

Regular Meeting
September 8, 2003

The Chowan County Board of Commissioners met in regular session on Monday, September 8, 2003 at 9:00 a.m. in the Commissioners Room, Courthouse.

Present: Jimmy Alligood, Louis Belfield, Ralph Cole, Jerry Downum, Wayne Goodwin, George Jones, Harry Lee Winslow.

Chairman Louis Belfield called the meeting to order and Commissioner Cole presented the invocation.

Consent Agenda

Commissioner Jones made a motion that the Consent Agenda, including last month's meeting minutes and the following budget amendments and tax releases, be approved.

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Budget Amendments

5321 DSS	dec	\$1838	state adult day care funding
5363 DSS	inc	\$10000	TEA foster care
5345 DSS	dec	3200	child care subsidy
5333 DSS	dec	22800	Smart State funding
5231 grant	inc	45437	Kindergaretn Readiness grant
4211 Data Process	inc	4330	Rural Center Grant-WebSite Dev
6130 Rec	inc	1000	contri from Albemarle RC&D for Holladay's Island
4170 Elections	inc	19153	from State for new voting machines
4268 Sr.Center	inc	165	insurance repair on van

Tax Releases

Ducks Unlimited Inc.	\$209.63	purchased new tag
AC Evans	\$263.90	value reduced due to termite damage and vandalism
LE Woodell	\$121.84	vehicle turned in

The regular meeting was recessed to enter into a public hearing on the 2004 Community Development Block Grant.

Public Hearing - 2004 CDBG

Carolyn Morris, representing Albemarle Commission, presented information about the County's 2004 application for Community Development Block Grant funds, totaling \$400,000. There are presently 13 applicants for assistance, of which six, possibly seven homes can be rehabilitated/replaced. The selection committee, appointed by Chairman Belfield, include Commissioner Cole, Town Councilman Willis Privott, Rev. Jane Love, program participant Sarah Berry and Jean Bunch, representing a non-profit organization. Documents for signatures presented included Lead County and Interested Municipalities Signatures, Certification of Ability to Meet Federal Performance and Procurement Requirements, Disclosure of Civil Rights Complaints/Lawsuits, Citizens Complaint Procedure, Floodplain Certification, and Citizen Participation Plan.

No public comment was offered. Chairman Belfield closed the public hearing and reconvened the regular meeting.

Gift to County by Dr. A.M. Stanton

Dr. A.M. Stanton presented a piece of art by a Mr. Wolfe, who was a resident of Edenton, to the County. The artist Mr. Wolfe visited Sweden and painted this copy of a painting he saw in a Swedish Museum in the 1930's or early 1940's of the Swedish King being returned to his country after he was killed in the War with Russia. Mr. Wolfe gave the painting to Chowan County Clerk of Court E.W. Spires, Dr. Stanton's father-in-law. Dr. Stanton was a surgeon in Chowan County from 1951 until the early 1960's when he moved to Plymouth.

Recognition - George Stokes

George Stokes and his wife, Maggie, are entering the second phase of retirement by selling their home and buying a motor home to travel.

Mr. Stokes was recognized for his support of the County over the years since he moved to Chowan County in 1974, contributing to many projects. He spearheaded and raised the money to build the Veterans' Memorial at the Courthouse complex, and has organized each of the annual Veterans Day services at the Memorial. He served as the County's Veterans Service Officer for several years, has been an active member of the Post 40 American Legion and supporter of the Chowan County Regional Fair and the Law Enforcement Appreciation Banquet. Ron Green, Post 40 Commander and Shelton Stryker, Mr.

Stokes' next-door neighbor and friend also spoke to recognize Mr. Stokes. True to Mr. Stokes' humor, his comment was "I'll be back".

Employee Recognition

Register of Deeds Sue Rountree presented Lynn Gilliard and Betty Venters to recognize their certifications with the North Carolina Association of Registers of Deeds.

Planner Elizabeth Bryant presented Holly Colombo in recognition of his completion of Level III certificates in all areas of inspection, building, electrical, mechanical and plumbing. Commissioners Jones and Goodwin commented on the quality and professionalism of the Inspections Staff.

Report of Inspections and Planning Department

Mrs. Bryant reported that the County Planning Board is studying the family exemption rule in the Subdivision Ordinance and will make a recommendation to the Board of Commissioners. She noted that Code Enforcement Officer Bob Vogele continues to work on difficult nuisance abatement issues including the Marx, O'Kelly and Goodwin properties.

Main Street Program

Chamber of Commerce Executive Director Richard Bunch presented Belinda Washlesky, the Coordinator for the Main Street Program, recently initiated by the Town of Edenton. The Main Street Program Award is to be presented September 26. Technical assistance and advice, training and design assistance will be available to the Town from the National Trust for Historic Preservation.

Economic Trends

Mr. Bunch, as Executive Director of the Economic Development Corporation, presented a capsule of the County's economy, including:

* The County's unemployment rate is 4.6%, compared to 6.3% for the Nation and 6.9% for the State of North Carolina.

- * Local industries are busy, peanut processors, boat builders, textiles and the barge traffic to Tee-Lok.
- * The Economic Development Corporation and the Town of Edenton are working with the Town's engineers to begin development of the remaining 90 acres of land at the Airport Industrial Park to construct roads, water and sewer service for potential clients.

House Bill 273

House Bill 273, passed by the 2003 General Assembly, requires that all counties and towns enact a policy regarding sick leave and salary continuation to all employees for adverse medical reactions due to the employee receiving a smallpox vaccination. Commissioner Goodwin made a motion that the following amendment be made to the County's personnel policy.

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Chowan County's Workers Compensation Policy and Chowan County's sick leave policy will cover any employees who have injuries and adverse reactions from the smallpox vaccination as a result of employment with Chowan County.

A health care provider must certify the need for any such leave greater than 24 hours.

Employees are encouraged to consult their personal physicians prior to being inoculated to determine if they have any conditions indicating that they should not be inoculated with, or might suffer adverse medical reactions from the vaccine.

Chowan County/College of the Albemarle Campus

Commissioner Winslow made a motion that the Board of Commissioners authorize the naming of the College of the Albemarle campus at the Old Walker School Campus to be COA Edenton-Chowan Campus and that the present facility at the Purser Shopping Center continue to be the Chowan County Center.

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COA President Lynn Bunch and Chowan Campus Dean Lynn Winslow commented on the planned construction, to begin the first of 2004.

Fire Service Agreements

County Manager Cliff Copeland reported that representatives of the County and Town and the two fire departments met and agreed on the basic elements of a proposed agreement to extend the fire serve to a 6-mile district. Staff Attorney Peter Rascoe will prepare the documents to be forwarded to the State for approval.

Also, a two-day school is being scheduled by the Department of Insurance for the Center Hill Crossroads Fire Department which will enable the County to obtain a reduction in insurance rates, impacting home insurance costs for a significant number of homeowners.

Report from Annual Meeting of Association of County Commissioners Chairman Belfield and Commissioners Alligood and Cole reported on the annual meeting, including notes from the "No Child Left Behind" program, economic development and tourism issues. Noah Wood from Robeson County was elected President of the Association and Matt Wood was elected the District I Director, which covers Chowan County.

Human Services Committee Report

Commissioner Cole presented DSS Director Ben Rose to brief the Board about Department activities, including, Child Support collections remain very active, there are approximately 800 Chowan County households, including 1900 people, receiving food stamps. He also noted that the Medicaid unit is dealing with legislative changes in the laws from the last session's cuts in Medicaid services.

Also presented was Recreation Director Robbie Laughton who announced that 630 children participated in summer program of organized sports and 350 children in summer activities such as swimming, arts and camp programs. Fall programs are already in progress with record numbers of children participating. The Chowan Community Center continues to enroll record numbers of participants.

Manager's Report

Sewer Feasibility Study

Mr. Copeland reported that from conversation with the engineer, information and design specifications on the Town of Edenton treatment plant are now being collected and partial data has been collected on demographics of the service area under consideration. Plans now call for preliminary design options and cost estimates to be available by October. By November, a draft report should be completed which will include data on options for financing the costs and also data on initial user fee rates and any other fees to finance operations of the system. Grant money to assist in the construction is being investigated.

Old Courthouse Renovation

Additional plastering needs have been identified by the Contractor and the County has requested that the State identify additional funds to expedite the completion of the project.

Revaluation

The Tax Administrator has received bids from contractors to perform the 2006 revaluation. Prices have increased from \$13, paid last time, to approximately \$21 per parcel.

Communication Issues

Chowan County's communications needs are growing so rapidly, it has become clear that the County's efforts to provide equipment and technology requires some expert advice. A consultant has been retained to work with the Sheriff and Mr. Copeland to identify overall needs and develop a long range plan.

Roadside Grass Cutting

Commissioner Goodwin asked that the County contact DOT about the "pitiful condition" of roadside mowing. He stated that there are weeds and grasses as much as seven feet tall in places across the County. He noted instances where deer have come into the roadway in front of vehicles and could not be seen until they were in the road because of tall roadside grasses. He also noted mowing done in the County last December and in February of this year! and questioned why the State would allow contractors to mow then -- just to fulfill a contract! and then leave the roadside in such deplorable conditions in the grass-growing months. Commissioner Winslow noted that the quality of work is also questionable since improper equipment is being used on some of the mowers he has seen. By motion of Commissioner Jones! Mr. Copeland was instructed to contact DOT again! to take whatever action necessary to resolve this issue.

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Public Comment

Nancy Signett requested that the County check a fire hydrant on the corner of Colony Drive and Maple Drive where there is standing water.

The meeting was adjourned.

Nancy B. Morgan! County Clerk