

Regular Meeting  
November 3, 2003

The Chowan County Board of Commissioners met in regular session on Monday, November 3, 2003 at 9:00am in the Commissioners Room, Courthouse.

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

Absent: Wayne Goodwin, due to sickness.

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

#### Consent Agenda

By motion of Commissioner Alligood, the Consent Agenda, including the meeting minutes and the following tax releases and budget amendments, was approved.

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#### Budget Amendments

DSS 5321	decrease	\$10,000	State Adult Day Care Funding
DSS 5372	increase	\$17,673	Crisis Intervention Prevention

#### Tax Releases

BN Birch	\$100.26	wrong value listed
WV Danish	\$161.82	vehicle flooded
TIMMCO	\$997.96	additional info received after listing-new bill issued
MD Wilson	\$312.60	listed in SC
Mackenzie Enterprises	\$115.20	vehicle sold
LV Sieck	\$113.13	flooded veh purchased by ins co
KL Sorensen	\$103.79	vehicle flooded

#### Reports from Hurricane Isabel Recovery

County Manager Cliff Copeland stated that a majority of staff time is being spent on storm recovery -- paperwork required by FEMA, working with contractors and especially the debris cleanup, and responding to the enormous amount of telephone calls and visits from the public with storm related questions.

#### Finance

A separate fund for hurricane expenses was set up by Assistant Finance Officer Lisa Jones to track expenses to help with the FEMA paperwork required. Mrs. Jones continues to work with FEMA representatives as they perform an item-by-item review.

Expenses paid by the County through October 31 include:

\$ 77,000	overtime, FICA, retirement
\$ 54,000	contract labor (auxiliary deputies, debris removal monitors)
\$100,000	contract labor (emergency debris removal)
\$ 7,500	contract labor (water department engineers, electricians)
\$ 66,000	emergency food and provisions
\$ 45,000	supplies and materials
\$ 13,000	repairs to buildings and equipment

Mutual aid expenses and debris removal could reach \$2 million.

#### Debris Removal

Staff Attorney Peter Rascoe reported that FEMA approved two rounds of debris cleanup to protect the health and safety of the public. Any other cleanup is considered economic recovery and not approved by FEMA. The first round of cleanup in the County is to be completed by November 17. The second round will begin November 18 and is to be completed December 4. One pickup has been authorized for private roads. Mr. Rascoe continues to negotiate a reimbursement for the private road pickup, attempting to hold FEMA to one standard since FEMA is showing differential treatment among areas affected.

#### Inspections

Planner Elizabeth Bryant said that emergency electrical and unsafe building inspections have tapered off and that 90% of the permits now being written are for storm repair/replacement. Inspection requests have increased by more than 25%.

She also reported that she participated in the Sandy Point charrette and continues to work with the developers.

#### Mitigation

Mr. Copeland distributed copies of letters to Governor Easley and Senator Edwards requesting mitigation assistance to the storm damaged counties, including Chowan County. Long term needs outlined in the letter to Governor Easley include: relocation of the Police Department and Central Communications Center, sanitary sewer system repairs, short term damage to the tourism economy and long term needs for tourism, assistance to the community college campus, acquisition of a privately owned historic lighthouse for preservation, and standby generators. Governor Easley's letter to Senator Edwards included requests for assistance to farmers, low income and elderly housing, forest resources, inadequate rural community facilities, hazard mitigation programs for housing, water and sewer and other facilities, reduction in state and local governments' costs for FEMA assistance programs, and FEMA support in clearing debris from all roadways, public and private. Mr. Copeland commented that with the decline of the textile industry and the location of the OLF in northeastern North Carolina, this is the time to identify ways to drive the Northeast economically.

#### Social Services/Unmet Needs Fund

DSS Director Ben Rose reported that the Governor's Office has allocated approximately \$63,000 of private donations to Chowan County for disbursement to needy households to assist with unmet needs. Through food stamps and crisis funds, it is believed that food and other basic needs have been met. Some counties have chosen to pay utility, rent or mortgage payments but the Chowan committee chose to take the high road, maybe the difficult path, and look for truly unmet needs that households or businesses do not have resources to provide. Eligible needs to be considered include: electrical repairs, structural repairs, refrigerators, heating/air systems, tree removal, prescriptions, medical supplies and medical equipment that may have been destroyed. Applications are available at the County Office Building and the Northern Chowan Community Center. The DSS staff will

verify application information. The deadline for applying is November 15.

It is hoped to assist 100-150 households or businesses with a \$632 funding cap.

#### Disaster Relief Donations

Donations of \$12,000 have been received. Material and supplies to repair homes have been purchased from the donations.

#### County Property

The most serious damage is to the roofs at Swain Auditorium and the old Walker School, now used by the Recreation Department. The County set up a shelter for animals in the gym of the building, and when the roof came off, the animals and the volunteers were moved into the halls of the main building away from the gym.

Lou Jurkowski, a partner in BJAC, architects who have worked with the County for a number of years now, have graciously agreed to provide architectural services to the County at no charge to design and supervise the roof replacements.

Preliminary insurance coverage estimates are approximately \$400,000 for all damaged County property.

#### Manager's Report

Mr. Copeland said that so much of the staff's time is still spent in storm recovery, but that other projects are still moving ahead. He reported that the Sandy Point investors and planners are proceeding with the development.

He expressed appreciation to the American Legion Post 40 for organizing the law enforcement and storm responders appreciation dinner October 30.

#### Public Comment

None offered.

The meeting was adjourned.

Nancy B. Morgan, County Clerk