

The Alleghany County Board of Commissioners met in special session on Monday, December 19, 2005, at 8:30am in the Conference Room of the County Office Building, 90 South Main Street, Sparta, North Carolina. The purpose of this meeting is to discuss school facilities.

Present: Chair Eldon Edwards, Vice-Chair Warren Taylor, Commissioner Sandy Carter Herndon, Commissioner Ken Richardson, County Manager Don Adams, and Clerk to the Board Karen Evans. Commissioner Graylen Blevins was present but arrived late. County Attorney Donna Shumate was absent.

Chair Eldon Edwards called the meeting to order.

Superintendent Dr. Jeff Cox explained that the Board of Education has received two bids for the Sparta Elementary School eight-classroom/multi-purpose room addition. He further explained the bid alternates. He stated that the Board of Education voted to accept the lowest bid from Vannoy Construction. He explained the total construction costs will be \$1,950,000, which includes the architect fees, alternates, furniture/technology and contingency monies.

Commissioner Warren Taylor and Dr. Cox discussed the timeline for the construction.

Dr. Cox explained the project.

Charles Joines, Chairman of the Board of Education, stated that they were pleased the bids came in lower than the architect's estimates.

Commissioner Ken Richardson talked about visiting Millers Creek to see this type of school construction. He stated that he hoped this could have been done last year. He talked about the construction costs of the classrooms at Millers Creek being \$70-\$80 per square foot. He stated that he is pleased with the bids and very much supports this part of it. He talked about he has been encouraging the boards to meet together.

Commissioner Warren Taylor, Charles Joines and Dr. Cox discussed the pitch of the roof on the new addition.

Commissioner Sandy Carter Herndon asked for clarification on the project costs; \$1,950,000 or \$2,015,126.

Dr. Cox stated that the construction costs are \$1,950,000. He explained that the \$2,015,126 was the estimated costs.

Commissioner Warren Taylor and Dr. Cox discussed some additional parking is being added during this project.

Dr. Cox started described how this project fits into the bigger facilities plan.

Commissioner Graylen Blevins arrived at 8:47am.

Dr. Cox continued explaining how this building is needed regardless of other renovations at Sparta Elementary School. He talked about working on a 5-year facilities plan for the State and incorporating it into a 10-year plan for the boards to review.

Commissioner Sandy Carter Herndon asked if the other two elementary schools are in need

of renovations before August and borrowing all of the money at one time.

Dr. Cox stated that the urgency isn't at the other two elementary schools as it is at Sparta Elementary School. He further stated that they would be included in the next phase.

Commissioner Sandy Carter Herndon and County Manager Don Adams discussed the County's ability to borrow money.

Chair Eldon Edwards and Dr. Cox discussed the other phases' timeline won't be known until February. Dr. Cox talked about having meetings with both boards at that time.

Commissioner Graylen Blevins and Commissioner Warren Taylor discussed setting a schedule for joint meetings between the two boards similar to how the County and Town meets.

Commissioner Ken Richardson stated that he has a number of other issues that he would like to discuss including the delay on the school bus garage, safety issues at Glade Creek Elementary School and other issues at Piney Creek Elementary School. He talked about the need for both boards to get together to exchange ideas. He stated that he will not support anything else until all of the schools are included.

Dr. Cox addressed the school bus garage issue and the timeline they are working on for it.

County Manager Don Adams reminded the Commissioners of the three ways to finance this project; installment-purchase contract, COPS and bonds. He stated that if the Commissioners wish to keep with the timeline, he recommends going with the installment-purchase contract. He talked about the required public hearing, the next regular meeting falls on a County holiday, LGC application must be sent by January 4th and special circumstances regarding this loan because there is already a loan in place on Sparta Elementary School. He continued to explain the special circumstances concerning this loan including future construction at the location. He stated that it may be necessary to privately negotiate with some banks on this project and the LGC has given him permission to do so. He talked about not many banks would be interested in this project because of the current loan and future construction at the site. He stated that the goal is to look at all of the financing options available two to five years down the road.

Commissioner Sandy Carter Herndon and County Manager Don Adams discussed the drawbacks because it is a second loan on the property.

County Manager Don Adams stated that the \$2,000,000 loan on the courthouse renovations could have cost 2¢ on the tax rate if the Board hadn't already built the payments into the budget. He reiterated that a payment of \$200,000 could potentially require a 2¢ tax increase unless other revenues are realized.

Dr. Cox talked about the lottery proceeds will be approximately \$125,000 to be spent on capital needs.

Commissioner Sandy Carter Herndon asked when the money would be available.

Charles Joines, Clarence Crouse and Dr. Cox talked about the money should be available next budget year.

County Manager Don Adams asked if the Board of Education understands that all of the

lottery money is going to be spent on this project or the next project.

Charles Joines talked about the amount of lottery proceeds that the State is projecting Alleghany County to receive. He stated that his personal opinion is to contribute this to a future project or this project.

County Manager Don Adams stated that these funds can be used for debt assumed prior to receiving the funds.

Commissioner Warren Taylor made a motion to approve the scope of the proposed project and direct the County Manager to go forwards with the financing and advertise for the public hearing. Commissioner Sandy Carter Herndon seconded the motion. Vote 5:0.

Susan Murphy stated her appreciation for the Commissioners' support.

Commissioner Ken Richardson stated that it has been almost a year since the last meeting with the Board of Education. He further stated the need to discuss these things as we go along.

The Board of Commissioners continued discussing meeting regularly with the Board of Education and setting up a schedule like the joint meetings with the Town.

Being no further business, Chair Eldon Edwards adjourned the meeting at 9:25am.

Respectfully submitted,

Karen Evans
Clerk to the Board

Attest:

Eldon Edwards
Chairman