



The Alleghany County Board of Commissioners met in regular session on Monday, August 17th, 2020 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 Larry Prince, Commissioner John Irwin, County Manager, Michael Carter, County Attorney Donna Shumate and Clerk to the Board Drew Temple.

Commissioner Mark Evans made a motion to approve the agenda with only one public comment period. Chair Bill Osborne seconded. Vote 5:0.

Commissioner Mark Evans made a motion to approve minutes from 8/3. Commissioner Larry Prince seconded. Vote 5:0.

**AGENDA**  
Monday, August 17, 2020  
10:00 am

- 10:00 Meeting called to order  
Pledge of Allegiance and invocation  
Approval of agenda  
Motion on minutes from 8/3 (pages 1-5)
- A. 10:05 **Public Comments/Agenda Items:** Citizens are encouraged to comment at this time on any item(s) specifically listed on this meeting's agenda. Guidelines for public comment are posted in the meeting room.
- B. 10:10 **Presentations to the Board**
- i. Earthquake update – Travis Dalton, Daniel Roten
  - ii. Financial update – April Hamm
  - iii. Office telephone update – Drew Temple
- C. 10:20 **General Business**
- a. Fire training facility runoff ditching – Megan Edwards
  - b. Volunteer Fire Department contracts discussion
  - c. BB&T signature cards
  - d. Fairgrounds Fund budget amendment #1 in the amount of \$5,000 for TDA grant for electronic sign (page 6)
- D. 10:45 **Consent Agenda (Board action requested)**
- i. Rita Miller, Tax Administrator (pages 7-17)
    - a. License Plate Agency month end report
    - b. July auto refunds
    - c. July real and personal property refunds
    - d. Real and personal property releases
    - e. Delinquent taxpayer contracts
- E. 11:00 **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.

**F. 11:10 County Manager Comments**

- i. July building inspection report (page 18)
- ii. Facilities updates
- iii. Establishing ¼ cent sales tax marketing committee

**G. 11:30 County Commissioner Comments**

**H. Request for Closed Session Pursuant to  
G.S. 143-318.11.(a)-(6) Personnel**

**I. Adjourn**

**Public Comment**

Robert Overbay explained the plan the Veteran's Committee has for Veteran's Memorial Park with regards to new security cameras, lights, flag poles and further security at the park.

District Director, Bob Meek said Congresswoman Virginia Foxx is aware of the situation in Alleghany County and said the office would do anything it could to help Sparta and Alleghany County.

**Presentations to the Board**

**Earthquake update**

Emergency Management Coordinator, Daniel Roten said his office has received over 500 reports of damage and around 60 of those have major damage (at least 40% of the value of the structure). He said 8 families, 14 individuals are being taken care of by Red Cross. He said 8 USR team members came up last week to help assess damage. He said they are still working on compiling a dollar amount of damage throughout the county but that it is in the millions. He said several more reports of damage came in over the weekend and today so the report should be ready to go to the North Carolina Division of Emergency Management this evening to apply for assistance. He said the damage report he received from Jason Joyce with NCDOT was that our bridges were in good shape but the obvious road damage (Chestnut Grove Church Rd.) will cost approximately \$75,000. He explained the difference between private and public assistance in this situation. He said Lowe's Hardware donated a truckload of bottled water so if citizens need water, please contact the Sheriff's Department.

Commissioner John Irwin said the board had not been informed enough about the status of the earthquake and said the board needs to read and review the Emergency Action Plan.

Chair Bill Osborne commended employees on their hard work.

Chief Building Inspector, Travis Dalton said a repair at Duncan Recreation Center does not require for the structure to be brought to ADA compliance. He said the number could go up or down once the repairs start because the engineers have been conducting rapid assessments. He said his group thought it was more important to get to as many houses as possible rather than stop and create a report.

**Financial Update**

April Hamm, Interim Finance Officer explained the local spending report she distributed to the board, gave a General Fund update and bank balance update.

**Office telephone update**

Drew Temple, Assistant County Manager gave an update on the office telephone system RFP.

## **General Business**

### Fire training facility runoff ditching

Megan Edwards, Recreation Director explained the runoff ditching project proposal at the fire training facility and the cost is \$2,850 to come out of Fairgrounds Maintenance and Repair budget.

Commissioner Bobby Irwin said the home above the fire training facility is dumping a lot of water onto our property and we should approach him to see if he could help with the cost.

Chair Bill Osborne made a motion to start the ditching project. Commissioner Mark Evans seconded. Vote 5:0.

Chair Bill Osborne said he would go by and talk to Mr. Joines today about possibly helping with the ditching project.

### VFD contract discussions

County Manager, Michael Carter said with all the thoughts on the VFD contracts, the board needs to have a discussion to decide what should be included.

Commissioner Bobby Irwin suggested the Volunteer Fire Departments be required to carry catastrophic or earthquake/tornado/hurricane coverage and that if the county were to have to go to court with one of the VFDs for violating the contract, there should be a clause that the VFD pay legal fees for the county if the county prevails.

Commissioner Mark Evans suggested a work session to talk about VFD contracts. There was consensus among the board to have a work session on September 2<sup>nd</sup> at 9 am.

### BB&T signature cards

Commissioner Mark Evans made a motion to approve BB&T signature cards. Commissioner John Irwin seconded. Vote 5:0.

### Fairgrounds Fund budget amendment

County Manager, Michael Carter explained the Fairgrounds Fund budget amendment.

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

## **Consent Agenda**

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

## **County Manager comments**

County Manager, Michael Carter encouraged the board to look over the July building inspection report.

County Manager, Michael Carter shared the quote with Billings Heating & Cooling to replace the HVAC unit on the roof of 348 S Main.

County Manager, Michael Carter gave a full facilities update on the old COA, new COA, earthquake damage to the Courthouse, abatement of the tin roof at the Courthouse, 90 S Main and the jail.

County Manager, Michael Carter explained a ¼ cent sales tax committee had been established and recognized the members.

County Manager, Michael Carter said the first meeting in September falls on Labor Day so it needs to be moved to Tuesday, September 8<sup>th</sup> at 6:00 pm.

County Manager, Michael Carter highlighted the Job Retention Grant (JRG) bulletin Commissioner John Irwin forwarded.

County Manager, Michael Carter said the CARES Act funds are in and in the next 2-4 weeks, we would bring a proposal to the board about how to disperse those funds.

Megan Edwards, Recreation Director explained the cost for the digital sign at the Fairgrounds is \$4,000 per side installed and after the TDA funds, she plans to approach the Fairgrounds Board and fundraise for the remaining balance.

**County Commissioner comments**

Commissioner Mark Evans thanked county folks and emergency people.

Commissioner Bobby Irwin said school started today and asked for citizens to be careful and be easy on everyone today while the schools work out the new systems they have going.

Commissioner Bobby Irwin thanked Inspections and everyone who has helped with the earthquake relief efforts. He said he had hoped there would be money in the minibudget for the Courthouse but he understands it didn't make committee.

Commissioner John Irwin said Emergency Management needs to make checklists so nothing slips through the cracks.

Commissioner John Irwin said citizens were concerned with county employees not wearing masks. He explained it is a choice that employees make and that we have physical barriers to protect employees and citizens.

Commissioner John Irwin said the BDC owns the Farmers Market.

Commissioner John Irwin said he contacted a member of the Alleghany County Economic Development Corporation and the member said they had not had a meeting in at least 10 years. He said the corporation could not go away because they have money and has a grant for extending water lines to the Alleghany County Group Home.

Chair Bill Osborne said it is unfair for the people who come to speak to the board to be talked to the way they have been. He said the style of questioning and raising voices needs to stop.

Commissioner Mark Evans said it is his understanding that the Courthouse allocation is being discussed by the legislature after the earthquake events.

Commissioner Mark Evans made a motion to enter in to closed session to include April Hamm, HR Officer. Commissioner Larry Prince seconded. Vote 5:0.

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

Commissioner Mark Evans made a motion to adjourn. Commissioner Larry Prince seconded. Vote 5:0.

Respectfully Submitted,

Drew Temple  
Clerk to the Board

Bill Osborne  
Chairman