

The Alleghany County Board of Commissioners held an emergency meeting on Tuesday, May 16, 2006, at 1:00pm 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 Herndon, Commissioner Ken Richardson, County Manager Don Adams, and Clerk to the Board Karen Evans. County Attorney Donna Shumate was absent.

Chair Eldon Edwards called the meeting to order and explained the purpose of the meeting.

Commissioner Warren Taylor asked about the process of having a referendum, borrowing the money and when does the exact money amount has to be decided.

County Manager Don Adams stated that the money can't be significantly different than what is presented to the Local Government Commission on May 23. He explained the process of getting the referendum on the ballot. He stated that the public hearing ads would have to have the actual numbers listed.

Commissioner Graylen Blevins talked about putting the issue on the referendum and knowing the amount of tax increase.

County Manager Don Adams stated that the tax increase will be in the public education packet.

Commissioner Graylen Blevins talked about the need to educate everyone on the issue. He further stated that if the public votes for it then the citizens have decided and are well aware of what is involved, and if the public says no they know they have to suffer the consequences. He stated that the Commissioners are here to serve the people. He further stated that everyone needs to be responsible and let the people speak.

Chair Eldon Edwards explained the reasons for this meeting is because yesterday the Board didn't take an official vote, the County Manager needs official direction for the May 23 meeting and today is the only time all of the Commissioners could meet. He stated that yesterday the majority of the Board wanted to go with a referendum. He further stated that he doesn't support it. He explained that he thinks it is excessive, and the County can't afford it with the other obligations. He further explained that he felt like an alternative amount could do what is needed for the schools.

Commissioner Ken Richardson stated that his position hasn't changed but he is interested in what Commissioner Taylor's opinion is on this matter.

Commissioner Warren Taylor talked about the Board of Education and staff have answered the Commissioners' questions regarding the middle school. He stated that he hoped to get the middle school figure down to a more reasonable number. He stated that he supports going forward with putting the referendum on the ballot with the middle school plan as presented. He further stated that he doesn't know how the citizens will react. He explained that if people who support it will get behind it, it will pass. He talked about not standing in the way of progress but he would like to see the referendum number a lot lower.

Commissioner Sandy Carter Herndon stated that she supports the middle school if the voters/residents support it and are willing to bear the expense. She talked about \$6,000,000 or

\$10,000,000 would require a significant tax increase. She further talked about the importance of letting Piney Creek Elementary School and Glade Creek Elementary School know that they will be taken care of and their safety needs addressed. She explained the need for communicating with them to make sure they are aware that their needs will be addressed.

Commissioner Warren Taylor talked about looking at the needs without a middle school will cost \$6,000,000 now. He further talked about needs that will have to be addressed eventually.

Commissioner Sandy Carter Herndon talked about \$5,000,000 is a 7¢ tax increase.

Commissioner Graylen Blevins asked about plans in the event the bond fails.

Commissioner Sandy Carter Herndon stated that we already have it with the plans of Kindergarten to 8th grade costing \$6,200,000 or a middle school costing \$10,400,000.

Commissioner Graylen Blevins stated his concern about how citizens will react to either number.

Dr. Jeff Cox talked about the recurring costs on the middle school and how much will be done if the bond fails.

Commissioner Warren Taylor stated that is why he asked about reducing the programming costs and the need to address those issues in the public hearings.

Commissioner Ken Richardson reaffirmed his thoughts that he supports the referendum with the understanding that the Board of Education will strive to keep 150 students at Piney Creek Elementary School. He stated that two public hearings aren't going to be enough public contact. He further stated the need for more public contact. He talked about the Board is supportive of the schools. He further talked about there isn't much difference between doing it the right way or piecemeal the needs in regards to costs.

Commissioner Warren Taylor talked about the cost will increase if the needs are piecemeal.

Commissioner Warren Taylor made a motion to approach the Local Government Commission about getting this amount of money.

Chair Eldon Edwards asked about adding approving the middle school concept to the motion.

Commissioner Warren Taylor amended his motion to include the approval of the middle school concept. Commissioner Graylen Blevins seconded the motion. Vote 4:1 (Eldon Edwards).

Commissioner Ken Richardson asked if the Board of Education wanted to say anything.

Chair Eldon Edwards stated that he doesn't see the need to have further discussions between the two boards.

Commissioner Ken Richardson made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 1:32pm. Commissioner Warren Taylor seconded the motion. Vote 5:0.

Respectfully submitted,

Karen Evans
Clerk to the Board

Attest:

Eldon Edwards
Chairman