

The Alleghany County Board of Commissioners met in regular session on Monday, February 16, 2015, at 10:00am in the Board Meeting Room of the County Administration Building, 348 South Main Street, Sparta, North Carolina.

Present: Chair Tom Smith, Vice-Chair Karen Leys, Commissioner Larry Davis, Commissioner Mark Evans, Commissioner Bobby Irwin, County Manager Don Adams, and Clerk to the Board Karen Evans. County Attorney Donna Shumate was present but left early.

Chair Smith called the meeting to order, led the Pledge of Allegiance and offered the Invocation.

Chair Smith talked about changes to the agenda; #5 under General Business be moved to the beginning of the meeting, reschedule Adrian Tait and Genia George and move #7 under General Business to #1 under General Business.

Commissioner Davis made a motion to approve the amended agenda for this February 16, 2015, meeting. Commissioner Leys seconded the motion. Vote 5:0.

AGENDA  
Monday, February 16, 2015  
10:00 AM

- 10:00 Meeting Called To Order, Pledge of Allegiance and Invocation  
Motion on Agenda for February 16, 2015, Meeting  
Motion on Minutes for January 22, 2015, and February 2, 2015, Meetings
- 10:05 A. Rita Miller, Tax Administrator
1. January Releases and Refunds - Standard release and refund of both automobile and real property taxes due to reasons listed on the report.  
Actions Requested – Vote on releases and refunds.
  2. January Collections Report - Monthly 2015 collection rates through January as compared to 2014 monthly collection rates. No action requested.
  3. Enforced Collections Report – Summarizes enforced collections for the month of January 2015. No action requested
  4. Payment Agreement Report - List of people with payment agreements who did not make payments. No action requested.
  5. Motor-Vehicle Appeal  
Action Requested – Vote on the appeal.
  6. Board of Equalization and Review Hearings Dates  
Action Requested – Vote to set the dates.
  7. New Construction Assessment Proposals – Information will be presented on how to ensure timely assessments on new construction/real property. One proposal involves an in-house promotion with the other proposal engaging a private company. Requested action to be considered at a future meeting.
- 10:25 B. Sandy Ashley, Interim Social Services Director
1. Introduce New Social Services Director
  2. Fill Open Position (s) of Social Worker Supervisor III, Grade 75, \$48,313.37.  
Action Requested – Vote to fill the open position (s).
- 10:40 C. Adrian Tait, Director of Workforce Development with High Country Council of Gvt (rescheduled)
- RE: Workforce Development in Alleghany County. Mr. Tait will inform the Board about ongoing workforce development programs / changes. Mr. Tait will also discuss how these programs / changes could partner with the Alleghany County Library. No action requested.
- 10:55 D. Alleghany County Library
- RE: Golden Leaf Grant Application. The Library is seeking to request a grant from Golden Leaf in the amount of \$752,890. The purpose of this grant is to make significant facility renovations to the Wilkes Community College / Blue Ridge Business Development Center warehouse space.

The renovated space would be utilized for library and workforce development purposes. The grant application deadline is March 13, 2015. The Library is seeking formal support from the Board for this application prior to the application deadline.

11:25 E.

Beth Lovette, Director

RE: Appalachian District Health Department Annual Report. No action requested.

11:45 F.

Genia George (rescheduled)

RE: Arts Council's Annual Report. No action requested.

G.

Break at the Board's Discretion

H.

General Business

1. Regional Library Board Appointment

Tom Smith's term on the Regional Library Board has expired and is eligible to serve another 6-year term.

Action Requested – Vote on the appointment.

2. NCACC 2015 District Meetings

NCACC is holding district meetings throughout the State with the closest meeting being on April 2 in Statesville. There is no fee to attend but registration is required. No action requested.

3. NCACC Strategic Plan Regional Input Sessions

NCACC is holding regional strategic plan input sessions throughout the State with the closest meeting being on March 24 in Conover. There is no fee to attend but registration is required. No action requested.

4. Proposed Joint Board of Commissioners/Board of Education Meeting

The Alleghany County Board of Education has requested to hold a joint meeting with the Alleghany Commissioners. Action Requested – Schedule a joint meeting with the Board of Education.

5. Fill Open Position of Transfer Facility Attendant (moved to the beginning)

Request to fill the open position of Transfer Facility Attendant, Grade 59, \$22,133.11.

Action Requested – Vote to fill the open position.

6. Action Committee Names for the Strategic Economic Development Plan

1. Names are being submitted for each of the action committees to be considered by the Commissioners. Action Requested – Vote to appoint the recommended names to each of the committees for the Plan.

2. Consider providing \$2,500 in administrative support funds for the committees to operate. The Town of Sparta will also consider providing \$2,500 at their next meeting. Action Requested – Vote on using \$2,500 out of the Economic Development Fund to be used as administrative support for the action committees.

7. Roaring Gap Sheriff Deputy Retirees (moved to #1)

Alleghany County has appointed two Sheriff Deputies to serve the Roaring Gap Club area for decades. The Roaring Gap Club has reimbursed Alleghany County for all expenses associated with these Deputies while they were active law enforcement employees. There has never been a written agreement regarding this arrangement. Now that there is an employee who has retired, discussions must be held in regards to who is responsible for the long-term retiree expenses. No action requested at this meeting.

8. Wellness Drawings

Drawings for employees who have obtained 125 points, completed Preventive Care portion of Wellness Program and obtained the most points.

Action Requested – Draw 8 employees' names for a chance to win a \$25 Chamber gift certificate. Draw 2 employees' names for a chance to win a \$100 Chamber gift certificate. Draw 1 employee's name for a chance to win a \$200 Chamber gift certificate.

I.

Public Comments—30 minutes

J.

Commissioners Comments

K.

Adjourn

Commissioner Evans made a motion to approve the minutes from the January 22, and February 2, 2015, meetings. Commissioner Leys seconded the motion. Vote 5:0.

County Manager Don Adams explained that the newspaper has moved their advertising deadline up due to the weather and how a week could impact this next topic. He talked about a person retired at the Transfer Facility, which created an open position. He said that he is asking for permission to fill the open position of Transfer Facility Attendant.

Commissioner Irwin made a motion to fill the open position. Commissioner Davis seconded the motion. Vote 5:0.

Rita Miller, Tax Administrator, presented the January auto releases.

Commissioner Leys made a motion to approve the January auto releases. Commissioner Irwin seconded the motion. Vote 5:0.

Rita Miller presented the January auto refunds under the vehicle tax system (VTS).

Commissioner Leys made a motion to approve the VTS January auto refunds. Commissioner Evans seconded the motion. Vote 5:0.

Rita Miller presented the January real property releases.

Commissioner Davis made a motion to approve the January real property releases. Commissioner Evans seconded the motion. Vote 5:0.

Rita Miller presented the January real property refunds.

Commissioner Leys made a motion to approve the January real property refunds. Commissioner Irwin seconded the motion. Vote 5:0.

Rita Miller presented the January 2014 reports; collections' report, enforced collection report, payment agreement report.

Commissioner Leys mentioned the good work on the payment agreements on behalf of the citizens.

Commissioner Evans and Rita Miller talked about the foreclosure report.

Rita Miller presented a motor-vehicle appeal for a Ford Edge with an assessed value of \$27,623, owner's appraisal of \$19,275 and her recommendation is \$20,700 from the NADA book. She noted the property owner is in agreement with the recommended amount.

Commissioner Davis made a motion to approve the Tax Administrator's recommendation. Commissioner Leys seconded the motion. Vote 5:0.

Rita Miller talked about the timeline for scheduling Board of Equalization and Review hearings. She requested the Board to schedule the hearings during the week of May 11 for three nights beginning at 6:30pm.

County Manager Don Adams and Rita Miller talked about having a training session. She mentioned having one night for training then having the meetings. He stated that our revaluation company will provide a training to the Commissioners before the hearings.

The Board talked about dates/times for the training. They agreed on Tuesday, May 5 at 6:30pm. They decided dates/times for the hearings. They agreed on May 12, May 14 and May 15 at 6:30pm.

Rita Miller presented information about the revaluation company's contract has ended for picking up new construction. She explained her focus has been on collections. She said she needs direction from the Commissioners about which direction to go with new construction. She presented two options; enter into contract with Wampler & Eanes for this

work, which means they will come twice a year to pick up new construction, or promote within Tax Office staff because we already have one person certified as an appraiser. She explained her recommendation is to promote a person in the office for this work because they will be in the field more frequently. She provided reasons why it is important to have someone in the field. She reiterated that she is looking for some direction from the Board.

County Manager Don Adams explained why personnel discussions are occurring in the middle of the year and what happens if we wait until budget time. He talked about the importance of getting new construction as it goes. He reviewed the three options; Tax Administrator to pick up new construction which will take her time away from collections, enter into a private contract or the in-house promotion.

Chair Smith and Rita Miller talked about this person will only need continuing education since she is already certified.

Commissioner Evans and Rita Miller talked about the costs difference between the two options she presented.

Commissioner Leys and Rita Miller talked about this will be in addition to her current work. Rita Miller explained that she will be moving around other duties. They discussed this will be around 25-30% of her work.

Commissioner Leys made a motion to go with Option B, in-house promotion. Commissioner Irwin seconded the motion. Vote 5:0.

Rita Miller talked about the informal revaluation hearings this week will be held even with the bad weather. She encouraged everyone to ask questions, if needed.

Sandy Ashley, Interim Social Services Director, introduced Lisa Osborne as the new Social Services Director, effective today.

The Board welcomed Lisa Osborne and stated their appreciation.

Lisa Osborne said thank you for the opportunity.

Sandy Ashley talked about Lisa Osborne was a Social Worker Supervisor III, grade 75, \$48,313. She asked for permission to fill the position and the possibility if filling her position results in other open positions then filling the other open positions as they move up.

Commissioner Davis made a motion to accept Lisa Osborne as the Social Services Director. Commissioner Leys seconded the motion. Vote 5:0.

Commissioner Leys made a motion to approve filling the open positions at Social Services. Commissioner Davis seconded the motion. Vote 5:0.

Commissioner Evans and Chair Smith talked about these motions.

Sandy Ashley and Commissioner Evans talked about the Social Services Board hires the Social Services Director.

County Manager Don Adams clarified the motions that were made by allowing Social Services to fill open positions as they occur when filling the Social Worker Supervisor position. He explained this action does not add additional positions.

Sandy Ashley talked about these changes will create a lot of training. She said that they don't know how much it will be, and Lisa Osborne may be back for additional training monies.

Pat Polley recognized the members in the audience representing the Library. She talked about a Golden Leaf grant application that they would like to present. She said the grant is due March 13. She talked about the space needs at the Library. She reviewed the history of the Library referendum and the previous grant attempt with Golden Leaf. She

continued discussing their space needs. She talked about moving off Main Street, and are looking at various ways to accomplish getting more space. She further talked about the WCC/Blue Ridge BDC teapot space is a little over 11,000 square feet. She talked about their move to the NC Cardinal System will increase their access to materials since it is an online catalog. She reiterated that the main thing they need is space. She explained part of the proposal builds on what the Library already does and provided examples on expanding those areas. She talked about they visited two other libraries; Mocksville and King, and how those libraries work with NC Works. She talked about the advantages of moving the Library and being close to Wilkes Community College and Alleghany High School. She referred to the survey in the Commissioners' packets from Library patrons.

Commissioner Irwin explained that he is for this but his concern is moving off Main Street. He talked about the advantages are more at the proposed location. He said he is 100% for it.

County Manager Don Adams explained that the Golden Leaf application is for \$752,890, the Library group is matching it with \$221,235 for a total project costs of \$974,125 for the renovation of the facility for the Library.

Pat Polley talked about the monies from the Library is from donations and monies raised by the Friends of the Library.

County Manager Don Adams explained that Adrian Tait was going to come talk about NC Works and explained how that will work with the Library's proposal. He talked about Alleghany County Library would be a NC Works Center and explained what that means.

Commissioner Leys explained she uses the Library, their small space and her experiences there. She talked about the need to do something to create more space. She further talked about working with NC Works. She said it will create a little more costs to the County. She stated that she is amazed at how much the Friends of the Library makes from the used books.

Commissioner Davis said since we have the space, this is a good time to give the Library more space.

Commissioner Evans talked about he is excited by what he sees.

Chair Smith talked about these plans are very similar to the plans in 2006.

Commissioner Davis made a motion to formally support the Golden Leaf grant application. Commissioner Irwin seconded the motion. Vote 5:0.

Beth Lovette, Appalachian District Health Department, provided the annual report for the Health Department. She explained they are one of six multi-county health departments in the State. She reviewed the Board's composition. She talked about the areas they work in. She reviewed the revenue pie chart for 2013-14 showing counties monies are 14%. She talked about a grant they received so now all septic permits are online. She further talked about the environmental health employees, and clinical services staff. She talked about preventive measures and a health promotion grant. She further talked about considering how to help people make healthy choices. She reviewed the printed annual report. She provided additional updates; CAP program going to a private company, RHA, and the State appointed RHA as the lead agency for the CAP. She talked about the closing of their dental clinic, and she has been assured by the school's dental clinic that they are working with additional children. She explained that the Health Department plans to do an assessment related to dentistry in Alleghany and Ashe. She talked about the Health Department is trying to obtain a federally qualified health center grant. She further talked about public health funding and explained what they get federal and state monies for. She said they are working on the budget. She reminded everyone that they sold the hospice business and are currently working to sell the properties. She explained their plan to auction off these sites and the deed restrictions say that the monies must go towards hospice care. She reviewed their plans about complying with the deed restrictions.

Commissioner Irwin asked about health inspections on food, and is our Health Department the same as it is across the State. Beth Lovette answered yes, they all operate under the USDA food code and the State is working on improving procedures so that it is the same across the State.

Commissioner Leys and Beth Lovette discussed the recent measles outbreak. They discussed the whopping cough outbreak a few years ago. Commissioner Leys stated her appreciation to Beth Lovette and Appalachian District's website, and she hopes this grant is approved. Commissioner Leys reminded the Board that the North Carolina Association of County Commissioners' first goal is about expanding Medicaid.

County Manager Don Adams talked about the children dentistry and how it will impact Social Services and Allegheny in Motion. He said he looks forward to the study results.

Chair Smith declared a brief recess at 11:27am.

County Manager Don Adams provided a handout showing information about the Roaring Gap deputies. He talked about the history for the Roaring Gap deputies including all of the expenses for the two deputies have been reimbursed by Roaring Gap Club to Allegheny County. He said he does not know how long ago it began. He explained that one of the deputies there recently retired, and this person qualifies for health insurance along with the separation allowance supplement and when these costs became apparent he talked to Roaring Gap and the conversations centered on who is responsible for the retirees' costs. He explained the value of these two deputies should offset these costs was the initial conversation. He further explained Allegheny County is obligated to pay \$317,653, current proposal from Roaring Gap Club for this person is to pay 100% of the costs for the next six years, then Roaring Gap would pay 75% of the costs until the employee reaches age 65. He said that Allegheny County does have responsibilities for health insurance after age 65. He stated that the total amount of the proposal is \$267,061 to be paid by Roaring Gap and \$50,592 to be paid by Allegheny County. He reminded everyone that this is for this one employee only. He stated that there is still one deputy employed there, this employee worked for Allegheny County Sheriff's Department for 10 years and has worked for Roaring Gap for 10 years. He explained the agreement for this employee and any other deputies that go to work at the Roaring Gap Club, Roaring Gap will pay 100% of the pro-rated costs until the employee reaches age 65. He provided an example. He said this is the negotiations up to this point. He said that he is turning it over to the Commissioners for some direction.

Chair Smith and County Manager Don Adams talked about the retiree's health insurance. They discussed the special separation allowance.

Commissioner Leys summarized the agreement for the current Roaring Gap deputies' retiree. She talked about 139 calls were recorded that this deputy responded to out in the County while working for Roaring Gap Club. She explained a situation that she was personally involved in about a car accident. She said it's worth the money to her because of her personal situation. She talked about the future contract assuming the shared portion of the benefits with Roaring Gap is a good business plan. She said her main support is because of her personal knowledge of their assistance County-wide.

Chair Smith and County Manager Don Adams talked about circumstances when Roaring Gap deputies are called away from that area, and the County Manager will have to get more information for the details.

Commissioner Irwin asked that the two deputies that were employed there was requested by whom; Roaring Gap. County Manager Don Adams said he doesn't know. The County Manager said he has no idea how this was originally set up. Commissioner Irwin talked about over the years these deputies have been working in Roaring Gap serving Roaring Gap people receiving an Allegheny County check reimbursed by Roaring Gap. County Manager Don Adams said yes, and we include every expense associated with the two deputies for reimbursement. Commissioner Irwin asked is it fair to say they are employees of Roaring Gap Club through Allegheny County. County Manager Don Adams provided an example. Commissioner Irwin asked have our other deputies took calls inside Roaring Gap. The County Manager answered that regular road deputies have responded to calls in the

Roaring Gap area but can't say within the Roaring Gap Club. Commissioner Irwin and County Manager talked about they have worked together in the past.

Commissioner Evans stated, without having an original agreement to go on, that this proposal, for the most part, except the portion after age 65, is good. He said there may need to be a conversation about insurance after age 65. He stated that he is good with this up to age 65. He further stated that he would like to see some help after age 65.

County Manager Don Adams said there are only so many options here and reviewed them.

Commissioner Irwin and County Manager Don Adams talked about the County Manager will not approve the position being hired because of these conversations. They discussed the actual day-to-day costs would be paid for 100% by them as it is now and the current proposal regarding retirees.

Commissioner Evans and the County Manager talked about the pro-rated portion of the proposals.

Commissioner Irwin and County Manager talked about the current proposal is asking for part of the retirement package to be paid for by the taxpayers.

County Manager Don Adams presented a letter from John Hedrick stating that Tom Smith's term on the Northwestern Regional Library board is up for reappointment.

Chair Smith said he is willing to serve another term.

Commissioner Evans made a motion to approve the reappointment of Tom Smith to serve on the Northwestern Regional Library board. Commissioner Leys seconded the motion. Vote 5:0.

County Manager Don Adams talked about the North Carolina Association of County Commissioners (NCACC) is holding regional meetings and the nearest meeting is in Statesville on April 2. He said there is no costs to attend this meeting but registration is required. He stated anyone who wants to attend to let the Clerk know.

County Manager Don Adams talked about the North Carolina Association of County Commissioners (NCACC) is holding regional strategic planning meetings and the nearest meeting is in Conover on March 24. He said there is no costs to attend this meeting but registration is required. He stated anyone who wants to attend to let the Clerk know.

Chair Smith and County Manager Don Adams discussed the meeting and purpose. Chair Smith encourage anyone to attend.

Commissioner Evans asked what time is the meeting in Statesville. Clerk Karen Evans said it starts at 5:30pm.

County Manager Don Adams explained the purpose of the April 2 meeting.

County Manager Don Adams talked about the recent facilities committee meeting, and the Board of Education wants to have a joint meeting.

Commissioner Irwin explained he and Commissioner Evans visited all of the schools except the High School, which is today at 2pm. He said they have seen the condition of the schools, and they are beautiful. He mentioned the science lab at Piney Creek School looks like it belongs in a college setting. He said that our biggest expense is the schools. He talked about we should meet together once or twice a year.

Commissioner Evans talked about the purpose of the meeting is to have visits/conversations between the two boards.

They Board talked about dates/times to meet; March 4 and March 12 at 6:30pm.

County Manager Don Adams presented the proposed action committee names for the Board's consideration. He said that the nomination committee did an excellent job and all of these people have agreed to serve. He named the action committees; Business Recruitment and Development, Workforce Development, Agriculture Development, Tourism Development and Marketing, Youth Retention, Healthcare.

Chair Smith said thank you for your work on this.

Commissioner Leys made a motion to add Dr. Jack Cahn and Julie Wishon Tucker as an alternate for Courtney Bennett on the Healthcare committee.

Commissioner Irwin and County Manager Don Adams talked about youth retention and tourism development having the TDA appoint up to members to serve on this committee.

Commissioner Irwin seconded the motion on the floor. Vote 5:0.

Commissioner Leys made a motion to approve the list with the added two people. Commissioner Irwin seconded the motion. Vote 5:0.

County Attorney Donna Shumate left the meeting at 12:35pm.

Chair Smith talked about considering providing \$2,500 in administrative support funds for the committees to operate. County Manager Don Adams said this request came from the nomination committee, Town will consider the same request, and gave administrative support examples. Chair Smith mentioned the funds are coming out of the Economic Development Fund. Commissioner Leys explained the Town is planning to ask for the monies also and provided examples including clerical work, food, and minutes' preparation.

Commissioner Evans made a motion to approve the \$2,500 with reports on how it is spent. Commissioner Leys seconded the motion. Vote 5:0.

Chair Smith said thank you to these citizens for serving.

The Board of Commissioners conducted raffles for employees that have completed the required 125 points, completed the Preventive Care portion of the program and obtained the most points for the County's wellness program.

Chair Smith opened the floor for public comments. None were received. He closed that portion of the meeting.

Commissioner Leys mentioned that she was approached by Dan Abernathy to support the upcoming open house at the Ashe County Arts Center with the opening reception on February 20. She thanked Ricky Brown for coming in and meeting with economic development board.

Commissioner Irwin said it was a pleasure to go see how the Board of Commissioners and Board of Education have built the fine institutions. He talked about this past Friday he attended meetings in Boone for the Heifer International and Seeds of Change programs.

Commissioner Evans talked about his recent school visits. He encouraged people to visit the schools. He mentioned with the threat of bad weather to remember everyone who has to be out in it.

Being no further business, Commissioner Leys made a motion to adjourn at 12:48pm. Commissioner Davis seconded the motion. Vote 5:0.

Respectfully submitted,

Attest:

Karen Evans  
Clerk to the Board

Tom Smith  
Chair