

March 17, 2014

A regular meeting of the Bladen County Board of Commissioners was held at 6:30 pm on Monday, March 17, 2014 in the Commissioners Meeting Room of the Bladen County Courthouse.

The following members were present:

- James G. "Jimmie" Smith, Chairman
- Mark Gillespie, Vice Chairperson
- Charles Ray Peterson
- Delilah Blanks
- Billy Ray Pait
- Russell Priest
- Daniel Dowless
- G. Michael Cogdell
- Wayne Edge

Attorney: Leslie Johnson, Johnson Law Firm

ITEM 1. Chairman Smith called the meeting to order. Reverend Larry Hayes, Good News Baptist Church, Bladenboro, NC provided the Invocation. County Manager Gregory J. Martin led the Pledge of Allegiance.

ITEM 2. Consent Items:

Upon a motion by Commissioner Peterson, seconded by Commissioner Priest the Board approved the following Consent Items:

- A. Agenda.
- B. Minutes of Regular Meeting on March 10, 2014.
- C. Minutes of Special Meeting on March 10, 2014.
- D. Budget Amendments as follows:

Elections

<i>Expenditures</i>		<i>Debit</i>	<i>Credit</i>
104300.200	Supplies & Materials	2,095.72	
104300.395	Schools & Meetings	2,000.00	
<i>Revenues</i>			
103170.051	Elections Reimbursement	878.72	
103170.052	Filing Fees & Printouts	3,217.00	

To cover cost of Elections Conference for Board Members for March 2014 and to cover cost for computer upgrade and viruses.

Library

<i>Expenditures</i>		<i>Debit</i>	<i>Credit</i>
106700.310	Travel	64.06	
<i>Revenues</i>			
103190.010	Miscellaneous Revenue	64.06	

Donation from Elizabethtown Housing Authority for a rug purchased for the Clarkton Library by a donor.

Library

<i>Expenditures</i>		<i>Debit</i>	<i>Credit</i>
106700.610	Contract Services	500.00	
<i>Revenues</i>			
103190.010	Miscellaneous Revenue	500.00	

Walmart donation for summer reading program.

Department of Social Services

<i>Expenditures</i>		<i>Debit</i>	<i>Credit</i>
146100.688	Crisis Intervention	2,045.00	
<i>Revenues</i>			
143531.220	Crisis Intervention	2,045.00	

Reallocated CIP funds. Funding Authorization #3.

E. County Attorney Invoices:

Date	Department	Amount
3/14/14	Sheriff's Office	\$ 3,282.00
3/14/14	Sheriff's Office	\$ 500.00
	Total	\$ 3,782.00

F. Community Development Block Grant Monthly Performance Status Reports for February, 2014, incorporated by reference and made a part of these minutes.

March 17, 2014

G. Rural Volunteer Fire Department Funding Agreement and Automatic Aid Agreement for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2014.

H. Municipal Fire Department Funding Agreement and Automatic Aid Agreement for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2014.

ITEM 3. Matters of Interest to Commissioners:

Commissioner Peterson updated the Board regarding a Scholarship Recognition program held on the campus of Bladen Community College earlier in the week. Commissioner Peterson also shared a Thank You note from Victoria Pait, a recipient of the Board of Commissioners' scholarship at Bladen Community College. Ms. Pait is the granddaughter of Commissioner Billy Ray Pait. Ms. Pait thanked the Board for its gracious gift of the scholarship and stated that, once she completes her education at BCC, she would be transferring to North Greenville University in South Carolina to complete her degree in Biology, with plans to enter medical school.

ITEM 4. Individuals/Delegations Wishing to Address Commissioners:

A. Gayle Fernandez, of Robeson County Community Development Corporation, and Everette Stiles, from the NC Housing Finance Agency, each spoke regarding the NC Foreclosure Prevention Fund. They explained the process by which citizens may obtain assistance with mortgage payments for the unemployed, including property tax obligations, home owners insurance and association dues related to the mortgaged home. Ms. Fernandez also stated that debt counseling is available. Currently, the Hardest Hit Fund, which supports the NC Foreclosure Prevention Fund, has been funded through June, 2015.

ITEM 5. Public Hearing:

A. Chairman Smith recognized Planning Director Greg Elkins, who then provided an overview of the Planning Board's rezoning recommendation regarding a 4.0 acre tract of land (PIN: 1332-00-67-3170), located on US 701 North, across from Merritt's Pottery. The Planning Board met on February 18, 2014 and made a favorable recommendation to the Board of Commissioners to rezone the subject property from Residential/Agricultural to Commercial. Mr. Elkins stated that the current landowner wished to have the property rezoned in order to create a more marketable and desirable property. Chairman Smith declared open the Public Hearing and invited citizens to speak regarding the rezoning request.

Mr. Jeff Futrell, a homeowner living adjacent to the subject property, was recognized and was sworn in by Mr. Elkins. Mr. Futrell stated that his concern was the type of business which may be established on the property. Mr. Futrell also stated that he had noticed that the For Sale sign now displayed a Contract Pending sign. Mr. Futrell stated that his neighborhood is quiet, with several other families with children living in close proximity to the subject property.

Mr. Elkins reiterated that the rezoning request was initiated to more widely open the market for the sale of the property.

Ms. Christie Merritt, current landowner, was recognized by Chairman Smith and was sworn in by Mr. Elkins. Ms. Merritt confirmed that a deposit had been received on the subject property. The interested business is a golf cart sales and service business, G and E Golf Carts, located in Fayetteville.

Mr. Futrell stated that there were several golf cart businesses in close proximity of the property and voiced his concern for the sustainability of three or more businesses of this type within a five-mile radius. He stated that should the business not stay viable, that there would be no recourse to prevent any other type of commercial business opening a location on that property.

Commissioner Blanks asked Mr. Elkins of the process by which the Planning Board reviews rezoning requests. Mr. Elkins stated that the surrounding properties are reviewed and the Board determines if the request is consistent with the surrounding land use and therefore, conducive to rezoning.

Upon a motion by Commissioner Peterson, and a second provided by Commissioner Priest, the Board unanimously tabled the Rezoning Request.

March 17, 2014

ITEM 6. Finance Department: (Lisa Coleman, Director)

A. In Ms. Coleman's absence, County Manager Greg Martin presented the Financial Dashboard for the period ending February 28, 2014.

ITEM 7. Board of Elections (Cynthia Shaw, Director)

A. County Manager Greg Martin provided an overview of the request recently received from Mr. Ray Britt, Chairman of the Board of Elections, requesting to hire a temporary employee in preparation for and during the upcoming election. Upon a motion by Commissioner Edge, seconded by Commissioner Gillespie, the Board unanimously approved the hiring of a temporary employee through the end of the fiscal year, June 30, 2014.

ITEM 8. Revenue Department (Chris Ellis, Tax Administrator)

A. Following recent discussions regarding the steps to be taken to require a property owner to pay property taxes in full prior to deed transfer, Mr. Ellis provided an overview of the process by which Bladen County shall be included in legislation to authorize that requirement. The upcoming meeting with the Legislative delegation, originally scheduled for March 20th, will provide the opportunity to begin the process. Bladen County will need to be incorporated into NCGS 161.31 Tax Certification, (b) Applicability. Once approved and amended by the NC Legislature, a Resolution would need to be adopted by the Board.

Upon a motion by Commissioner Blanks, seconded by Commissioner Cogdell, the Board unanimously approved Mr. Ellis to proceed with the necessary steps to introduce a Resolution for consideration.

ITEM 9. Emergency Services (Bradley Kinlaw, Director)

A. Emergency Services Director Bradley Kinlaw provided an overview of the requested amendment to the current Municipal Fire Contract for the 2013-2014 fiscal year with the Town of Bladenboro. The request was presented for consideration based on a recommendation by the Local Government Commission (LGC) and related to a new fire station facility planned for the Town of Bladenboro. Specifically, Item G, USDA Loan on page three of seven has been included to read: "For the duration of the loan associated with the fire station constructed in 2014, the County agrees to levy ad valorem taxes for the Bladenboro Fire District in an amount sufficient to make annual payments to the Town of Bladenboro for the annual debt service obligation associated with the USDA loan."

Upon a motion by Commissioner Peterson, seconded by Commissioner Dowless, the Board unanimously approved the amendment to the current year (period ending June 30, 2014) Fire Department Funding Agreement and Automatic Aid Agreement.

B. Mr. Kinlaw updated the Board regarding the county's emergency shelters. In doing so, Mr. Kinlaw utilized a power point presentation to address some of the concerns identified by the Board since the inclement weather events in January and February.

Mr. Kinlaw, along with participants from the Sheriff's office, Health and Social Services Departments, proposed reducing the number of shelters from seven (7) to four (4), which would be strategically placed to serve the county. Proposed sites include Bladen Lakes Primary, East Arcadia-BCC Campus, East Bladen High School and West Bladen High School. With generators in place at Bladen Lakes and East Arcadia-BCC Campus, there would be some labor, materials and supply costs to be incurred to bring them to Emergency Shelter requirements. East and West Bladen High Schools would require two (2) portable heat pumps at each site, duct work, wiring, materials and supplies to bring them to compliance. An estimated project cost, to include a mobile pet shelter, is \$69,800.

Commissioner Peterson asked about transportation of the elderly and infirmed to the four (4) proposed sites. Mr. Kinlaw stated that BARTS was a great asset to the county and could be utilized.

Commissioner Blanks asked Mr. Kinlaw about response times of rescue units within Bladen County. Mr. Kinlaw stated that he would look into recent dispatch times and follow up with Commissioner Blanks.

March 17, 2014

ITEM 10. Advisory Board Appointments:

A. Juvenile Crime Prevention Council (3)

Upon a motion by Commissioner Gillespie, seconded by Commissioner Pait, the Board waived the policy on term limits and reappointed Aaron Cox and Johnice Autry, and appointed Kelly Cribb to Grace Thompson's expiring term. Each of the terms will expire March 21, 2017.

B. Keep Bladen Beautiful (1)

Upon a motion by Commissioner Edge, seconded by Commissioner Gillespie, the Board unanimously reappointed Bruce Barbour to a three-year term, with the term expiring March 31, 2017.

C. Southeastern Economic Development Commission (3)

Upon a motion by Commissioner Edge, seconded by Commissioner Pait, the Board unanimously reappointed Chris Tatum, Barbara Knight and Mark Gillespie, with the terms expiring March 31, 2017.

D. White Lake Planning & Zoning Board of Adjustments (1)

Upon a motion by Commissioner Edge, seconded by Commissioner Pait, the board unanimously reappointed Deborah Vocke, with the term expiring March 20, 2017.

ITEM 11. County Manager: (Greg Martin)

A. County Manager Greg Martin presented for consideration the proposed NCDOT Easements and Deeds related to the US 701/NC 87 Interchange. Upon a motion by Commissioner Peterson, second provided by Commissioner Dowless, the Board unanimously accepted an offer to purchase, for the sum of \$12,950, the Temporary Right of Way, Temporary Easement, Deed for Right of Way and Summary Statement Offer to Purchase from the NCDOT.

B. Upon a motion by Commissioner Peterson, seconded by Commissioner Pait, the Board unanimously adopted the following Resolution Requesting the new Cape Fear River Bridge at Tar Heel, which is currently under construction, to be Named for former Ferry Skipper David B. Melvin:



C. Mr. Martin provided an overview of a draft Employee Tuition Reimbursement Policy for review and discussion. The intent is to assist full-time regular employees to further their education, for the benefit of the employee and Bladen County. Mr. Martin handed out a draft for review and consideration which was more recent than the information attached to the Agenda. Mr. Martin stated that this proposed policy is an initiative that is consistent with the Board's strategic goal of developing employees.

D. Mr. Martin presented a request from Mr. Bruce Cannon, representing the Bladen Baptist Association, to use the courthouse lawn on Monday, April 7th, for a prayer gathering, one of four to be held in the county in preparation for Early Voting and the May 6 election. Upon a motion by Commissioner Peterson, seconded by Commissioner Pait, the Board unanimously approved the use of the courthouse lawn by the Bladen Baptist Association.

Commissioner Blanks asked about a standardized form for citizens, civic clubs and other interested parties to utilize to request the use of county facilities. Mr. Martin stated that currently there is no formal form that is used. However, he stated that his office would research and have a proposed form at an upcoming Board meeting for review and consideration.

E. Mr. Martin reviewed the calendars for March and April, 2014.

March 17, 2014

During the review of the calendar for March, it was determined that the NC Legislative Delegation meeting needed to be rescheduled for another date. Mr. Martin will contact Senator Rabon, Representative Brisson and Representative Waddell to reschedule the joint meeting.

Upon a motion by Commissioner Dowless, seconded by Commissioner Gillespie, the meeting was adjourned at 7:30pm.

James G. Smith, Chairman
Bladen County Board of Commissioners

ATTEST:

Maria C. Edwards, Clerk to the Board