



The Alleghany County Board of Commissioners met in regular session on Monday, May 7th, 2018, at 6:30 pm in the Board Meeting Room of the County Administration Building, 348 South Main Street, Sparta, North Carolina.

Present: Chair Mark Evans, Commissioner Bobby Irwin, Commissioner Tom Smith, Commissioner John Irwin, Commissioner Larry Prince, County Manager, Mike James, County Attorney Donna Shumate and Clerk to the Board Lauren Linker.

Chair Evans called the meeting to order at 6:30 PM.

Chair Evans led the pledge of allegiance and gave the invocation.

Commissioner Larry Prince made a motion to approve the agenda. Commissioner John Irwin Vote 5:0

AGENDA
Monday, May 7, 2018
6:30 pm

6:30 Meeting Called to Order, Pledge of Allegiance and Invocation
Motion on Agenda for May 7th, 2018 Meeting
Motion on Minutes from March 20, 2018

- A. 6:35 Spotlight Business - Horizon Bistro – Garrison Wagoner
- B. 6:45 Recognition of Law Enforcement Officers
- C. 6:55 Public Agenda Comments
- D. 7:10 Linda Hash, Soil and Water District Conservationist (Page 1-7)
 - 1. Advisory Board Merger
 - 2. Advisory Board Reappointments
- E. 7:30 Veterans Advisory Council

Re: Sidewalk Implementation

- F. 7:45 Ron Lewis

Re: Charters of Freedom

- G. Consent Agenda
 - 1. General fund budget amendment # 19 in the amount of \$7,275 (Page 8)
 - 2. General fund budget amendment # 20 in the amount of \$20,000 (Page 9)
 - 3. Police Week Resolution (Page 10)
 - 4. Pioneer Eclipse Resolution (Page 11)
 - 5. Liability and Property and Workers Compensation Insurance Renewal (Page 12-19)

- H. General Business
 - 1. Veterans Park Paving Bids (Page 20-21)

- I. Public Comments – 30 minutes

- J. County Manager Comments
 - 1. Sparta School Renovation Update (Page 22-30)
 - 2. Beemer property proceeds
 - 3. Updated budget meeting schedule
 - 4. Out of town ambulance transports
 - 5. Upcoming fairgrounds events

- K. Commissioners Comments

L. Adjourn

Commissioner Tom Smith made a motion to approve the minutes from March 20, 2018. Commissioner Larry Prince seconded. Vote 5:0

Chair Mark Evans gave a brief update on the horizon bistro since the owner was not present.

County Manager Mike James read the Police Week Resolution and recognized all law enforcement officers present at the meeting. The commissioners thanked the officers for their service.

Chair Evans opened public agenda comments. Seeing no movement, he closed that section.

Linda Hash, Soil and Water Director went over the history of how the two ag boards were formed and the history of the coming board merger. She also went over the reappointments of three members that would be on the new combined board.

Chair Evans asked about the voting of the exofficio members.

Linda Hash explained the one board exofficio members has voting rights and one did not. She then noted that the ordinance that created the initial board stated that those members would not have voting rights and she was okay with that. She felt it was better for the farmers and other members to have the voting rights and the staff be there to guide and help in whatever ways the agencies are needed. She then said she didn't hear that anyone had a problem either way.

Commissioner Bobby Irwin explained the vote was unanimous between the boards to merge.

Chair Mark Evans asked if there would be any loss of opportunity for grants.

Linda Hash said the County or Soil and Water would be there for the grant opportunities.

Commissioner Larry Prince made a motion to allow the two agricultural boards to proceed the merger. Commissioner Bobby Irwin seconded. Vote 5:0

Linda Hash asked if the board would like to reappoint the positions now or wait and bring it back at a later date.

Commissioner John Irwin made a motion to reappoint Jimmy Joines, Virginia Van Hampton and Yancy Sparks. Commissioner Larry Prince seconded. Vote 5:0

Robert Overbay gave a background of how the veterans advisory committee was formed, how the memorial brick sales were going and what their goals were for the future of the park.

Commissioner Bobby Irwin said he would like to address the request by the committee on the paving of the parking lot at veteran's park. He explained the rush to get the project started and how it would affect their brick installations.

Dr. David Streater, charters of freedom explained what the organization does. He explained they provide settings of the constitution, the bill of rights and the declaration of independence for educational features. Ron Lewis explained the importance of the charters of freedom. He then explained the scope of the project. He explained that the board would need to accept the gift of the charters of freedom and then they would help find a location to put the settings, but that would be all except they may use some maintenance labor.

Commissioner Bobby Irwin asked about the timeline of a project like this.

Ron Lewis explained they have everything spaced out, but it is normally about six months from start to the opening celebration.

Commissioner Larry Prince asked what the footprint of the project was.

Ron Lewis said the declaration of independence is twelve feet across and the others are both four by four in size.

The Board agreed to look over the letter and would bring it back at a later meeting.

Chair Mark Evans called a 5 min recess at 7:40 PM. He then called the meeting back to order at 7:51 PM.

Commissioner Larry Prince made a motion to approve the consent agenda. Commissioner Tom Smith seconded. Vote 5:0

Chair Mark Evans explained the history from previous meetings concerning paving bids for the Veteran's Memorial Park.

Commissioner Tom Smith said he was hesitant tonight to dedicate \$50,000 for this one project since the board hasn't had the opportunity to look at other projects.

Commissioner Larry Prince said felt the same as Commissioner Tom Smith that he was not comfortable spending the money on this and didn't feel that it matched the intent of the donor. He said he felt the board needed to allow the citizens a chance to give them some ideas and feedback.

Commissioner John Irwin said he agreed with Commissioner Tom Smith and Commissioner Larry Prince he was uncomfortable with spending this money without public input. He went on to say that he would love to have the parking lot paved, but not with this money. He asked if the storm water runoff would be an issue with the wetlands below the parking lot.

Commissioner Bobby Irwin explained the Veterans Advisory Committee was tasked with taking care of the park. He said with the large gravel there currently it prohibits people from being able to use the county's park. He said he felt there was nothing more related to outdoor recreation that making the park accessible to all citizens. He said he would like to see a public hearing and discussion at the midmonth meeting.

Chair Mark Evans said he felt like the board would like to see the parking lot paved just not with these recreation proceeds. He then noted that budget season was coming up and maybe that would be a place to look at it even better.

Commissioner Bobby Irwin said he would like to see a public hearing at the midmonth meeting.

Donna Shumate, Attorney informed the Board they did not have proper time for a legal public hearing.

County Manager Mike James explained it wouldn't have to be a public hearing since we have public comments sections at each of our meeting.

Commissioner Bobby Irwin made a motion to have a public hearing at the next midmonth meeting to discuss the paving with beamer property proceeds.

Donna Shumate explained there is not proper time for advertising to hold a public hearing at the midmonth minute.

Commissioner Bobby Irwin amended his motion to have a public hearing at the June 4th meeting.

(There was no second to the motion.) Chair Mark Evans noted the motion dies on the floor.

Chair Mark Evans invited the public to come and express their thoughts and ideas at the public comments section at each meeting or use the setup online to help share their ideas.

Chair Mark Evans opened the floor for public comments.

Harry Jones said he had concerns about spending the outdoor recreation money on paving a parking lot when there are other things that need attention. He also noted he felt like there needed to be someone really looking into the storm water issue and surveys instead of rushing to get this done for a timeline. He said he was not against paving the park he just wanted the lady to be honored correctly.

Terry Johnson gave a synopsis of the George Orwell novel of 1984. He then spoke about the dark forces around us and commended the Board for the example of the democracy and transparency.

Randy Miles of the VFW thanked the Board for supporting their flag program for each of the buried veterans in the County for Memorial Day.

County Manager Mike James went over the Sparta School Renovation timeline. He noted the change in a budget meeting date change from June 1st to May 25th. Next, he spoke about the out of town ambulance out of county transport process and thanked Dr. Bryant, Medical Director and the EMS shift leaders for working to make this work best for everyone. Next, he went over some of the upcoming fairgrounds events in the coming months. He then went over a recent fire in Piney Creek and thanked all five departments involved. New River access next Friday 18th at 11 AM. He congratulated the Girls Softball Team and reminded everyone of the Primary Election tomorrow open 6:30am to 7:30pm.

Chair Mark Evans asked about the WiFi for the Fairgrounds. County Manager Mike James said it should be installed this next week.

Chair Mark Evans said at the joint meeting with the Town they officially approved for the Christmas lights group to place lights on the courthouse and county buildings.

Commissioner Larry Prince said he was pleased with the chamber and marketing progress.

Commissioner John Irwin said, “well I’m going to take some time. Seems that we have a unique feature without the county commissioners. We have Christmas twenty times a year. Only instead of going to Santa or sending a letter to Santa requesting what you want. You send what you want to put on the agenda and you never know if you’re going to get anything until the agenda comes out. On August 2nd I sent an email to everyone all the commissioners everyone requesting clarification on how to get on the agenda. I got one, we talked bout it. We were going to be notified. Every request to put something on the agenda that I have made since then, I have requested that if I do not make the agenda please tell me why I didn’t make it, yet to receive, I believe I got one reply. On January 10th of this year uh went over to take my trash, scales frozen, what’s that mean? We weigh commercial trucks. We charge them by the ton. This is how we help pay for that transfer station as I understand it. So, I aske the employees, is anybody been notified, I want the work order number. Work order number I requested that we set up a work order system so that we could track the work orders. They’ve been told not to submit work orders. Notified the county manager, all the commissioners. Requested that it be placed on the agenda to be discussed the operation of the transfer station. Then the employee said I’m sorry Mr. Irwin, but I can’t talk to you. I’ve been told that if I’m caught talking to you I will be fired. Notified everyone. January 10th, 2018 sunshine laws in the state of North Carolina you can request a copy. I did get a reply from the county

manager not answering the questions that I asked. Now why would I want a work order? Why would I want a work order? On August the 4th I asked Roger Brady why he didn't have any lights in the building. He said I don't know. I've been requested lights for five years. Now this is pre the present county manager. He had been buying the bulbs for the county building out of his pockets so that he could see to work. The council on ageing building, the building that was built in 1934 1937 what we knew as we were young as the community building it's now the council of ageing building the door facing choate motor company the transom has rotted out. The door wouldn't open because the door was swollen, I understand now that we have an estimate of a minimum of \$10,000 because the floor is rotted and the reason that I am told that it's a minimum of \$10,000 we don't know how much rot is below the floor. So, we I went back. I've got documentation first reported January 5, 2016, again March 9, 2016, March 21, 2016, September 2017 that work order number is 80. October 24, 2017 work order 159. We've known that we've had a problem, but we have put the maintenance off and now we're going to pay big bucks. Now, am I calling out the County Manager, no. Make sure that you understand me, the county manager has done an outstanding job, but we must remember he did not pick his staff. He does not know his staff and he does all our grant writing. He is supervising over 100 employees. He must depend on his department heads. Now, I would like to see the work orders so that we know where we stand so that we know that we are doing the maintenance on the county buildings. If you want to know why I do that. I walk around. Why do I ask employees? I've found out a long time ago whenever I was supervising 1,500 Marines in comm squadron 28 I could tell the department heads what I wanted done, but if I wanted to find out if it had been done I went to the snuffly that had to do it. Whenever an employee is told not to talk to a public servant that gets under my crawl, too bad. I expect whenever we come around and we started talking about bonuses in July that this would be known. I expect a county employee to give the county eight hours of labor if we are paying him for eight hours. I don't expect to be accosted by a young lady that is torqued off at Food Lion because she saw county employees at Lowes in Galax and then ran into them at the barbecue place at noon. We have a failure to communicate. Sir, I would like a discussion placed on the agenda about the operation of the transfer station so that we can run a consensus of one how much we're going to charge, are we going to let rucks tractors and trailers unhook so that they can weigh the trailer, hold up the line during the Christmas tree season. This is the reason why I want to discuss this to make sure that we have a consensus and then rewrite the SOP the standard operating procedures that I know it by that is dated 2014 and needs to be updated. I respectfully request as Bobby Irwin has requested an agenda item on our next meeting in that regard. At the same time, I would like to have access to the work orders or let the county manager give us a brief on where we stand on workorders particularly those that are going to cost large amounts of money to the county. Thank you."

Commissioner Bobby Irwin reminded everyone of the brick sale cut off of July 14th. He noted he respected everyone's opinions on the veterans memorial paving. He explained he comes from a different angle and he may seem a little strong at times because he fights for the veterans.

Commissioner Larry Prince made a motion to enter closed session under 143-318.11. a-3 under Attorney Client privilege. Commissioner John Irwin seconded. Vote 5:0

Chair Mark Evans called the meeting back from closed session. He noted no action was taken during closed session.

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

Respectfully Submitted,

Attest:

Lauren Linker
Clerk to the Board

Mark Evans
Chair of the Board