



The Alleghany County Board of Commissioners met in regular session on Tuesday, March 6, 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, County Attorney Donna Shumate, and Clerk to the Board Lauren Linker.

Chair Mark Evans called the meeting to order. He noted Commissioner Larry Prince was absent and wished him the best while he was away for a funeral. He led the meeting with the pledge of allegiance.

Commissioner Tom Smith delivered the invocation.

Commissioner Smith made a motion to approve the agenda. Commissioner John Irwin seconded. Vote 4:0

AGENDA
Monday, March 6, 2017
6:30 PM

- 6:30 Meeting Called To Order, Pledge of Allegiance and Invocation
Motion on Agenda for March 6, 2017 Meeting
Motion on minutes from meetings on January 26, 27 and 30, 2017
- A. 6:35 Spotlight Business, Allen Delp & Debra Kennedy from Baywood Boys
- B. 6:50 Public Agenda Comments – (Page 1)
- C. 7:05 Rita Miller, Tax Administrator – (Page 2)

Re: Board of Equalization and Review (Action Requested)
- D. 7:05 Rita Miller & Karen Evans – Benefits Committee – (Page 3)

Re: Results of Cafeteria Plan Benefits RFP (Action Requested)
- E. 7:15 Dale Caveny, Business Development Center Director – (Page 4-7)
Re: Present contract for Marketing and Branding strategy. (Action Requested)
- F. 7:30 Mike James, Bobby Irwin -- Courthouse Security Committee – (Page 8-9)

Re: Recommendation for Courthouse Expansion (Action Requested)

- G. 7:45 VFD/Emergency Services Funding
- H. 8:00 Fred Pfaender, Music on Main – (Page 10)
Re: Request for monetary support. (Action Requested)
- I. General Business
 - 1. Backup PSAP Update – (Page 11-13)
 - 2. Approval for proposal (Action requested)
- J. Public Comments—30 minutes – (Page 14)
- K. County Manager Comments
 - a. Nuisance ordinance update
 - b. Drug testing follow-up
 - c. Budget letters to non-profits – (Page 15-18)
 - d. DSS Board Update
- L. Commissioners Comments
- M. Closed Session NC GS 143-318.11 (a) 4 Economic Development
- N. Adjourn

Commissioner John Irwin made a motion on the minutes. Commissioner Bobby Irwin seconded. Vote 4:0

Allen Delp the owner of Baywood Boys restaurant spoke to the Board about their business. He explained they have now been open for a year and the business was starting to grow. He went over the special events they have going on through the week as well as some upcoming special events going on.

Chair Evans asked how Music on Main affected their business.

Allen Delp said it was a great thing, but there are some things that need to be worked on along with some support and help to keep it going.

Commissioner John Irwin asked what the improvement would be.

Allen Delp suggested closing one lane of Main Street to make it safer for people who come to participate in the events.

Greg Walker said the County does not need a fire tax. He went on to say that he supports all local volunteer fire department, but stated there needs to be a closer look at the books for some fire departments before a fire tax is created. He asked that it be brought to a vote to the citizens before it is created.

David Higgins chief of Glade Creek Volunteer Fire Department. He explained that the Fire Department does a lot of fund raising, but being out trying to raise money takes away from the training time the firefighters need.

Dale Sheets, Laurel Springs Volunteer Fire Department. He explained how expensive it is for gear for the firefighters, \$8,500 per person. He went on to talk about the expenses they are facing and the lack of funds as well as the growth of demand for the departments and their need to keep up with the growth.

Harry Jones spoke about the increase in home owners insurance if there wasn't a fire department.

Larry Adams Piney Creek Volunteer Fire Department. He noted the most immediate need at Piney Creek Fire Department is a Fire Station. He then went over some of the struggles that they are facing.

Chair Evans stated he would like to rearrange the agenda to put G right after B to get the discussion started about the proposed fire tax.

Commissioner Smith said he felt like the Board is in support of all the fire departments and he felt like more should be discussed during the budget meetings. He then talked about the procedure of creating a fire tax and earmarking money. He stated he thought it was something that needs to be explored.

Commissioner Bobby Irwin said the fire department does much more than just fight fire. He then asked how the tax could be managed for the different areas of the County.

County Manager Mike James said there are different ways it can be done.

Commissioner Bobby Irwin said there is a lot of things that need to be done to be able to sell the tax to the citizens.

Commissioner John Irwin talked about the two ways the fire tax can be accomplished. He then talked about the age of the equipment and the cost of daily activities.

Chair Evans asked what the advantage to having a fire tax.

Commissioner John Irwin said if it is dedicated to the fire department later on when this Board is gone it will still be dedicated to the Fire Departments.

Rita Miller Tax Administrator explained that she need to set the date for the Board of Equalization and Review. She then went over the general statutes for what was needed for the Board of Equalization and Review.

The Board discussed dates in April for what would work best. It was decided to meet on April 4th and April 6th at 6:30 pm.

Rita Miller introduced Karen Evans, April Hamm and Lisa Osborne. As part of the Benefits Committee and explained the Requests for Proposal that were sent out for section 125 insurance plan for County employees. She stated that the committee will recommend going with the League of Municipalities for Vision and Kathy Brown with Van Popering Insurance for all other section 125 flexible benefits plan.

Karen Evans explain the options for the vision plan.

April Hamm explained what the dental insurance would include and the option for flexible spending account.

Lisa Osborne explained the educational meetings they will provide for employees.

Commissioner John Irwin made a motion to accept the recommendation by the benefits Board.

Commissioner Tom Smith asked what the savings would be.

Karen Evans said yes the County would pay \$1 for each employee and that would allow the employees to buy the increased amount of insurance.

Commissioner Tom Smith seconded.

Chair Evans said for a dollar that is a no brainer and it sounds like it's a good plan for employees.

Vote 4:0

Dale Caveny explained that the Business Development Center was the lead group for requesting proposals for the branding and marketing. He explained the proposals that they had received and requested for the Board to accept the contract between Destination by Design and the Blue Ridge Business Development Center.

Chair Evans asked if he felt like the committee would continue to see this processes through.

Dale Caveny said he felt like the committee would because it is a good diversity of the County and want to follow this to completion.

Commissioner John Irwin made a motion to approve the request for the contract between Business Development Center and Destination by Design. Commissioner Bobby Irwin seconded. Vote 4:0

County Manager Mike James said he felt like after leaving the courthouse meeting he felt there was a need to look into options to expand the courthouse. He said currently option A would be to expand the current courthouse and option B would be looking at the council on aging building. He said at this point he felt like the Board needed to set aside some money to enlist an architect to see which plan is more reasonable to do.

Commissioner Smith noted he was not at the meeting and wanted to understand how they were thinking about expanding.

Commissioner John Irwin said backward towards the road, towards the sheriff's office.

County Manager Mike James it would be to fill in the "L" shape of the current building.

Commissioner Smith asked if there wasn't fuel tanks in the back of that building and noted that would be an obstacle with the expansion of the current building as well as the council on aging building currently being occupied and they thought it wasn't big enough.

Chair Evans went over the numbers that the Clerk of Superior Courts had provided. He noted they made a much better argument this time than they had previously.

Commissioner John Irwin made a motion to authorize the funds not to exceed \$20,000 for an architect to look into the courthouse to see what can be done.

Commissioner Bobby Irwin seconded with the exception that County Manager Mike James get some information and come back to the Board with the information.

Commissioner John Irwin made a motion to authorize the County Manager to solicit estimates for an architect to do a feasibility study to the courthouse. Commissioner Bobby Irwin seconded. Vote 4:0

Fred Pfaender went over the numbers from last year's music on main events. He noted that if everything goes correctly then the Town will match the amount the County gives.

Commissioner Smith asked how many weeks this year.

Fred Pfaender said it will be for five months.

Commissioner Bobby Irwin asked what was given last year and why it was more this year.

Fred Pfaender said that last year only covered the last two and this amount would be for the whole season.

Commissioner Smith asked if this was passed would it come from the economic development fund.

County Manager Mike James explained yes he thought that would be the best place for it.

Commissioner Smith made a motion to approve \$2,500 for the Music on Main events. Commissioner Bobby Irwin seconded. Vote 4:0

County Manager Mike James went over the updates from the PSAP system.

Commissioner Bobby Irwin asked why the Sheriff had not been here pushing trying to get this project completed.

County Manager Mike James said they have had many conversations about the topic and he was up to date on all the details.

Commissioner John Irwin made a motion to accept the five year lease with century link and to buy the equipment. Commissioner Bobby Irwin seconded. Vote 4:0

Chair Evans opened the floor to public comments.

Terry Johnson stepped up to talk about the ordinance coming before the Town Council tomorrow evening. He then gave a solution to put the housing out on each of the farms.

Seeing no other citizens for public comments Chair Mark Evans then closed that section of the meeting.

County Manager Mike James went over the next steps for the nuisance ordinance. He informed the Board that it will go before the Planning Board next week and then they will tweak it and bring it back to the Commissioners for final approval. He then went over the random drug testing for all county employees' discussion that occurred at the previous meeting and explained some information that he received reiterating the fact that not all county employees can be randomly drug tested. Next he went over the letters that were sent out to each of the special appropriation group for their budget requests.

Commissioner Smith stated he would like to know when things are going to be requested with his name attached. He noted the letter that had gone out to the special appropriation stated that the Board and County Manager were requesting a form 990 which he was unaware that the Board had agreed on asking for.

Commissioner Bobby Irwin asked if the agency does not provide appropriate information would it would be up to the County Manager to reject someone's request.

County Manager Mike James said since this is new he would suggest noting on the forms that the correct information was not provided and letting the agency know as well for future budgets.

Commissioner John Irwin explained why he had requested the form 990 from the agencies.

Commissioner Smith asked are there any groups that we currently give money to would maybe not have a form 990 for some reason.

Chair Mark Evans clarified yes some may not.

County Manager Mike James noted the point is not to cut people out it is to get a little more information about the groups.

County Manager Mike James next went over the DSS Boards current make up and stated there wasn't much to be done since the positions were full. He went on to state he didn't know of any way to remove the previous commissioner to put in Commissioner Larry Prince.

Commissioner Tom Smith said it was his understand though that Commissioner Larry Prince was invited to attend all meetings.

Commissioner Bobby Irwin said they are one of the largest recipients of the budget and there is currently no oversight.

County Manager Mike James said there is no mechanism to change it right now.

Commissioner John Irwin said he disagreed the Commissioners controlled the budget.

County Manager Mike James explained how the DSS budget worked with state and federal mandates.

The discussion was had to bring this topic up at a time when Commissioner Larry Prince is present.

County Manager Mike James informed the Board the Cycle NC will be passing through Allegheny County. He noted they will start September 30 in Jefferson and be spending the night in Elkin on October 1. He also informed the Board there would be an Audio and Visual test run Friday at 10 am for any that wanted to attend.

Chair Evans asked about a finalized date for the joint meeting with the school board.

County Manager Mike James stated they were shooting for April 3 at 5 o'clock.

Commissioner Bobby Irwin commented on the Agricultural Dinner and what a great event it was.

Commissioner John Irwin made a motion to enter into closed session. Commissioner Smith seconded. Vote 4:0

Commissioner John Irwin made a motion to have an appraisal of the old county library and post office. Commissioner Bobby Irwin seconded. Vote 4:0

Commissioner John Irwin made a motion to adjourn. Commissioner Bobby Irwin seconded. Vote 4:0