

The Alleghany County Board of Commissioners met in regular session on Monday, November 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 Attorney Donna Shumate, County Manager Don Adams, and Clerk to the Board Karen Evans.

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

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

AGENDA
Monday, November 16, 2015
10:00 AM

- 10:00 Meeting Called To Order, Pledge of Allegiance and Invocation
Motion on Agenda for November 16, 2015, Meeting
Motion on Minutes for October 19, 2015, Meeting
- 10:05 A. Proclamation Recognizing the Lady Trojans Volleyball State Championship Season
- 10:10 B. Rita Miller, Tax Administrator
1. October 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. October Collections Report - Monthly 2015 collection rates through October as compared to 2014 monthly collection rates. No action requested.
 3. Enforced Collections Report – Summarizes enforced collections for the month of October 2015. No action requested.
 4. Payment Agreement Report - List of people with payment agreements who did not make payments. No action requested.
 5. Solid Waste Fee Release Request – One appeal will be presented. Action Requested – Vote on the request.
 6. Change to Property Tax Law – New legislation creates an exception regarding waiving interest on old registered motor-vehicles taxes. Action Requested – Discussion about the new legislation and decide how to proceed.
 7. Tax Office Budget Amendment – Budget Amendment General Fund #4 in the amount of \$7,500 to budget for additional attorney foreclosure fees. Action Requested – Vote on the budget amendment.
 8. Greg Wright Hearing Request – Greg Wright has requested a hearing regarding his property tax. Action Requested – Decide when to hear appeal. Mr. Wright has requested a day hearing.
- 10:25 C. Beth Lovette, Appalachian District Health Department Director
RE: Health Department Federally Qualified Health Center Grant. No action requested.
- 10:45 D. Shelly Foreman, Senior Director of Public Affairs
RE: Smoky Mountain Center Annual Report. No action requested.
- 11:05 E. General Business
1. USDA Local Food Promotion Program Grant
Through the efforts of the Cooperative Extension Service, Alleghany County is eligible to receive a local foods promotion grant in the amount of \$40,500. More information will be provided at the meeting. No action requested.
 2. Planning Board Budget Amendment
Budget amendment General Fund #6 in the amount of \$1,615 for the Planning Board's \$30 per meeting stipend that was previously approved by the Commissioners. Action Requested – Vote on the budget amendment.
 3. Local Emergency Planning Committee Grant Budget Amendment
Budget amendment General Fund #7 in the amount of \$1,105 to budget for a local emergency planning committee grant received by Emergency Management in May. Action Requested – Vote on the budget amendment.

4. Pay Grade Plan Update
Request by Social Services to remove the Social Worker Supervisor II position and create the position of Human Services Coordinator III position, as approved by the State. Action Requested – Vote on the request.
 5. Open Administration Position
Request to fill an open Assistant to the County Manager-Clerk/Administrative Assistant-Clerk position, Grade 68/Grade 65. Action Requested – Vote on the request.
 6. Organizational Meeting in December
Reminder that the December 7th meeting is the organizational meeting for the Board of Commissioners. No action requested.
 7. Article 46 Sales Tax Discussions
Continue discussions regarding the proposed Article 46 Sales Tax. No action requested.
- F. Public Comments—30 minutes
 - G. Commissioners Comments
 - H. Adjourn

Commissioner Leys made a motion to approve the October 19, 2015, minutes. Commissioner Evans seconded the motion. Vote 5:0.

Chair Smith congratulated the AHS volleyball team for being the State champions.

Commissioner Irwin read a proclamation honoring the volleyball team.

Debbie Weaver stated their appreciation for the opportunity today. She provided information about their great season.

Members of the volleyball team introduced themselves to the Board.

Debbie Weaver introduced her staff.

Commissioner Irwin made a motion to approve the proclamation. Commissioner Evans seconded the motion. Vote 5:0.

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

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

Rita Miller presented the October real property releases.

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

Rita Miller presented the October real property refunds.

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

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

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

Rita Miller presented the October 2015 reports; collection rate report, enforced collection report, payment agreement report.

Rita Miller presented a request for a solid waste fee refund for property at 405 Macedonia Church Road. She explained it was a storage building, has been moved and never used as a residence.

County Manager Don Adams and Rita Miller talked about the property owner says no one has lived there.

Commissioner Leys and Rita Miller talked about the 2015 taxes aren't due yet.

Chair Smith and Rita Miller talked about her recommendation is to release it because it wasn't used as a residence now and it has been moved.

Commissioner Irwin and Rita Miller discussed the power is on and it appeared someone had been living in it. She explained he was billed two solid waste fees.

Commissioner Leys made a motion to release the solid waste fee. Commissioner Evans seconded the motion. Vote 5:0.

Rita Miller talked about a change to the property tax law, which the new law allows counties to waive or release interest on old motor-vehicle bills. She explained that Chris McLaughlin does not recommend it and her recommendation is to not release them because we are collecting some. She reviewed the County's three options; not to make any changes, cease adding the interest to the old bills or release the interest on the old bills. She said the Board could take action to stop adding the additional interest, which was \$431.83 in October.

The County Manager and Rita Miller talked about if the interest isn't accrued then the number that is released later is smaller.

Chair Smith said he agrees with Chris McLaughlin at the School of Government.

Commissioner Irwin asked Rita Miller what is her recommendation. Rita Miller said to do nothing. Commissioner Evans said he agrees.

Commissioner Leys talked about the \$431.83 and asked how much time is used for that. Rita Miller explained that it is just part of the monthly process.

Chair Smith said it sounds like the Board won't take any action on this. The Board agreed.

Rita Miller presented budget amendment General Fund #5 in the amount of \$7,500. She explained the purpose.

Commissioner Leys made a motion to approve budget amendment General Fund #5 in the amount of \$7,500. Commissioner Irwin seconded the motion. Vote 5:0.

Rita Miller presented a letter from Greg Wright asking for a hearing regarding his farm use.

The County Manager provided the background on the situation including the only thing that can stop the foreclosure sale was the payment of the back taxes, which occurred. He explained that Greg Wright still wants a hearing during the day.

Rita Miller explained why it can't be heard as the Board of Equalization and Review.

Chair Smith asked what he is wanting. Rita Miller said he wants the use value but as of today she still doesn't have an application.

The County Manager explained that the Tax office can't determine if he qualifies until the Tax Office gets an application. He talked about another issue will be prior years' qualifications.

Rita Miller explained the process for late applications is up to December 31 for 2015 and according to State law late applications can't be heard after December 31 for that calendar year.

Commissioner Leys and Rita Miller talked about the property owner has an application.

Commissioner Irwin and Rita Miller talked about she has not spoken to the property owner since the foreclosure date was set.

The County Manager talked about the agenda process including the property owner would have to contact him to get on the agenda and then come to the Commissioners.

Commissioner Irwin and the County Manager talked about if it is on the agenda it is because the County Manager personally spoke to the property owner. Commissioner Irwin said if he doesn't show up then it doesn't go any further.

Chair Smith asked the Tax Administrator and County Attorney to be present. They agreed.

Commissioner Evans asked does any of this need to go forward without an application. The County Manager said if they are standing in front of you the Board can say to put in the application, so yes the recommendation would be to get the application in.

Chair Smith encouraged the Board to meet with this person at the mid-month meeting in December.

Chair Smith made a motion to schedule the appeal for the mid-month meeting in December. Commissioner Leys seconded the motion. Vote 5:0.

The County Manager and Rita Miller talked about sending the letter by certified mail and the content in the letter.

Beth Lovette, Appalachian District Health Department Director, came before the Board to explain more about what they do. She explained the different areas that public health works. She talked about working to make sure they are fiscally sound. She further explained they worked on a federal-qualified grant. She announced that they received a federal-qualified health-center grant. She said there are 6 district health departments in the State. She reviewed how districts save counties money. She talked about the local dollars almost pay for the environment health services. She further talked about district staff can be pulled across county lines as needed. She explained they can apply for grants for a single county, two counties or all three counties. She talked about the health-center grant is only for Alleghany and Ashe. She talked about the amount of the grant for the district.

The County Manager and Beth Lovette talked about half of that is for primary healthcare.

The County Manager explained that primary health has been a major conversation, not a mandated service but a valuable service. He further explained their conversations over the years regarding the primary healthcare services.

Beth Lovette talked about the federal designation and it provides dollars to enhance care and improve care. She explained that they are working with Alleghany Memorial Hospital to bring prenatal care to the Health Department. She said they are working on a business model for the dental portion and some funding identified for dental patients.

The County Manager mentioned that the designation will allow to maintain access to that level of funding.

Beth Lovette explained that it allows for fair or enhanced reimbursement for Medicaid/Medicare, and allows them to participate in several federal projects. She said they have to reapply every couple of years, and they will give us the tools to continue. She explained that federal-qualified health-centers have been around since 1965. She said they expect this to continue but it is government money so it can change. She reviewed a handout including general information about the designation. She reiterated that the Health Department is designated as a qualified health center.

Chair Smith said congratulations on receiving the designation.

Beth Lovette said they are one of two in North Carolina, and having great resources in Raleigh.

Chair Smith and Beth Lovette talked about the numbers on the pamphlet are national numbers.

Commissioner Irwin and Beth Lovette talked about how the national numbers relate to Alleghany County numbers. She talked about Alleghany's statistics. They talked about an opportunity to work more closely with the veterans. She continued to provide Alleghany's statistics. She talked about having a separate board for the designation being a community governed board and items they are working on.

Beth Lovette talked about they haven't had monies for primary care, and now the Commissioners aren't going to be faced in the immediate future about providing primary care.

The County Manager said he can't emphasize the importance of this grant. He talked about selling home health and annually having the conversation regarding the fiscal strength of the Health Department.

Commissioner Leys said it is an honor to sit on the Health Department board. She explained things they have faced in losing employees. She talked about Beth Lovette's abilities. She said she is looking forward to seeing how this impacts the Health Department.

Shelly Foreman with Smoky Mountain Center congratulated everyone on the Health Department's grant, and it is a huge deal especially for rural areas in providing primary care. She talked about issues they see where people do not receive appropriate healthcare. She talked about working on making sure the whole person is getting taken care of. She mentioned care coordination, integrated care, Medicaid reform and how the State of North Carolina decided to embrace Medicaid reform. She explained the process, and they would have to apply to do that. She talked about there is currently a fee for the service. She explained that if this goes through, the State would bring up to three private insurance companies to administer Medicaid. She talked about the impact to the fiscal healthcare world, what it means for Smoky Mountain Center, they would have to contract with Smoky for a period of time then Smoky would have to compete to offer/manage the services.

The County Manager and Shelly Foreman talked about the Medicaid reform impact to Daymark for the first four years after that they may could negotiate with them.

County Manager Don Adams talked about Smoky Mountain Center is responsible for providing mental health services in the catchment area.

Shelly Foreman talked more about the Medicaid reform and currently there is a lot up in the air.

The County Manager said it evolves to how much does the County have a say with the local dollars and where does that end up in a larger entity. He talked about having access to the needed services.

Shelly Foreman said there are a lot of unanswered questions. She reviewed the State-level things and the State funds were cut again this year so they have to use their fund balance more. She talked about there are many services they want to plan for but the fund balance is being used for the State cuts.

Shelly Foreman said that Commissioner Irwin has been diligent in attending the County Commissioners Advisory Board. She explained the Advisory Board. She further explained that they had requested a quarterly dashboard so she is presenting it to the Commissioners. She reviewed the handouts for Medicaid and for the State. She started with the State and monies to provide care to individuals through Daymark Recovery Services. She reviewed the areas of services provided by Smoky Mountain Center through Daymark. She reviewed the first quarter of FY2015's information for Alleghany County. She stated that the vast majority of the Medicaid monies are youth. She continued to review the first quarter's information.

The County Manager asked if these are State and local dollars. Shelly Foreman said yes. The County Manager said all local dollars go to Daymark. Shelly Foreman agreed and said the State funds go to fund the other areas. The County Manager asked about the State cuts. She

said they are maintaining the level of services by using their fund balance, and the last time the State cut they didn't have to use their fund balance.

Shelly Foreman talked about the outpatient services are individual therapy, family therapy, groups, assessments, and evaluations.

Commissioner Leys and Shelly Foreman talked about a team is available through Daymark in Alleghany County.

Commissioner Irwin and Shelly Foreman talked about assessments are through Daymark. They discussed the difference with telemedicine as compared to the team. They further discussed Daymark contracts for the services and the telemedicine process. She explained that this type of treatment has been around for awhile, and they have had success in having access to the needed care.

Shelly Foreman presented Alleghany County's Medicaid quarterly information and State funded IDD services.

Commissioner Leys mentioned home services including she was invited to Daymark to be on a committee to apply for a grant for those services since it wasn't here. Shelly Foreman said she would check with Billy West about the community team. Commissioner Leys said with telemedicine, she has been told it was successful for some and not for some. Shelly Foreman said she will follow up with Billy West.

Shelly Foreman continued to present the quarterly information for the Medicaid portion of their services.

The County Manager asked Shelly Foreman to find out when vendors are getting monies for community treatment teams. Shelly Foreman said she will find out for sure but would say it is Daymark.

Shelly Foreman explained they will provide this type of information quarterly. The County Manager asked that they show by provider and by service including what provider provides what service.

Commissioner Leys asked if there is a list of providers on the website. Shelly Foreman said that most of the agencies have it, they have an 800 number and then is transferred to the appropriate area. Shelly Foreman explained the information that is on their website including their phone number is 1-800-849-6127.

Commissioner Irwin talked about Smoky Mountain Center covers 23 counties ranging in population from 6,000 to over 600,000. He mentioned Alleghany's amount, which is the 7th largest provider of money in the 23 counties. Shelly Foreman said all of the local dollars go to Daymark.

Commissioner Irwin asked about when a person goes to the hospital and needs mental health services. Shelly Foreman said they aren't the provider of services because Daymark is. She explained they urge everyone to call the 800 number. She further explained the mobile service management, and working on placement. Commissioner Irwin asked for how long. Shelly Foreman said it depends upon the circumstances and provided examples.

Commissioner Leys said she was interested in their fund balance. Shelly Foreman explained the State cut their funding, and they are working on a formula to determine how much additional monies will have to be provided.

Shelly Foreman stated their appreciation to Commissioner Irwin for attending the Advisory Board meetings.

Chair Smith declared a brief recess at 12:03pm.

County Manager Don Adams informed everyone that Alleghany County is eligible to receive for a local foods promotion program grant in the amount of \$40,500. He explained the

purpose of the grant is to provide a coordinator for the local foods promotion, cooler, truck. He said that it is a Federal program. He explained that he is going through to make sure everything is understood. He said that a budget amendment will be coming to you to put the amount in the Extension Service budget. He reiterated staff is working on the details.

County Manager Don Adams presented budget amendment General Fund #6 in the amount of \$1,615 for the Planning Board's \$30 per meeting stipend.

Commissioner Leys noted that taxes will come from it.

Commissioner Leys made a motion to approve budget amendment General Fund #6 in the amount of \$1,615. Commissioner Irwin seconded the motion. Vote 5:0.

County Manager Don Adams presented budget amendment General Fund #7 in the amount of \$1,105 for a grant that Emergency Management received in May for the Local Emergency Planning Committee. He described uses for the grant monies.

Commissioner Davis made a motion to approve budget amendment General Fund #7 in the amount of \$1,105. Commissioner Leys seconded the motion. Vote 5:0.

The County Manager presented a proposed Pay Grade Plan update that relates to the position approved of Social Worker Supervisor II. He explained that the request is to remove it and replace it with Human Services Coordinator III position. He further explained the process that Social Services has to go through when new positions are created. He stated that this brings the existing supervisor into compliance.

Commissioner Leys explained Social Services has been trying to get this approved from the State since the beginning of the fiscal year and just recently received word back. She said that this request is not asking for additional monies.

Chair Smith and Commissioner Leys talked about it was a change in the language and not a change in duties. She explained what the person will be doing.

The County Manager explained how this will bring Social Services into compliance with the State. He reiterated the request is to remove the Social Worker Supervisor II position and replace it with Human Services Coordinator III plus permission to fill the position.

Chair Smith said this is at the same grade.

Commissioner Leys made a motion to approve the request to remove the Social Worker Supervisor II position and replace it with Human Services Coordinator III plus permission to fill the position. Commissioner Irwin seconded the motion. Vote 5:0.

County Manager Don Adams said that he is requesting to fill an open position of Assistant to the County Manager/Clerk—Administrative Assistant/Clerk, grade 68/grade 65. He explained that he will be advertising the position at grade 65, if the request is approved. He further explained that Mrs. Evans is the new Finance Officer as a couple weeks ago. He stated that the Assistant Finance Officer's job is being advertised and then this position will be advertised, if approved to be filled.

Chair Smith congratulated Mrs. Evans on her promotion.

Commissioner Evans made a motion to approve the request to fill the open position in Administration. Commissioner Davis seconded the motion. Vote 5:0.

The County Manager congratulated Mrs. Evans, too. He said that she did well in the interview process and is already doing good things.

The County Manager reminded everyone that the organizational meeting will be the first meeting in December. He listed out examples of items that will be discussed including the selection of Chair/Vice-Chair, board appointments and Rules of Procedure.

County Manager Don Adams mentioned the Article 46 sales tax discussions from Friday. He said he has briefly talked to the Department of Revenue and has some answers including the sales tax is not applicable to prescription medicine.

Chair Smith said, as the County Manager mentioned, the Commissioners had a meeting on Friday about this. He asked for additional comments or questions. No one spoke. He mentioned the goal of deciding whether to put the issue on the referendum.

Commissioner Irwin said we have some approaching deadlines and need to move.

Commissioner Leys said we are well informed about the process, and the deadlines are approaching.

Commissioner Davis and Chair Smith talked about the surrounding counties around us have it.

Commissioner Evans reiterated some of the conversations for the public; ¼¢ sales tax to go on referendum for emergency communications for mandates that are coming. He provided some examples of things that the tax will apply to and not apply to. He stated that the surrounding counties already have it. He said that this is a way to help improve the County emergency communications. He explained more about the need for a backup plan and improving the 911 areas. He further explained seeing a lot of things put off then it is something for the future to have to shoulder.

Commissioner Leys added that this is for the March 15 ballot for infrastructure improvements for Alleghany County, and it is a State mandate for the backup plan.

Commissioner Evans said this way everyone will contribute to it through purchases rather than property taxes that only applies to people who own property.

Chair Smith asked is the Board prepared to move forward.

Commissioner Irwin asked about the motion is to vote to put it on the ballot. Chair Smith agreed and said it needs to state what it is being used for.

The County Manager talked about getting information appropriately out to the public. He asked that it be separate motions; one to have a referendum and then one about the issue. He read a statement that allows the Commissioners to direct the Board of Elections to add the referendum to the ballot. He further read the question that is stated in State law for the ballot. He said then the second vote would be to have communications as the topic. He further said that the next meeting or so a resolution will come back about supporting communications being the reason.

Commissioner Irwin made a motion for the Article 46 referendum to be on the March ballot by directing the Board of Elections to include it in the election. Commissioner Davis seconded the motion.

Commissioner Leys explained how much it will cost people.

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

Chair Smith asked is the Board comfortable with the purpose.

Commissioner Irwin made a motion about the purpose of the referendum being emergency communications. Commissioner Leys seconded the motion. Vote 5:0.

The County Manager said by the next meeting or so he will have the resolution about the emergency communications. He explained that the County can spend money to educate people about the Article 46 tax and what is the purpose but cannot spend money related to saying yes in support or no in support. He said that the Commissioners individually are not restricted on how they proceed forward.

Chair Smith talked about sharing ideas between now and the next meeting for the resolution.

Commissioner Evans and the County Manager discussed that the County can spend money on the education side of the referendum. The County Manager said he can start providing examples of educational materials.

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

Commissioner Evans congratulated the volleyball team on winning, and Mrs. Evans on her new position, and having big shoes to fill. He made a comment about No Shave November for cancer awareness and the need to support cancer survivors.

Commissioner Leys said she was invited to a DANA function regarding elderly abuse awareness. She stated her appreciation for what they do. She said it is heavy on our hearts about the loss of two youth recently and the importance of the 800 number for Smoky Mountain Center and other avenues. She said that the Hospital is still working on a meeting with the veterans. She thanked Commissioner Irwin for his services in recognition of Veterans Day.

Commissioner Irwin talked about they are working on the memorial wall. He mentioned the Marines birthday event Saturday night. He explained events that occurred at the birthday event. He said he appreciates the article that Bob Bamberg put in the newspaper. He thanked everyone who brought a raffle ticket, and stated that all of the money goes back into the county.

Chair Smith reminded everyone of the November 30 meeting with the Town Council. He wished everyone a good Thanksgiving.

Being no further business, Commissioner Davis made a motion to adjourn at 12:52pm. Commissioner Leys seconded the motion. Vote 5:0.

Respectfully submitted,

Attest:

Karen Evans
Clerk to the Board

Tom Smith
Chair