

Regular Meeting
January 10, 2005

The Chowan County Board of Commissioners met in regular session on Monday, January 10, 2005 in the Panel Room of the Old Courthouse.
Present: Jimmy Alligood, Louis Belfield, Ralph Cole, Jerry Downum, Bill Gardner, Wayne Goodwin, Harry Lee Winslow.

Chairman Goodwin called the meeting to order and Commissioner Downum presented the invocation.

Consent Agenda

By motion of Commissioner Belfield, the minutes and the following budget amendments, Capital Project Ordinance, tax releases and resolution were approved.

Ayes 7
No 0

Budget Amendments

DSS 5345	inc	\$ 6,370	crisis funding
DSS 5345	inc	\$20,032	daycare funding
Soil/Water 4730	inc	\$117,700	grant for stream cleanup

Capital Project Ordinance Public Safety-Emergency Operations Center
\$10,756,845

Resolution

WHEREAS, funds secured through grants will assist Chowan County in the construction of an emergency operations center, combined with other sources of funding identified by the County.

NOW, THEREFORE, the Chowan County Board of Commissioners does hereby declare intent to utilize proceeds from these revenue sources to pay certain expenses that will be incurred prior to the closing of the loan; and,

FURTHER, directs the Finance Officer to reimburse the County for any expenses incurred for this project.

Adopted today, January 10, 2005, by the Chowan County Board of Commissioners.
Nancy B. Morgan, County Clerk

Tax Releases

D Adachi	\$331.78	listed in Florida
Chowan Co	\$149.94	exempt property
AB Dellinger	\$627.39	listed in Perquimans
JC Fenner	\$225.31	listed in Florida
L Jordan	\$197.03	tags duplicated
KA Wilkerson	\$129.01	listed in Perquimans

Commissioner Appointments

Chairman Goodwin presented the following appointments for the 2005 year.

Commissioner Board Appointments for 2005

Town/County	Goodwin, Cole
TDA	Alligood (Chair), Gardner
DSS	Alligood
SW Authority	Belfield, Goodwin
Public Health	Winslow
Mental Health	Cole
Hospital Local Dir Council	Downum
Recreation	Alligood
Community Foundation	Gardner
Albemarle Commission/ Workforce Consortium	Cole
Airport	Gardner
Econ Dev Corporation	Gardner, Downum
Education	Belfield, Cole
Albemarle Learn Center	Belfield, Copeland
Chamber of Commerce	Gardner
COA Board	Winslow
Arts Council	Downum
Partnership for Children	Belfield
Interagency Council/AC	Goodwin
Finance Committee	Goodwin, Belfield, Downum

Internal Committees

Finance/Administration
Goodwin, Belfield, Downum
Public Safety
Alligood, Winslow, Cole
Human Services
Gardner, Cole, Alligood
Planning/Enterprise
Belfield, Gardner, Winslow

Resolution

WHEREAS, the SPCA is formally recognizing the enormous contributions of Marcia Crandall to the betterment of Chowan County animal welfare at a dinner on January 13, 2005; and,

WHEREAS, Marcia Crandall first helped to organize a Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals in February of 1984; and,

WHEREAS, Marcia Crandall served in many leadership positions within the SPCA; and,

WHEREAS, under the leadership of Marcia Crandall, the SPCA successfully organized adoption and education programs that forever benefited the health and welfare of animals; and,

WHEREAS, Marcia Crandall and other members of the SPCA successfully lobbied the County to establish an independent animal control program and construct an animal shelter; and,

WHEREAS, in 1998, again successfully lobbied the County to construct a new animal shelter that not only services Chowan County, but Gates County, and now later, Perquimans County; and,

WHEREAS, the animal control program in Chowan County is now considered a model program for the State of North Carolina.

NOW, THEREFORE, the Chowan County Board of Commissioners does hereby recognize the accomplishments of Marcia Crandall that have forever improved animal welfare services in Chowan County; and,

FURTHER, directs that this Resolution be presented to Marcia Crandall January 13, 2005.

Nancy B. Morgan, County Clerk

Presentation

Sheriff Fred Spruill presented a certificate of completion to Deputy Carl Rabe for his completion of the Advanced Law Enforcement Certificate, as a professional law enforcement officer in North Carolina.

Sheriff Spruill noted that twelve of the sixteen deputies are now certified, and the newer deputies are in the process of receiving their certifications.

Planning and Inspections

Beech Village Subdivision

Planner Elizabeth Bryant presented the final plat for Beech Village Subdivision as approved by the County Planning Board. The subdivision is located off Yeopim Road near Oak Grove Road and contains twelve lots. Lot size, roads, cul-de-sacs and improvements are installed and meet standards.

Commissioner Downum moved that the Subdivision be approved.

Ayes 7

No 0

The regular meeting was recessed to conduct a Public Hearing on the Mitigation Plan to be submitted to the State.

Public Hearing – Mitigation Plan

In April 2003, the County adopted a “final plan” and submitted it to the State. After Hurricane Isabel, the State requested that the County amend the plan to include information and a vulnerability assessment since the storm. That documentation has been included and is not ready for resubmission.

Chamber of Commerce Director Richard Bunch asked about the impact on businesses.

Mrs. Bryant responded that businesses have received information on the plan.

County Manager Cliff Copeland noted that the plan establishes a committee to review the plan annually.

With no additional comments, the Public Hearing was closed and the regular meeting reconvened.

By motion of Commissioner Alligood, the plan was approved to be submitted to the State by the following resolution.

Ayes 7

No 0

Resolution

WHEREAS, the North Carolina General Assembly passed Senate Bill 300: An Act to Amend the Laws Regarding Emergency Management, as recommended by the Legislative Disaster Response and Recovery Commission where among other provisions, this Bill requires that local governments have an approved hazard mitigation plan in order to receive State public assistance funds (effective for State-declared disasters after November 1, 2004); and,

WHEREAS, in October 2000, the President of the United States signed into law the Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000 (Public Law 106-390) to amend the Robert T Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act of 1988 which reinforces the importance of pre-disaster mitigation planning, establishing a requirement that local governments adopt a mitigation plan in order to be eligible for hazard mitigation funding; and,

WHEREAS, both Senate Bill 300 and the Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000 set forth certain requirements for local governments to have an approved hazard mitigation plan; and,

WHEREAS, the Chowan County Board of Commissioners clearly recognizes the importance of local mitigation planning and the urgency to complete the task of developing plans that not only meet minimum criteria, but work toward reducing the County's vulnerability to natural hazards; and,

WHEREAS, the 2002-03 grant received by the Town of Edenton and Chowan County on behalf of the State of North Carolina, Department of Crime Control and Public Safety, Division of Emergency Management for the funding of the Edenton-Chowan County Hazard Mitigation Plan requires an official public hearing and adoption which was held by the Chowan County Board of Commissioners on Monday, January 10, 2005.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CHOWAN COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS THAT:

1. Chowan County and the Town of Edenton will arrange for the implementation and development of the Edenton-Chowan County Hazard Mitigation Plan; and,
2. Chowan County and the Town of Edenton have substantially complied or will substantially comply with all Federal, State and local laws, rules, regulations and ordinances applicable to the projects and to the grants pertaining thereto.

Adopted, this the 10th day of January, 2005.

Nancy B. Morgan, County Clerk

Amend Subdivision Ordinance – Buffer Strips

The Commissioners agreed to table this item until the joint Commissioners and Planning Board meeting on January 18.

Mrs. Bryant reported that in 2004, 65 new single family homes and twelve apartments were constructed in Chowan County.

Chairman Goodwin noted that the Monds property is being cleaned up.

Finance Report

Finance Officer Lisa Jones presented the December financial report with revenues and expenses on budget. She noted that sales tax was budgeted at the 2003 rate for 2004, and the revenue is slightly over budget.

Mid-year meetings are being held with department heads to examine budgets and also department heads are asked to define capital improvement spending needs so that a five-year capital improvement plan can be developed.

Mrs. Jones announced that the final report has been submitted to FEMA. Total hurricane FEMA reimbursements are \$3,100,000. One claim was disallowed -- \$15,000 in costs for ambulance stand-by at shelters. Administrative money in the amount of \$45,000 is expected.

Mrs. Jones presented a lease/purchase financing agreement for three Sheriff vehicles and a wireless sound system for the Old Courthouse in the amount of \$93,000. BB&T was the low bidder at 3.09% for 36 months.

Commissioner Downum made a motion that a resolution be approved allowing the financing with BB&T.

Ayes 7

No 0

By motion of Commissioner Winslow, the County approved a resolution to allow a custodian investment agreement with FINISTAR/Gateway Bank. This financing developed by Broad Street Software and approved by the Local Government Commission will be short term investments.

Ayes 7

No 0

Mr. Copeland presented a draft audit prepared by J P Timberlake, CPA, which identified no weaknesses and made no recommendations for management changes. Reserves were listed at \$25,801,536.

Commissioner Belfield made a motion that the County be authorized to accept the audit and submit the audit to the State.

Ayes 7

No 0

Board Appointments

Tourism Development Authority

By motion of Commissioner Cole, Gale Howard (Edenton Rose B&B) and Dora Drohan (Granville Queen Inn) were appointed to the TDA Board, representing the accommodations.

Ayes 7

No 0

Edenton Planning Board

Commissioner Gardner moved that Carolyn Burns, a resident of Edenton Bay Subdivision, be appointed to the Edenton Planning Board.

Ayes 7

No 0

Albemarle Commission

Commissioner Belfield made a motion that J.B. Small be appointed to the Albemarle Commission Board, contingent upon his acceptance. Commissioner Cole will contact Mr. Small to determine his willingness to serve.

Ayes 7

No 0

Resource Conservation and Development Council

By motion of Commissioner Winslow, Peter Rascoe was appointed to the RC&D Council.

Ayes 7

No 0

Reschedule February Meeting

Commissioner Alligood made a motion that the February meeting be moved to February 10, 2005 at 6:00 pm in the Panel Room of the Old Courthouse.

Ayes 7

No 0

Schedule Special Meeting

Commissioner Belfield moved that the Board of Commissioners schedule a special meeting with the Board of Education. This meeting will be held February 21 at 11:00a.m. at the Albemarle Learning Center to discuss educational issues and strategies for this County. Other workshops will be scheduled on planning issues and discussion on the County's capital outlay plan.

Ayes 7

No 0

Application to Parks and Recreation Trust Fund

Mr. Copeland presented an proposed application to the PRTF for funding assistance for a HVAC mechanical system for the renovated Recreation Department/Walker gym, in the amount of \$115,000. The County share will be appropriated in next year's budget.

Commissioner Winslow made a motion that the County be allowed to submit the grant application.

Ayes 7

No 0

Recreation Department Director Robbie Laughton announced that the Phase I of the Walker gym renovations should be complete in about four weeks. The County Maintenance staff and the COA electricians class has performed a lot of the work saving considerable money in the project.

Twenty-eight youth basketball teams are playing this season and 400 children playing in the church league. Bids have been advertised for the Cannons Ferry camping platforms and the Chowan County Boys and Girls Club has hired an executive director. Seventy-five youth pre-registered for the B/G Club, with an anticipated enrollment of 250 after it opens January 17.

Library Renovations

Mr. Copeland presented a proposed letter to the Library Board addressing the delay in the renovation of the library, estimated at \$2million. In the letter he stated that since the hurricane, the County has addressed many issues, including the urgent need to provide an Emergency Operating Center to house the 911 Central Communications Center, as well as the Emergency Management Services and possibly the Sheriff's Department and the Police Department. When the flood waters came in from the Edenton Bay, the 911 Center was evacuated until the water subsided. The County was fortunate that the Sheriff had secured a mobile unit for such an emergency.

Prior to the hurricane, the library expansion design was 70% complete, with an investment of \$200,000. Other funding issues must be addressed, such as the Holmes High School renovation and jail over-crowding. Provided the County is able to secure grant money to assist in the construction of the EOC, it is hoped that the library renovation can proceed as early as this summer.

By consensus, the Board of Commissioners approved the letter for submission to the Library Board.

It was noted by the Chairman that the floodplain issues should be addressed for the library as well.

Librarian Rosalie Miller and Trustee Dossey Pruden spoke in support of the renovation.

Public Comment

None

Manager's Report

Mr. Copeland distributed preliminary drawings for the 911 Center/Emergency Operating Center. He discussed efforts to secure grant money through the USDA and the Homeland Security Commission.

Costs and subscriber rates are being defined for the proposed sewer system for the southern Chowan County, as well as an investigation to determine funding. A meeting with the Sandy Point developers examined ways the Sandy Point system and the proposed County system could be combined. Engineers for both projects are investigating this possibility.

DSS Director Ben Rose announced that the Child Support staff has improved its ranking in the last ten months from 83 to 66, which is an exceptional record for a small county. The Child Support staff is currently exceeding state averages in every aspect of the evaluation process.

Peter Rascoe informed the Board that letters and petitions have been submitted to the cell phone carriers without any response from the corporations yet.

Mr. Copeland distributed a handout presented to the Edenton Rotary Club last week, where Mr. Copeland was asked to discuss plans for the County for 2005. Projects included were the sewer for the southern sector of the County; the EOC, the library expansion, the State's upgrade of Highway 32, new voting machines, completion of the GIS system, addressing the jail expansion, a plan to investigate reorganizing the tourism-historic efforts, and investigating the feasibility of a swimming pool for the public and the schools.

He outlined actions taken from lessons learned from the Hurricane, including the successful efforts to secure funding for a communication tower, establishment of a reserve fund to storm-proof the water system (generators), all major county facilities now have generator capacity, and EOC training. And, also, more work needs to be done to relocate the 911 Center, construct an EOC, and provide new space for the Sheriff and Police.

He discussed the need for smart planning to prepare for the residential boom expected in Chowan County in the next five years. And with this growth, he stressed the need to preserve the County's quality of life, -- "the reason all these folks want to move here", and the need to provide services -- education, Social Services, EMS and ease of access to government.

Mr. Copeland announced a meeting with the District DOT staff to discuss the unsafe highway issues and how DOT plans to address those issues, particularly Highway 32, and the status of the upgrade. This meeting is scheduled for January 25.

The meeting was adjourned.

Nancy B. Morgan, County Clerk