



The Alleghany County Board of Commissioners met in regular session on Monday, August 7, 2017, 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. Commissioner Tom Smith led the pledge of allegiance and Chair Mark Evans gave the invocation.

Chair Mark Evans stated a closed session for personnel under NC GS 143-318.11 A (6) needed to be added to the agenda.

AGENDA

Monday, August 7th, 2017
6:30 PM

- 6:30 Meeting Called To Order, Pledge of Allegiance and Invocation
Motion on Agenda for August 7th, 2017 Meeting
Motion on minutes from meetings on 6/14, 6/16, and 6/27.
- A. 6:35 Public Hearing – NC DOT abandonment of Old Gap Road
 - B. 6:40 Spotlight Business, Twin Oaks Station and Brown’s Café – Paul Crouse
 - C. 6:45 Public Agenda Comments
 - D. 7:05 Gary Medley – Arts Council Presentation
 - E. General Business
 - 1. Financing Resolution for Simulcast Equipment (**Action Requested**) (Page 1-17)
 - 2. Beautification Ordinance Discussion (Page 18 -26)
 - 3. Hiring Policy Discussion
 - F. Public Comments – 30 minutes
 - G. County Manager Comments
 - 1. Update on mulch consumer pick-up
 - H. Commissioners Comments
 - I. Adjourn

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

Commissioner Tom Smith made a motion to accept the minutes as written. Commissioner Larry Prince seconded. Vote 5:0

County Manager Mike James explained the purpose of the public hearing of the previously approved road closure of Old Roaring Gap road.

Chair Mark Evans called the public hearing to order at 6:35 pm. Seeing no movement he then closed the public at 6:36 pm.

Paul Crouse and Fred Brown went over all the new things going on at Twin Oaks and Brown's Café. They spoke about their branding of the business to Twin Oaks and new hours for both businesses.

Chair Mark Evans opened the floor for public agenda comments. Seeing no movement, he then closed the public agenda comments.

Gary Medley and Barbara Halsey went over the history of the arts guilds and arts councils. She explained all the events that the new Arts Council hosted in the past year. She went on to speak about events for the coming year and the vision for the future.

County Manager Mike James explained the financing resolution for the simulcast equipment. He explained he will have another quote in before they choose, but the resolution is to get the financing started for the lease agreement.

Commissioner John Irwin made a motion to approve the resolution. Commissioner Larry Prince seconded.

Commissioner Bobby Irwin asked about the interest rate.

County Manager Mike James explained that state money can be used to help fund the project if the equipment is leased.

Vote 5:0

County Manager Mike James explained the history of the Beautification ordinance. Commissioner Tom Smith explained some of his past with a nuisance ordinance and his hesitations with the beautification ordinance at this time. Commissioner John Irwin read some feedback he had received and explained why he was against the ordinance. Commissioner Larry Prince explained his views and why he was in favor of the ordinance and why he had worked so hard on the document to help the county move forward. Commissioner Bobby Irwin explained his view on the beautification and why he was in support of the ordinance. He felt the intent was for the betterment of the community, but stated it was a living document that could be updated along the way. He then suggested Commissioner John Irwin and Commissioner Tom Smith come to a working meeting to help adjust to a document they could support.

Chair Mark Evans asked where 10 acres came into play for farm exclusion.

County Manager Mike James explained they looked at the different types from the tax office

Chair Mark Evans said he felt all land owners should live by the same rules. He then asked if there was documentation of the public health and safety issues for this need. He then stated there really hasn't been a cost discussion for the implementation.

Commissioner Bobby Irwin asked if it would help the commissioners to come together and have a working day.

Commissioner John Irwin made a motion to make the ordinance available for the public for 60 days and get feedback from the citizens.

Commissioner Prince said he felt they didn't have many options, but he was all for making the ordinance better and come to a consensus.

County Manager Mike James went over the options for the progress of the ordinance.

Commissioner Prince seconded. Vote 4:1(Commissioner Tom Smith)

County Manager Mike James went over the history of the hiring policy and the how it evolved to not have to bring every position before the board. He then went over the Boards options for to move forward.

Commissioner John Irwin said he felt there was an issue currently with the hiring process. He then went on to discuss additional expenses by county employees in comparison to contracted work.

County Manager Mike James explained the four new positions from this past new year's budget.

Chair Evans said he felt there needed to be more discussions when there are questions about overstaffing.

Commissioner Tom Smith said he didn't think the county departments are over staffed. He went on to say that for new positions he felt should come to the Board, but was confident in the County Manager, Human Resource officer and Department heads to make rehire decisions on their own.

Commissioner Bobby Irwin said he felt confident enough in the department heads to hire and they answer to the county manager and the Board really doesn't have control over the elected officials to hire.

Commissioner Larry Prince said he felt their duties on all the Boards is to give guidance on those topics, if the department is overstaffed or needs additional employees.

Chair Evans recessed at 8:10 pm. He then called the meeting back in session at 8:20 pm and opened public comments.

Harry Jones said he felt tourism could help keep local taxes down and the Board should help do what they can to make it a place people want to visit.

Terry Johnson stated he was in favor of the ordinance for economic and safety reason.

Jean Hoppers stated she was worried about farms and old historic sites for people.

Bill Maxwell asked County Manager Mike James multiply questions about the definition of a farm.

Paul Reeves stated that there were certain things that the State should be doing along the roadsides. He also noted he felt like zoning in the county has done more harm than its helped.

Chair Mark Evans then closed the public comments section.

County Manager Mike James went over the mulch at the transfer station. He then explained the school capital project that uses money from a specific sales tax. Next, he went over the sales tax that affects Alleghany County. Next, he went over two insurance claims that are open. Mike James then went over the QZAB loan and bids for the project at Sparta middle school. Then he explained where the Wilkes Community College architects are now looking to place the diesel mechanic shop. Next, he talked about the path from the high school and community college and bringing it up to ADA compliance, but they are still exploring the options with some of the storm water grant money. He then reminded the public of the surplus sale on August 26th at 9 am. He then said the high school will be having an active shooter training this coming Friday. He notified the Board and Public of the Opioid Forum on Wednesday August 16th at 9 am. Next, he explained a new traffic flow at the transfer facility. Next, he Congratulated Nick Hawks, Brand Hanson and Steve Carrier for their promotions. Finally, he went over a group that received a grant to research agriculture in the County.

Commissioner Larry Prince said the drugs have created a big issue with children in social service.

Commissioner Bobby Irwin thanked the state department for trimming the road side. He next went over the brick sales for the Veterans Advisory Committee. Next, he stated he would like to have an update from the Wilkes Community College trustees twice a year. He also stated the Board needed to look at a better system for recycling.

Chair Mark Evans noted the NCACC will be this coming weekend.

Commissioner John Irwin made a motion to go into closed session under personnel 143-318.11A6. Commissioner Prince seconded. Vote 5:0

Chair Mark Evans called the meeting back to open session. He noted no decisions were made while in closed session.

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

Respectfully submitted,

Lauren Linker
Clerk to the Board

Attest:

Mark Evans
Chair