing on the plan and consideration of the resolution. He reviewed the risk assessment of the region. He talked about the plan maintenance annually.

Commissioner Leys and Gerald Leftwich talked about the plan went from 87 pages to over 300 pages.

County Manager Don Adams talked about the plan has demographics about each area then the actual plan is near the end. He further talked about this is the first stage of dealing with an issue. He talked about how this benefits Alleghany County and the Town of Sparta. He further talked about the key points of the plan.

Gerald Leftwich talked about Alleghany County does have an emergency operation plan that defines the roles of everyone involved in a disaster. He said this plan is updated annually also. He further said that everyone does whatever it takes in a disaster situation. He talked about the State deemed it necessary in 2002 to have a multi-hazard incident response for schools. He further talked about the recent event at a school in the north involving children. He stated how many shootings there have been in schools in the United States since 1994.

Chair Cox and County Manager Don Adams talked about scheduling the public hearing at the January 7 meeting. The Board agreed.

County Manager Don Adams reminded everyone that the plan can be found on the County's website, www.alleghanycounty-nc.gov.

Gerald Leftwich talked about Alleghany County was the 5th county in the State to have people take a class about multi-hazard incident response in schools. He further talked about the number of people involved with the class and how it protects the children and everyone in the schools. He said that today we had officers at all 4 of the schools welcoming the kids and making them feel safe. He talked about we can plan ahead to prevent all that we can. He said that there have been 3 of those classes held here and now we have people that have taken the train-the-trainer class. He talked about how serious the classes are for protection of the children. He further talked about things that have been done in preparation of an event.

Brad Mabe, Chairman of Alleghany County Board of Education, talked about they did have counselors and people from the central office at every school this morning. He further talked about the kids have questions. He explained he talked to Sheriff Edwards about getting the deputies involved at the schools. He further explained that they will do everything they can to protect the children. He talked about they want to assure the public that they are doing things to protect the kids.

Sheriff David Edwards stated that he just wanted to reassure people that there are plans in place and people have been going to trainings. He said that he does need to get with the school system to make the schools safer.

The Board thanked them for coming.

John Blevins, Social Services Director, talked about a position he has open that is currently budgeted. He said that on November 30 he had one of his employees, a Social Worker IAT, resign. He talked about the job duties of this position. He explained the need for this position. He reiterated that this position is vacant at this time.

Commissioner Smith and John Blevins talked about the County is mandated to have the position but it is up to the counties to decide how many positions to have. They talked about there isn't anyone qualified for the position so it would have to be filled from outside. John Blevins talked about the existing people will have to cover this position's workload. They talked about the timeline to fill this position would be as soon as possible.

Commissioner Leys and John Blevins talked about this past Friday was the employee's last day.

County Manager Don Adams explained the prior Board's policy that every full-time position must come before the Board for approval to be filled.

Commissioner Leys and John Blevins talked about our current advertising policy including the review process. He explained Social Services' positions must go through the Office of State Personnel. He further explained what occurs if no one is qualified for the position and how the selected person would start out at a lower pay grade. They talked about the minimum education qualifications for this position is a 4-year degree.

Chair Cox and John Blevins talked about why these employees are leaving is partly because of pay and the extreme stressful situations.

County Manager Don Adams and John Blevins talked about the qualifications besides the 4-year degree.

Chair Cox and John Blevins talked about the chances of someone coming in at this salary level is extremely remote.

Commissioner Smith made a motion to allow the position to be filled. Commissioner Leys seconded the motion. Vote 4:1 (John Goudreau).

Jacob Perry came before the Board about his recent house fire. He said that he requesting that the solid waste fees be released when he cleans up the site.

Chair Cox and County Manager Don Adams talked about previous instances that this has occurred. The County Manager explained that this normally occurs when the property insurance doesn't cover all of the costs and provided previous examples.

County Manager Don Adams and Jacob Perry talked about he isn't going to rebuild onsite.

Randy Blankenship talked about when you have a loss like this it doesn't matter how much insurance you have you never fully recover. He stated that Jacob had insurance and they have paid. He talked about they say he can build what is there but building codes will not allow that. He gave an example. He talked about Jacob isn't going to be able to rebuild it because of that and he is trying to clean up the lot and try to buy somewhere else. He explained that if the solid waste fees were released then it would help.

Commissioner Goudreau made a motion to grant the release of the solid waste fees. Commissioner Davis seconded the motion. Vote 5:0.

Chair Cox talked about April Hamm is here about her two grants where the public hearings were held at the last meeting.

April Hamm, Transportation Director, talked about she would like to discuss the Community Transportation Program (CTP) grant first. She reviewed the administrative application in the amount of \$154,273 and on the capital portion; they would like to withdraw the brake lathe portion of the grant. She reviewed the new amount of the capital grant is \$45,050 with the costs to the County being \$4,505.

County Manager Don Adams talked about the brake lathe cost is \$7,490 which would cost the County \$749. He further talked about the space issue. He explained what normally occurs when rotators are repaired. He talked about the amount of time it would take to recover the County's costs. He explained the A/C recovery system would be able to be used on the vehicles and the buildings. He said that without this grant he would be asking for this piece of equipment. He talked about this equipment costs \$3,600 with a costs to the County of \$360. He explained that we have to remove the Freon from appliances at the Transfer Facility and long term this equipment can be used for that as well. He reiterated without this grant, he would be asking for this equipment anyway.

Chair Cox and April Hamm talked about this is removing the brake lathe and maintain the A/C recovery system at a County costs of \$360. She explained that the administrative portion is as she presented at the last meeting.

County Manager Don Adams clarified that on the removal of rotators only relate to AIM, not all of the other departments because some other departments use multiple outside vendors.

The Commissioners, County Manager and April Hamm talked about the costs to turn the rotators is \$30 for a pair so it would take a lot of time to recoup the required match for the grant.

Commissioner Leys and April Hamm talked about this is for fiscal year 2013/14 beginning July 1, 2013.

Commissioner Leys made a motion to approve the CTP grant application. Commissioner Davis seconded the motion. Vote 5:0.

April Hamm talked about the Section 5310, Elderly and Disabled or more commonly known as the ED van. She provided a brief history of the program that began in 2010. She reminded everyone of the conversation at the last meeting about the need for the County to supplement the program if the program is going to continue.

Commissioner Leys and April Hamm talked about the Commissioners can decide in June whether to fund the program.

Commissioner Smith and April Hamm talked about the unknown of the Medicaid brokerage system and the difference between the ED van and EDTAP. She talked about the grant is for the ED van only. She gave a brief summary of EDTAP and the difference between the two programs.

County Manager Don Adams talked about how EDTAP money could be used for a variety of transportation needs. He reminded everyone that Allegheny in Motion has an advisory board of the consumers of the transportation services. He explained that the advisory board decided years ago to limit EDTAP monies to medical transportation only.

Commissioner Smith, County Manager and April Hamm talked about EDTAP has been limited to medical only by AIM's advisory's board and the ED van fills the void from the limited EDTAP grant. They further talked about we have about 500 people that qualify for this program and have about 200 that uses it regularly.

Commissioner Leys and April Hamm talked about other services available for transportation if this program isn't funded including examples of costs for two different people would go from \$1 to \$6 per trip.

County Manager Don Adams talked about this is a tough discussion and is a major issue. He further talked about we have had years when we are short on EDTAP monies or RGP monies. He explained that this is a tough conversation because if this Board subsidizes ED then what about the other funding sources. He said he agrees about reviewing it during budget time.

Commissioner Smith and April Hamm talked about she hasn't found any additional funds available to assist in transportation. She explained that their funds are mainly funneled through NCDOT and FTA.

County Manager Don Adams clarified that the transportation program is already funded by the State and Federal government but he is talking about subsidizing it with local tax dollars.

Commissioner Goudreau said he doesn't see going forward or making a motion on this issue because at budget time it is still going to impact the budget and that is just putting it off. He talked about having an extremely hard budget year coming up. He further talked about he doesn't see that.

Chair Cox stated this is why we had the public hearing and waited a couple weeks to think about it. He further talked about the excellent program. He said that he is not ready to subsidize the program yet.

April Hamm said she understands. She talked about there is over 80,000 miles on that van and it will become part of the fleet plus it will have to stay in the boundary of what it was purchased for.

Commissioner Smith talked about applying for the grant. April Hamm explained what is involved in the grant application process. He talked about his concerns regarding Medicaid. She reiterated that we don't know anything about Medicaid at this time. He talked about his concerns of overextending some of the existing services. He said he isn't sure he can support this. She said that she can have the grant application completed by this Friday with the understanding that there is no assurance of keeping the program.

Commissioner Leys said to never give up and when it comes to grants to never give up. She further said that it would be the wrong thing to trash April Hamm's work at this time. She explained that there is another opportunity to say no in June. She said that it is the wrong time to give up.

Commissioner Goudreau talked about how you have to remember that grant money is still tax dollars regardless of where it comes from, which is something to keep in mind. He said it is time to start making tough decisions. He talked about a lot of grant sources are going to be dropping. He further talked about making a decision now is just putting off the inevitable.

April Hamm said with all due respect since the grant money is out there she is going to fight for everything that she can get for Allegheny County.

Commissioner Goudreau said that he understands that but to remember it isn't free money.

Commissioner Leys talked about thinking about the people who use this service.

Commissioner Goudreau talked about this would just change the price.

Commissioner Davis said that he thinks we should try because if we don't someone will.

Commissioner Leys made a motion for April Hamm to pursue the grant application and then have a final look at it in June before any General Fund budget allocation is made. Commissioner Smith seconded the motion. Vote 4:1 (John Goudreau).

April Hamm invited the Commissioners to come look into the program and even ride the van to see the people using the van.

Chair Cox declared a brief recess at 11:42am.

County Manager Don Adams presented the Radon Action Month proclamation. He read the last paragraph of the proclamation that is proclaiming January as Radon Action Month.

Commissioner Leys and County Manager Don Adams talked about having the Extension Service to come to the next meeting to talk about what is available for radon testing.

Commissioner Goudreau made a motion to approve the proclamation. Commissioner Davis seconded the motion. Vote 5:0.

County Manager Don Adams presented budget amendment General Fund #7 in the amount of \$1,770. He explained that this is a request from Rita Miller to add monies to the foreclosure line item because of all of the tax collections efforts; she has spent all of the money available. He further explained that this money has already been recouped through foreclosure actions that have already occurred.

Commissioner Goudreau made a motion to approve budget amendment General Fund #7 in the amount of \$1,770. Commissioner Davis seconded the motion. Vote 5:0.

County Manager Don Adams talked about the January 21, 2013, meeting falls on a holiday.

Chair Cox talked about going forward rescheduling the meeting. The Board talked about dates/times to hold the meeting.

Commissioner Smith made a motion to move the meeting to Tuesday, January 22, 2013, at 10:00am. Commissioner Goudreau seconded the motion. Vote 5:0.

County Manager Don Adams presented information about the North Carolina Association of County Commissioners (NCACC) legislative goals conference that is on January 24 and 25, 2013. He explained the information in the Board's packets; general information about the conference, form for the voting delegate, the County's submitted legislative goals. He said that the Board needs to select a voting delegate to vote on the goals at the conference. He talked about seeing if the Board has any additional goals to be submitted.

Chair Cox talked about Alleghany County has some goals that were accepted. He said that he plans to attend the conference and asked if any others would like to attend.

Commissioner Leys said she has a goal that she would like to have added.

Commissioner Smith made a motion to nominate Larry Cox to be the voting delegate. Commissioner Goudreau seconded the motion. Vote 5:0.

Commissioner Leys talked about her concern regarding conversations about DOT funds becoming more concentrated on the urban areas. She further talked about she would like for it to be a goal for Alleghany County and stress that we want to keep the current US 21 project on target for completion.

Chair Cox and County Manager Don Adams talked about this dealing with the equity formula that was discussed during election time.

The County Manager talked about getting the NCACC to support the goal would be the equity formula and the emphasis to maintain the schedule for US 21 would be geared towards our legislators and DOT. He further talked about going through the RPO for their support also. He said that he would ask this Board to create a goal for Chair Cox to take to the legislative goals conference that wouldn't take funding from the smaller places. He talked about how the NCACC may have to step aside on this topic because the larger counties view this completely different than the smaller counties and they wouldn't be able to take a policy stance on the issue. He said this isn't a new conversation. He reiterated that this is something to get on their radar about keeping to equity formula where it doesn't take from the smaller areas.

Commissioner Leys talked about all 5 Commissioners to take to our representatives about needing the US 21 project completed and to not take funds from it.

Chair Cox asked about having a meeting with the representatives to talk about this issue. She stated that she thinks it would be better to wait until the DOT board has been established in order to have that person too.

Chair Cox talked about having this on another meeting. Commissioner Leys agreed and reiterated that she would like for it to be one of the legislative goals.

Chair Cox asked if the Board wants the County Manager to create a goal for him to present to the legislative goals conference.

Commissioner Smith said he would recommend, the Chair, Commissioner Leys and the County Manager get together to write the goal.

Commissioner Goudreau said he was fine with that.

County Manager Don Adams said he will have a goal for the next meeting.

County Manager Don Adams presented the Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing that is required. He explained that this is for the community development block grant/scattered site funding. He explained the funding is used to assist people with their housing. He reviewed the highlights of the Analysis. He said that he will put the plan on the next agenda.

County Manager Don Adams asked the Board about having a planning session to be held in January.

The Board talked about dates/times for a planning session and how the meeting could proceed.

County Manager Don Adams stated the School Board has already invited the Commissioners to come tour the high school. He further talked about having the planning session prior to that meeting with the School Board.

The Board continued talking about dates/times for a planning session. They decided on January 29, 2013, at 6:00pm.

Chair Cox talked about consideration of the appointment to the Northwestern Regional Housing Authority that was discussed at the last meeting. He explained that he talked to Leo Tompkins about if he wanted to continue to serve on the Authority and he stated that he didn't. He stated that Commissioner Goudreau had indicated his interest in serving on the Authority if Mr. Tompkins did not want too.

Commissioner Goudreau stated that is correct.

Commissioner Smith made a motion to approve the appointment of Commissioner Goudreau to serve on the Northwestern Regional Housing Authority. Commissioner Davis seconded the motion. Vote 5:0.

Chair Cox talked about he had envisioned at the end of each meeting asking if each of the Commissioners had anything good to report. He asked for comments.

Commissioner Leys talked about the children and was glad to hear the comments from Gerald Leftwich, Brad Mabe, Sheriff Edwards and Chair Cox. She talked about approving the request from Social Services to care for the children, which makes her feel good. She thanked the people who work in those positions with the children. She talked about the many things going on in the county, preparing for the holidays and looking forward to next year.

Commissioner Smith said that he and Commissioner Goudreau swapped some committees and he recently went to the Council on Aging meeting. He stated that he echoes Commissioner Leys' comments about there are so many good things going on and he sees them everyday. He wished everyone a peaceful and blessed Christmas season.

Commissioner Goudreau said thanks to his fellow Commissioners for serving and putting the time into this. He further said it isn't easy sitting in this chair. He talked about one of the things that concerns him is economic development and the recent closings of the Pantry and Seasons. He said that he doesn't know if there is a lot that the Commissioners can do but encourage people to work with the local merchants. He talked about one time it struck him wrong that Allegheny in Motion was taking

people to Galax to shop. He said we need to think about decisions that affect the businesses because they pay taxes personally and for the business.

Commissioner Davis said he is looking forward to the coming year. He further said he can work with everybody and wished everyone a Merry Christmas.

Chair Cox said that Darlene Douglas has resigned from the Group Homes because of health issues and Becky Miller was promoted to fill the position. He talked about the new lights were recently turned on at stadium and Jarrett Field, and it was great that the Board of Education stepped up to address those issues. He wished everyone a Merry Christmas.

Being no further business, Commissioner Goudreau made a motion to adjourn at 12:23pm. Commissioner Davis seconded the motion. Vote 5:0.

Respectfully submitted,

Karen Evans
Clerk to the Board

Attest:

Larry Cox
Chairman