

The Allegheny County Board of Commissioners met in regular session on Monday, September 15, 2003, at 3:30pm in the Conference Room of the County Office Building, 90 South Main Street, Sparta, North Carolina.

Present: Chair Eldon Edwards, Vice-Chair Warren Taylor, Commissioner Graylen Blevins, Commissioner Sandy Carter, Commissioner Patrick Woodie, County Manager Don Adams, and Clerk to the Board Karen Evans. County Attorney Ed Woltz was absent.

Chair Eldon Edwards called the meeting to order.

Commissioner Sandy Carter opened the meeting with a prayer.

Commissioner Warren Taylor made a motion to approve the agenda for this September 15, 2003, meeting. Commissioner Patrick Woodie seconded the motion. Vote 5:0.

AGENDA
Monday, September 15, 2003
3:30 PM

- 3:30 Meeting Called To Order
Motion on Agenda for September 15, 2003 meeting
Motion on Minutes for September 2 & 3, 2003 meetings
- 3:35 Public Hearing
RE: 911 Road Names
- 3:45 Wendy Williams
RE: 911 Road Names and Procedures
- 4:15 Mary Walker
RE: Tax Releases & Refunds
- 4:30 Jim Hobbs & Buck Montgomery
RE: The Joe Place
- 4:45 Myrtle Taylor
RE: Angelou Economics Study
- 5:00 Jack Conaway
RE: Plat Approval
- 5:15 Bryan Starnes
RE: FY02/03 Annual Audit
County Business
 1. Reminder of Joint Meeting
 2. Budget Amendment—Social Services
 3. Wilkes Community College Lease Agreement
 4. Cooperative Extension request
 5. Other Business
 6. Public Comments—30 minutes
 7. Adjourn

Commissioner Patrick Woodie made a motion to approve the September 2 & 3, 2003, minutes. Commissioner Warren Taylor seconded the motion.

Commissioner Graylen Blevins asked that the minutes be amended to reflect that Commissioner Patrick Woodie opened the last meeting with a prayer rather than himself.

Clerk to the Board Karen Evans stated that the change will be made.

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

Wendy Williams, 911 Coordinator/Mapper, gave the Board stated that the public hearing is to discuss naming and renaming the following roads; Joes Way, West Park Lane, Weddens Way to Irwin Farm Lane and Betko Boulevard to Windy Hill Lane.

Commissioner Sandy Carter made a motion to open the public hearing at 3:31pm concerning the road names. Commissioner Warren Taylor seconded the motion. Vote 5:0.

Chair Eldon Edwards asked for public comments.

Marie Wedden talked about how her and her husband picked the names of Weddens Way and Betko Boulevard. She explained how they bought the land where the roads are located and developed the land. She stated that they are permanent residents and contribute a lot to the local economy of Alleghany County.

Chair Eldon Edwards, Wendy Williams and Marie Wedden discussed the process of renaming the roads, verifying signatures on the petition, changing information on the GIS web site.

County Manager Don Adams addressed several questions that Marie Wedden asked; who requested the renaming of the road, what reason the name was changed. He stated that the Board does not know why the road name change has been requested.

Marie Wedden talked about how proper procedures were not followed for the road name changes.

County Manager Don Adams explained that Wendy Williams is on the agenda next to discuss updating the E-911 Road Name Ordinance to reflect better procedures in renaming existing roads. Also, he explained that the Board would be discussing whether to change the road names or not.

Warren McHone stated that he lives on Weddens Way and is in favor of the road name change. He stated that other property owners could not be in attendance at today's meeting. He further stated that other property owners have asked that letters be read at this meeting. He read letters from the following property owners on Weddens Way and Betko Boulevard; Louisa Lewis, Tobias Morgan and James & Lynn Koehneke, who are in favor of changing the road names to Irwin Farm Lane and Windy Hill Lane. He mentioned that boulevard does not meet the criteria of a road name in Alleghany County.

Dr. Wade Irwin talked about the Weddens were invited to the meetings of the property owners on Weddens Way and Betko Boulevard, and if they didn't receive the invitation, then the mail did not deliver the letters. He stated that he watched everyone sign the petitions in his presence, and his signature was authentic. He further stated that three parcels on Weddens Way were for sale at the time the road name petitions were completed. Dr. Irwin talked about the process the property owners went through to submit the road name changes and where the new names came from. He mentioned a common area that the Weddens owns.

Warren McHone stated that he doesn't understand how the property owners' access can be owned by the Weddens.

Jay Wedden talked about this property is their baby and how they worked hard to get the development where it is today. He further talked about this development is his mark on the world. He explained where the names Weddens Way and Betko Boulevard came from. He talked about the grief that they had gone through concerning the renaming of the roads. He talked about how he has been treated through this process. He stated that he was appalled about how he found out about the road names being changed. He talked about how he has maintained the road for the last three years without any contribution of anyone. He further stated that the deed requires each property owner pay \$200 towards road maintenance. He explained that he hasn't received any money. He stated that he would change the Betko Boulevard to Betko whatever to comply with the ordinance. He reminded everyone that he still owns the bridge area.

Dr. Wade Irwin stated that each property owner paid \$200 last year for road maintenance and \$52 was returned back to each property owner.

Marie Wedden stated that when the property owners purchased the property, it was stated that the property owners would pay \$200 each year for road maintenance. She stated that the money wasn't collected in 2000, 2001 or 2002. She explained that the \$200 was collected for 2003 and \$52.14 was returned to each property owner meaning \$50 was the amount that each property owner has in the road maintenance per year.

Warren McHone discussed how the road has not been maintained adequately since he bought his property in 2000. He further stated that the deed has restrictions stating that no forestry activity will be on the performed on of the property. He talked about how Mr. Wedden cut trees and had them hauled out damaging the roads.

Chair Eldon Edwards asked for further public comments. None were received.

Commissioner Sandy Carter made a motion to close the public hearing at 4:24pm. Commissioner Patrick Woodie seconded the motion. Vote 5:0.

Wendy Williams, E-911 Coordinator/Mapper, illustrated where each property is located on the roads in question. She explained the location of each property owner. She further explained that the petition for Weddens Way had five out of eight property owners with 100% of the residents and the petition for Betko Boulevard had 100% of the property owners and 100% of the residents.

Commissioner Warren Taylor stated that the purpose of having a road name is for our 911 system. He further stated that the residents on the road are more affected than the property owners.

Commissioner Warren Taylor and County Manager Don Adams discussed the definition of residents in the current ordinance. The County Manager stated that the 50% plus one of the residents is the procedure of getting the petition to the Board to review the road name change not necessarily the criteria for the Board to change the road name. The County Manager stated that he current ordinance does not address the criteria for the Board to use for deciding whether to change a road name or not. The County Manager talked about the ordinance needs to have some changes made to it in the near future.

Dr. Wade Irwin asked how the original name was created.

Wendy Williams, E-911 Coordinator/Mapper, stated that, in the beginning, the names were created by looking at the history of the area.

County Manager Don Adams reviewed the process of how road names are created and who creates them.

Chair Eldon Edwards talked about 50% plus one is how the decision should be made.

County Manager Don Adams stated that was just to get the petition to the Board for the Board's consideration.

Commissioner Patrick Woodie stated that he is comfortable to go with residents being the criteria for the road name change.

Jay Wedden talked about that this is not fair. He stated that the Board should go by their heart to make this decision.

Chair Eldon Edwards stated that the Board has to go by the ordinance.

Commissioner Patrick Woodie talked about how the Board can fairly look at changing the name of any roads.

Jay Wedden asked if the Board wants to settle this in court? He stated that a judge could make the decision. He further stated that he is willing to negotiate on the road names.

Chair Eldon Edwards stated that is something the Board cannot do.

Commissioner Patrick Woodie made a motion to direct the County Manager, Wendy Williams and County Planner, if necessary, to develop a policy to reflect the name change being a majority of 50% plus one of the residents to be used for the criteria of naming roads.

The motion died for lack of a second.

The Board of Commissioners talked about the interpretations of current ordinance and the staff coming back to the Board with recommendations on developing guidelines for renaming roads.

County Manager Don Adams reviewed different criteria of determining the majority for renaming roads; property owners, residents owning property. He illustrated how each of the different criteria would affect the current petitions. He reminded everyone that the Weddens has sold one of their properties on Weddens Way making nine property owners at this time.

Commissioner Sandy Carter stated that the new property owners should not be part of this process because they were not property owners or residents at the time of the petitions.

Commissioner Warren Taylor made a motion to change the current names to the new requested names using the present ordinance as the guidelines and if any changes are made to the ordinance in the future the changes will affect future requests that come before the Board. Commissioner Graylen Blevins seconded the motion.

County Manager Don Adams stated that he wants to make sure he understands that the criteria of changing the road names is 50% plus one of the residents must agree on changing the road name.

The Board of Commissioners agreed.

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

Wendy Williams, E-911 Coordinator/Mapper, presented two new road names, Joes Way and West Park Lane for the Board's approval. She explained where each road is located.

Chair Eldon Edwards asked if the people have any comments on these new roads.

Scott Craven asked what the guidelines are to have a road named.

Wendy Williams explained the process of naming roads.

Commissioner Warren Taylor made a motion to approve the two road names. Commissioner Patrick Woodie seconded the motion. Vote 5:0.

Mary Walker, Tax Administrator, presented the tax release requests for August 2003 in the amount of \$14,149.82 for real property and \$677.12 for vehicles.

Commissioner Patrick Woodie made a motion to approve the tax release requests for August 2003 in the amount of \$14,149.82 for real property and \$677.12 for vehicles. Commissioner Sandy Carter seconded

the motion. Vote 5:0.

Mary Walker, Tax Administrator, presented the tax refund requests for August 2003 in the amount of \$84.78 for real property and \$388.84 for vehicles.

Commissioner Warren Taylor made a motion to approve the tax refund requests for August 2003 in the amount of \$84.78 for real property and \$388.84 for vehicles. Commissioner Graylen Blevins seconded the motion. Vote 5:0.

Mary Walker, Tax Administrator, presented a letter for a solid waste release for Anna Lee Ausley asking that the solid waste fee be released.

County Manager Don Adams and Mary Walker discussed when the policy has been changed from the dwelling not being able to be lived in.

Commissioner Warren Taylor made a motion to release the solid waste fee for Anna Lee Ausley. Commissioner Patrick Woodie seconded the motion. Vote 5:0.

Mary Walker, Tax Administrator, presented a motor-vehicle appeal for a 1995 Ford with a tax value of \$5,810. She stated that Mr. Richards paid \$5,000 for the vehicle in 2001. She further explained that Ashe County Motors currently values the vehicle at \$2,500, and she recommends the value be \$2,500.

Commissioner Warren Taylor made a motion to accept the Tax Administrator's recommendation of \$2,500. Commissioner Sandy Carter seconded the motion. Vote 5:0.

Mary Walker, Tax Administrator, presented a letter from the Town of Sparta asking that a portion of a tax bill be released. She explained that the Town purchased a piece of property in May. She further explained that the property owner as of January 1, 2003, has paid their pro-rated share of the taxes. She talked about how there isn't any statutes that allow the Board to release these taxes.

Commissioner Patrick Woodie made a motion to accept the Tax Administrator's recommendation of not releasing the taxes. Commissioner Warren Taylor seconded the motion. Vote 5:0.

Chair Eldon Edwards called for a 5-minute recess at 5:25pm.

Jim Hobbs explained that he is here today to discuss the road situation at The Joe Place developed by Miles Consolidated. He read a letter from Miles Consolidated stating they would maintain the road until the road is taken over by the State. He reviewed his concerns over the road. He read the deed restrictions on the property.

Commissioner Sandy Carter stated that the County has no authority on private roads. She stated that she recommends Mr. Hobbs take up the matter with Mr. Miles or an attorney.

Chair Eldon Edwards told Mr. Hobbs that the County does not have any authority on any private roads in the County.

Jim Hobbs stated that he has contacted an attorney. He discussed a housing committee for the subdivision.

D.W. Miles stated that the housing committee is in the process of getting the road up to State standards so it can be turned over to the State.

Myrtle Taylor stated that she is here to represent the Whitehead Community Center and concerned citizens. She talked about the Angelou Economics study talking about letting atheists into the County. She asked the County Commissioners to resolve their relationship with Angelou Economics.

Jack Conaway, Planner, came before the Board to ask for approval for a subdivision of property owned by Charles Johnson. He stated that the subdivision meets the guidelines in the subdivision ordinance.

Commissioner Sandy Carter made a motion to approve the plat as presented by the County Planner. Commissioner Patrick Woodie seconded the motion. Vote 5:0.

Chair Eldon Edwards reminded everyone that there is a 30-minute public comment time at the end of the meeting for anyone to speak on any topic discussed tonight.

County Manager Don Adams reminded the Board of the Joint Meeting on September 29, 2003, at 7:00pm. He stated that the Town has requested to hold this meeting at the Sparta Elementary School cafeteria.

Bryan Starnes with Martin Starnes and Associates presented the annual financial audit for fiscal year 2002/2003.

Commissioner Sandy Carter stated that she unfortunately missed the last Commissioners' meeting. She further stated that she has listened to the tapes from that meeting. Also, she said she did not attend the Angelou Economics meeting where the report was presented. She read a statement that she prepared concerning the Angelou Economics study. She stated that everyone has to work together in the County

County Manager Don Adams presented budget amendment General Fund #3 in the amount of \$7,151 for Social Services. He explained that the budget amendment is for computer damage that occurred during a lightning storm. He reminded everyone that these are monies from our insurance company.

Commissioner Warren Taylor made a motion to approve the budget amendment as presented by the County Manager. Commissioner Patrick Woodie seconded the motion. Vote 5:0.

County Manager Don Adams presented a lease agreement with Wilkes Community College for the space WCC is utilizing at the Blue Ridge BDC/WCC building. He explained the lease is necessary because the County used some State bond money to build the facility. Also, he presented a resolution concerning leasing the property to Wilkes Community College.

Commissioner Sandy Carter made a motion to approve the lease agreement between Alleghany County and Wilkes Community College and the resolution as presented by the County Manager. Commissioner Warren Taylor seconded the motion. Vote 5:0.

County Manager Don Adams presented a request from the Extension Service. He stated that the State has approved a \$550 bonus for State employees. He further stated that the State is requesting the County pay their pro-rated share of the bonus monies.

Commissioner Graylen Blevins made a motion to approve paying the pro-rated share of the bonus money. Commissioner Patrick Woodie seconded the motion. Vote 5:0.

Commissioner Patrick Woodie stated that he has had a couple of phone calls from residents around the low-water bridge at Farmers Fish Camp concerning debris gathering the bridge asked the County Manager to look into getting the Department of Transportation to clean up the area.

Chair Eldon Edwards asked for public comments.

Scott Craven said that Myrtle Taylor's statement asked that the County Commissioners terminate the association with Angelou Economics and by the meeting in October the project must be going forward.

Chair Eldon Edwards reminded everyone that the County doesn't have a contract with Angelou Economics.

Scott Craven stated that the group is asking that the Board would not be associating with the Angelou Economics.

Jim Winfield stated that he doesn't think this is the opinion of the majority of the citizens.

Clarence Crouse stated that he attended the meeting in question. He further stated that the presenter made a comment to liven the meeting up. He asked that the Board get the opinions of the citizens. He said that he is for growth of the County. He explained how he felt the comment was meant. He stated that he would love to see the County Commissioners continue and make the best decision on the situation.

Chair Eldon Edwards said that this study from Angelou Economics is just a recommendation, and the Board does not have to go with anything that is recommended.

Scott Craven said that it is his understanding that the Commerce Department could award a grant without this study being completed.

Commissioner Patrick Woodie explained the process of getting a comprehensive economic development plan completed and the rewards of having a completed plan.

Scott Craven asked if Angelou Economics would be making recommendations to the Commerce Department if the County doesn't go by Angelou's recommendations.

The Board of Commissioners stated that once Angelou's study is completed, they are completing out of the picture.

Winnie Craven asked about the priority ranking linked to money.

Commissioner Patrick Woodie stated that the counties that have a completed plan would have a more likely chance to get funding in the near future.

Winnie Craven asked who is paying Angelou Economics.

Commissioner Patrick Woodie explained that the funding is coming from a grant given by the federal government. He further explained how the Piedmont Council of Governments was selected to monitor this grant, how Angelou Economics was selected and how he was elected as a President of this group by election of the representatives from the eight counties.

Stewart Taylor talked about keeping Christian communities in the County.

Bob Bamberg stated that he doesn't remember the word atheists being mentioned at the Angelou meeting. He thinks that this has been a bad misunderstanding. He talked about this reaction is interrupting what was said at the Angelou meeting. He said that he doesn't think the County can react to a misunderstanding.

Winnie Craven talked about Mr. Bamberg's comments in the newspaper.

Commissioner Patrick Woodie stated that he thinks it is unfortunate that three lines in a day-long meeting are being focused on instead of the report that was presented. He said that he has asked Angelou Economics to meet with leaders of the faith community for a focus meeting with Angelou to make sure the faith community is well represented in the report.

Commissioner Patrick Woodie and Winnie Craven talked about the newspaper article.

Scott Craven spoke about a letter in the newspaper from Richard Burr and a letter from Virginia Foxx.

Chair Eldon Edwards stated that Richard Burr was talking about the comment that was made at the Angelou meeting.

Chair Eldon Edwards and Commissioner Patrick Woodie talked about Richard Burr wanting the County to get through this and go forward.

Scott Craven talked about Angelou's response in the newspaper talking down to the people in the County.

Stewart Taylor said that people has voted to gather petitions, and the Board will hear from the Christian community.

Commissioner Sandy Carter talked about the community has the responsibility to decide what action everyone is taking in response to this survey.

Scott Craven asked if anything that was in the survey would be beneficial for the County.

Commissioner Sandy Carter used the example of grass-fed beef. She reminded everyone that the County has several farms and could continue to grow. She gave other examples of items in the study that would help the County.

Scott Craven and Bob Bamberg talked about Bristol Compressors coming to Alleghany County.

Chair Eldon Edwards stated that the Board appreciated everyone coming and expressing their concerns. He further stated that the County does not have any ties with Angelou Economics.

Being no further business, Commissioner Warren Taylor made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 6:53pm. Commissioner Graylen Blevins seconded the motion. Vote 5:0.

Respectfully submitted,

Karen Evans
Clerk to the Board

Attest:

Eldon Edwards
Chairman