



The Alleghany County Board of Commissioners met in regular session on Monday, April 19th, 2021 at 10:00 am in the Board Meeting Room of the County Administration Building, 348 South Main Street, Sparta, North Carolina.

Present: Chair Bill Osborne, Commissioner Mark Evans, Commissioner Bobby Irwin, Commissioner Mechelle Luffman, Commissioner John Irwin, County Attorney, Heather Klein and Clerk to the Board Drew Todd.

Commissioner Mark Evans made a motion to approve the agenda. Commissioner John Irwin seconded. Vote 5:0.

AGENDA
Monday April 19, 2021
10:00 am

10:00 Meeting called to order

Pledge of Allegiance and invocation

Approval of agenda

- A. 10:05 **Public Comments:** Citizens are encouraged to comment at this time on any item(s) requiring the attention of the Commissioners. Guidelines for public comment are posted in the meeting room; please use the sign-up sheet provided.
- B. 10:20 **Presentations to the Board**
- i. Gould Killian 19/20 audit presentation
 - ii. TDA quarterly report – Steve Mason
 - iii. Chamber update – Lisa Bottomley
 - iv. Financial update – April Hamm, Finance Officer
 - v. Facilities update – David Spicer, Public Works Director
- C. 10:40 **General Business**
- a. Glade Creek VFD request for “fund balance” funds (page 1)
 - b. General Fund budget amendment #11 in the amount of \$1,339 HAVA grant funds (page 2)
 - c. General Fund budget amendment #12 in the amount of \$24,027 earthquake insurance proceeds for building repairs (page 3)
 - d. General Fund budget amendment #13 in the amount of \$3,885 earthquake insurance proceeds for building repairs (page 4)
 - e. General Fund budget amendment #14 in the amount of \$10,141 earthquake insurance proceeds for building repairs (page 5)
 - f. General Fund budget amendment #15 in the amount of \$177,500 earthquake insurance proceeds for building repairs (page 6)
 - g. General Fund budget amendment #16 in the amount of \$15,078 earthquake insurance proceeds for building repairs (page 7)

- h. General Fund budget amendment #17 in the amount of \$47,453 Daymark building repairs (page 8)
- i. General Fund budget amendment #18 in the amount of \$12,620 HAVA grant funds (page 9)
- j. Request for release of solid waste fee (pages 10-11)
- k. Wilkes Community College Board of Trustees appointment, Ricky Brown (page 12)
- l. Final Town Tax Collection Agreement (pages 13-16)
- m. Fairgrounds – Aaron Ray Tompkins
 - a. Digital sign
 - b. Internet
 - c. Concession stands vacancy (page 17)

D. 11:20 Consent Agenda (Board action requested) (pages 18-25)

- i. Rita Miller, Tax Administrator
 - a. License Plate Agency month end report
 - b. March auto refunds
 - c. March real and personal property refunds
 - d. Real and personal property releases
 - e. Collections monthly totals report
 - f. Delinquent taxpayer contracts

E. 11:25 County Manager Comments

March building inspection report (page 26)

F. 11:30 County Commissioner Comments

G. 11:45 Request for Closed Session Pursuant to G.S. 143-318.11.(a)-6 Personnel

H. Adjourn

Chair Bill Osborne recognized Eugene Pruitt who worked for EMS who passed away earlier this month with a moment of silence.

Presentations to the Board

Audit presentation

Dan with Gould Killian gave the 2020 audit presentation and said they issued unmodified (clean) opinions in separate reports.

TDA quarterly update

Steve Mason gave the TDA quarterly report.

Chamber update

Lisa Bottomley gave the Chamber and marketing update. She said they are going to be working on their relationship with the Blue Ridge Parkway Association. She thanked the budget committee for consideration of their budget request. She said she would be willing to have a conversation about promoting the Fairgrounds.

Financial update

April Hamm, Finance Officer gave a financial update as of this morning. She thanked Sidney and Brittani for their hard work through the audit.

Facilities update

David Spicer, Public Works Director gave a facilities update. He said the second courtroom is finished and court has been held a few times. He said the courthouse earthquake damage repair is coming along. He said in the front part of the courthouse,

most of the cosmetic cracks have been exposed. He said the rear part of the courthouse has more severe damage. He said Stone Restoration is working diligently to make sure the courthouse is stable. He said they are working some in the clerk's office to repair damage. He said contractors are looking at other county facilities to begin repairing them. He said most of the damage throughout the county buildings is cosmetic. He said within the next week repairs should begin at Daymark. He said his staff is working hard at the Transfer Station and that the new loader is back up and running. He said they are in the process of having an engineered assessment done. He said he did sign a new contract for scrap tire disposal. He said it isn't official but it looks like our recycling program will be approved by DEQ. He said overflowing downspouts have been corrected at the Fairgrounds.

The Board asked for County Attorney, Heather Klein to review the Doosan loader lease for any provisions to get out of the lease because the loader has been down so often.

General Business

GCVFD request for "fund balance" money

Commissioner John Irwin made a motion to approve GCVFD request for fund balance funds pending a detailed receipt. Chair Bill Osborne seconded. Vote 4:1 (aye: Chair Bill Osborne, Commissioner Bobby Irwin, Commissioner Mechelle Luffman, Commissioner John Irwin nay: Commissioner Mark Evans)

Commissioner Mark Evans said he would like to see more detailed budget documents for GCVFD before approving this request.

Commissioner Bobby Irwin said he would like to further analyze GCVFD general ledger sheets to see if there is a line item for repair. He said this request is probably the intention of the board with regards to the reserve fund.

General Fund budget amendment #11

April Hamm, Finance Officer explained General Fund budget amendment #11.

Commissioner John Irwin made a motion to approve budget amendment #11. Chair Bill Osborne seconded. Vote 5:0.

Commissioner John Irwin made a motion to approve budget amendment #12. Chair Bill Osborne seconded. Vote 5:0.

Chair Bill Osborne made a motion to approve budget amendment #13. Commissioner John Irwin seconded. Vote 5:0.

Commissioner John Irwin made a motion to approve budget amendment #14. Chair Bill Osborne seconded. Vote 5:0.

Commissioner John Irwin made a motion to approve budget amendment #15. Commissioner Bobby Irwin seconded. Vote 5:0.

Commissioner Bobby Irwin made a motion to approve budget amendment #16. Commissioner John Irwin seconded. Vote 5:0.

Commissioner John Irwin made a motion to approve budget amendment #17. Commissioner Bobby Irwin seconded. Vote 5:0.

Commissioner Bobby Irwin made a motion to approve budget amendment #18. Commissioner John Irwin seconded. Vote 5:0.

Recess

Request for release of solid waste fee

Rita Miller, Tax Administrator explained the request for release of solid waste fee does not meet the criteria the county follows.

Commissioner Bobby Irwin made a motion to deny the request for release of solid waste fee. Chair Bill Osborne seconded. Vote 5:0.

WCC Board of Trustees appointment

Commissioner Bobby Irwin made a motion to approve the appointment of Ricky Brown to the WCC Board of Trustees. Commissioner Mark Evans seconded. Vote 5:0.

Final Town Tax Collection Agreement

County Manager, Michael Carter explained the Town of Sparta has executed the final Town Tax Collection agreement.

Chair Bill Osborne made a motion to approve the Town Tax Collection agreement. Commissioner Mechelle Luffman seconded. Vote 5:0.

Fairgrounds

Aaron Ray Tompkins said the digital sign at the Fairgrounds has been priority for 2 years. He said the Fairgrounds Committee has secured \$5,000 of funding from the TDA. He is requesting to use \$5,000 from the Fairgrounds budget and the Fairgrounds Committee will be responsible for the balance due for the digital sign.

There was discussion about whether the money should come out of a utilities line item to pay for a capital purchase.

There was discussion about who would own and maintain the sign once it is installed.

Commissioner Mark Evans made a motion to approve \$5,000 from the Fairgrounds maintenance budget to purchase the new digital sign to be donated to the county. Chair Bill Osborne seconded. Vote 4:1 (aye: Chair Bill Osborne, Commissioner Mark Evans, Commissioner Bobby Irwin, Commissioner Mechelle Luffman nay: Commissioner John Irwin)

Aaron Ray Tompkins explained the proposal from the Fairgrounds committee for them to pay for the equipment for internet and the county pay for the service. He said the service can be dialed back in months

Commissioner Bobby Irwin made a motion to table the internet service request from the Fairgrounds committee. Commissioner John Irwin seconded. Vote 5:0.

County Manager, Michael Carter explained which line items each of these requests would come out of.

Aaron Ray Tompkins explained the sub-committee from the Fairgrounds committee who will help in creating an RFP for concessions at the Fairgrounds.

Commissioner John Irwin made a motion to submit an RFP for operation of the concession stand at the Fairgrounds. Chair Bill Osborne seconded. Vote 5:0.

Consent agenda

Commissioner Mark Evans made a motion to approve the consent agenda. Commissioner John Irwin seconded. Vote 5:0.

County Manager comments

County Manager, Michael Carter said we have mostly completed our revenue projections and will now begin the process of looking over the expenditure requests in more detail and follow up with some departments. He said his goal is to have the full board to review the budget by the first meeting in May. He asked that the Board consider scheduling the budget public hearing for the second May meeting and have it on the first June meeting for approval. He asked that the Board consider a special meeting to allow for public comments.

County Commissioner comments

Commissioner Mechelle Luffman thanked the Town Council and Town Manager for the unanimous vote on the Tax Collection agreement. She said there was misinformation given at that meeting by the Mayor. She said the human error in solid waste billing had been corrected. She explained the misinformation by the Mayor from the Town Council meeting about the County disbursing tax revenues to the Town and the questioning the trustworthiness of the County and Board of Commissioners.

Commissioner John Irwin said there is a meeting with the Director of the NC State Parks and Recreation Department that did not include the County Manager or 3 of the County Commissioners. He said he thinks this meeting is political. He said 2 members sit on the Alleghany County Economic Development Committee and the BDC Board. He encouraged citizens to call their County Commissioners and tell them they're fed up.

Commissioner Bobby Irwin thanked Mechelle for her statement and said it was long overdue. He thanked the Town Council members for their responses. He said there has not been an update since NCDPS asked the county to sever ties with Communities in Schools in March of 2020. He said Michael Carter's recommendations to the budget committee are reflected in the fund balance numbers presented today. He said we are going to have to get the question settled who runs the Fairgrounds? He said the county needs to be able to work with the volunteers.

Chair Bill Osborne said there were at least 2 meetings between the County and the Town explaining the tax collection timeframe. He said it was unnecessary for the County to be drug through the mud. He said the Mayor was feeding his own agenda. He said taking the fund balance from 11% to 17% in less than a year says a lot about the County Manager and his staff. He said the Board needs to consider 2 people for the Workforce Development Board. He said there are disaster relief funds for people displaced due to earthquake damage. He said it is not for construction cost. He said to see Daniel Roten if you are interested.

Commissioner John Irwin said there is an animal control meeting today at 4 pm the public is welcome.

Commissioner Mark Evans made a motion to go into closed session.
Commissioner Bobby Irwin seconded.

Chair Bill Osborne said there was no action taken during closed session.

Commissioner John Irwin made a motion to adjourn. Commissioner Mark Evans seconded. Vote 5:0.

Respectfully Submitted,

Drew Todd
Clerk to the Board

Bill Osborne
Chairman