

The Alleghany County Board of Commissioners and Sparta Town Council held a joint meeting on Monday, August 29, 2005, at 7:00pm in the Conference Room of the County Office Building, 90 South Main Street, Sparta, NC.

Present: Chair Eldon Edwards, Vice-Chair Warren Taylor, Commissioner Sandy Carter Herndon, Commissioner Ken Richardson, Mayor John Miller, Town Council Members Robert Andrews and Roger Brady, County Attorney Donna Shumate, County Manager Don Adams, Town Manager Bryan Edwards and County Clerk to the Board Karen Evans.

Chair Eldon Edwards called the meeting to order for the County at 7:00pm.

Mayor John Miller called the meeting to order for the Town at 7:00pm.

Commissioner Warren Taylor made a motion to approve the agenda for this August 29, 2005, meeting. Commissioner Sandy Carter Herndon seconded the motion. Vote 4:0.

Mayor John Miller stated that the agenda meets the Town's approval.

Joint County/Town Meeting
August 29, 2005
Agenda

7:00pm	Meeting Called to Order Motion on Agenda
7:05pm	Blue Ridge National Heritage Area Presentation County Business 1. Sandy Ashley, DSS Request County/Town Business 2. Water Authority Update 3. Joint Tax Collections 4. Next Joint Meeting General Discussions County Business 5. Closed Session—NCGS 143-318.11 (a) (3)-legal Adjourn

Town Manager Bryan Edwards gave everyone a brief summary of the Blue Ridge National Heritage Area.

Patrick Woodie explained the designation of a heritage area and what is involved with the designation. He further explained the Blue Ridge National Heritage Area including the board members, \$1,000,000 coming to the Heritage Area annually, office space at Advantage West, hiring an executive director, the Alleghany County Development Plan and Helen Ruth Almond's assistance with the Heritage Area.

Town Manager Bryan Edwards reviewed the Alleghany County committee list and gave a brief PowerPoint presentation showing Alleghany County's Development Plan. He explained the four major initiatives showing 15 projects.

Helen Ruth Almond talked about it is a pleasure to be involved with the Blue Ridge National Heritage Area.

Chair Eldon Edwards, Mayor John Miller and Town Manager Bryan Edwards talked about the natural dam on Little River, previous discussions about the dam and the limited access.

Town Manager Bryan Edwards stated his appreciation for Helen Ruth Almond and the other board members and George Stancil for creating the PowerPoint presentation. He talked about the progress made so far.

Helen Ruth Almond talked about the importance of taking one or two of the projects and seeing progress early.

Sandy Ashley, Social Services Director, talked about a letter received from the State concerning recently appropriated monies involving child welfare staffing allocations. She gave the Commissioners statistics on the increased caseload for child abuse/neglect. She talked about how the State monies can be used to match federal money to obtain an additional Social Worker III position at a pay grade 68. She further talked about adding this position will be no additional costs to the County.

County Manager Don Adams explained that the Commissioners will actually be voting to allow or not allow him to sign the Child Welfare Staffing Allocations, Terms and Conditions. He further explained that the budget amendment will come back at a later meeting if this request is approved.

Sandy Ashley stated that DSS will comply with all of the Terms and Conditions. She explained the Multiple Response System that is discussed in the Terms and Conditions.

Commissioner Sandy Carter Herndon made a motion to give the County Manager the authority to sign the Terms and Conditions to allow DSS to get an additional position. Commissioner Warren Taylor seconded the motion. Vote 4:0.

County Manager Don Adams gave everyone an update on the Virginia/Carolina Water Authority. He explained that they are currently reviewing their bylaws, interviewing engineers and setting up the swearing-in ceremony for the board members.

Town Manager Bryan Edwards talked about the \$1,000,000 received in federal monies this year for the project. He further talked about the actions by the Ferguson Group in assisting with obtaining these monies.

Mayor John Miller talked about this being a window of opportunity.

County Manager Don Adams talked about discussions concerning the County billing and collecting Town taxes. He further talked about the Tax Office already does the assessment part for the Town. He stated that this shouldn't be a lot of work on the County's side but there may be additional costs associated with this project, but they will let both boards know once the details have been worked out.

Commissioner Warren Taylor and County Manager Don Adams talked about tax bills being combined into one bill and the tax bills are printed by an outside company.

Mayor John Miller talked about the confusion from the taxpayer when they come to the Town to pay their taxes but have questions about their assessment and has to go to the Tax Office anyway.

Commissioner Ken Richardson and Town Manager Bryan Edwards talked about other counties that handle municipal tax collection and vehicle tax collection.

County Manager Don Adams talked about the tax certification that requires all delinquent county taxes to be paid prior to deed recordation. He further talked about having the certification for the Town and the County and how it helps with the collection rates.

Commissioner Warren Taylor and Commissioner Sandy Carter Herndon talked about looking into the County collecting the Town's taxes and the benefit to the taxpayers.

Chair Eldon Edwards mentioned the next joint meeting is scheduled to be on October 31st.

Mayor John Miller talked about the 5th Mondays work out good to hold the joint meetings and mentioned having the October 31st meeting at the new County Administration Building.

Chair Eldon Edwards listed out the joint meeting dates in 2006.

Town Manager Bryan Edwards talked about several good things going on in the Town.

Patrick Woodie mentioned the NC Rural Partners Forum on November 3 and 4 focusing on small towns, and Sparta will be one of five small towns focused on during the meeting. He stated that they will be coming to Sparta to film during September.

Commissioner Sandy Carter Herndon and Patrick Woodie talked about having booths at this event to promote Alleghany County.

John Brady reiterated that a lot of positive things are going on now with more work needed.

Chair Eldon Edwards talked about moving forward and is pleased with what is happening in the Town and County.

Commissioner Warren Taylor talked about serving on the Rural Transportation Committee with John Brady and Don Adams. He stated that they recently approved the prioritization of roads in the area. He asked the County Manager to explain the prioritization.

County Manager Don Adams explained that the County had asked that the four-mile stretch of Roaring Gap Mountain be added to the NCDOT priority listing. He further explained the scoring system for the regional priority ranking. He stated that by adding the four-mile stretch to US 21 ranked that project #2 in the region. He talked about the current funding for US 21. He stated that the Sparta Loop is ranked high as well.

Town Manager Bryan Edwards talked about the projects have been moved back due to funding issues. He further talked about pursuing other avenues concerning funding.

County Manager Don Adams explained the difference between the two projects concerning the funding schedule.

Commissioner Ken Richardson mentioned attending the NCACC Annual Meeting and some counties are asking for another local option $\frac{1}{2}$ ¢ sales tax to assist with school construction, each county must request to be added to the list of eligible counties and this being an option if the County wishes to pursue it. He explained the procedures for getting the $\frac{1}{2}$ ¢ sales tax.

Commissioner Sandy Carter Herndon made a motion to add Alleghany County to the list of counties for the additional $\frac{1}{2}$ ¢ sales tax.

Commissioner Warren Taylor stated that by adding Alleghany County to the list doesn't mean that we are for it or against it that it is just an option.

Commissioner Warren Taylor seconded the motion the motion on the floor. Vote 4:0.

Town Manager Bryan Edwards talked about the Town would be included if the County decides to do so since the Town is receiving a portion of the current sales tax.

Town Manager Bryan Edwards invited everyone to the Community Visioning Forum on September 8, 2005, at 7:00pm at the Sparta Cafetorium.

Chair Eldon Edwards asked for public comments. None were received.

Mayor John Miller adjourned the Town meeting at 8:02pm.

Chair Eldon Edwards called a brief recess at 8:03pm.

Commissioner Ken Richardson made a motion to enter into closed session at 8:09pm under NCGS 143-318.11 (a) (3)—legal. Commissioner Warren Taylor seconded the motion. Vote 4:0.

Commissioner Sandy Carter Herndon made a motion to adjourn closed session at 8:50pm and reconvene the regular meeting. Commissioner Warren Taylor seconded the motion. Vote 4:0.

Chair Eldon Edwards stated that no action was taken.

Being no further business, Commissioner Warren Taylor made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:51pm. Commissioner Sandy Carter Herndon seconded the motion. Vote 4:0.

Respectfully submitted,

Karen Evans
Clerk to the Board

ATTEST:

Eldon Edwards
Chairman