

Regular Meeting
February 5, 2007

The Chowan County Board of Commissioners met in regular session on Monday, February 5, 2007 in the Panel Room of the 1767 Courthouse.

Present: Jimmy Alligood, Louis Belfield, Ralph Cole, Jerry Downum, Bill Gardner, Kenny Goodwin, Harry Lee Winslow.

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

Consent Agenda

By motion of Commissioner Belfield, the Consent Agenda, including the January meeting minutes and the following tax releases and budget amendments, and the Capital Project Ordinance for the Red Banks Farm Park, was approved.

Ayes 7

No 0

Tax Releases

| | | |
|-------------------------|----------|---------------------------|
| CL Blount | \$118.16 | vehicle turned in |
| AW Harrell | \$110.26 | listed in Gates County |
| WH Motley | \$100.44 | listed in Hertford County |
| Truck/Equipment Service | \$109.98 | not in town limits |
| HT Jones | \$194.66 | to correct Sr exemption |
| SBE Moore | \$194.12 | overpayment corrected |

Budget Amendments

| | | |
|----------|----------|--|
| 5333 DSS | \$14,564 | increase in Smart Start Daycare funding |
| 5372 DSS | \$24,797 | increase in CRISIS funding |
| 4330 EMS | 278 | insurance proceeds from vehicle accident |

Capital Project Ordinance – Red Banks Farm Park

Funded by Parks & Recreation Trust Fund, contribution from General Fund and appropriation from Sales Tax Refund \$1,017,035

Senator Edward Jones

Senator Edward Jones, recently appointed to fill the unexpired term of Senator Robert Holloman, visited the Board meeting to introduce himself and to offer his assistance to the County. Senator Jones previously served as a House of Representatives member.

Public Hearing – 2007 CDBG Scattered Site Housing Grant

Consultant Carolyn Morris introduced the grant and announced that this hearing is the first of two to satisfy the application requirements for a 2007 CDBG application. This application will request funds for housing repair assistance in both the County and the Town. Urgent repairs, such as roof repairs, are covered up to \$5000 by the grant assistance.

Chairman Cole recessed the regular meeting and declared a public hearing to receive comment. None was offered. The Public Hearing was closed and the regular meeting reconvened.

Ms. Morris requested that the County schedule a second public hearing for the March meeting. By motion of Commissioner Downum, a second public hearing to receive comment on the proposed 2007 CDBG Scattered Site Housing Grant will be held at the March 5 meeting at 9:00a.m.

Ayes 7

No 0

Presentation – Proposed Land Use Plan for Chowan County and the Town of Edenton
Planner Elizabeth Bryant and Consultant Buddy Blackburn presented a proposed Land Use Plan update to the Commissioners, the Town Council, and the County and Town Planning Boards, in joint session.

Commissioner Belfield moved that the County accept the proposed plan for submission to the State for its review before preparation of the final plan.

Ayes 7

No 0

Board Appointments

Edenton Board of Adjustments – By motion of Commissioner Gardner, Owen Maxwell was appointed as alternate member representing the County to the Edenton Board of Adjustments.

Ayes 7

No 0

Shepard-Pruden Library – Commissioner Alligood moved that Gwen Moye, Norman Brinkley, Loretta Gard and Craig Miller be appointed to the Library Board.

Ayes 7

No 0

Workforce Consortium Resolution

Commissioner Belfield moved that Chairman Ralph Cole be designated Chief Elected Official for the operations of the Workforce Investment Consortium.

Ayes 7

No 0

Schedule Public Hearing – NCDOT Secondary Roads Program

By motion of Commissioner Gardner, a public hearing was scheduled for the March 5 meeting of the Board of Commissioners at 9:00a.m. to receive the recommendations from the NCDOT for the Secondary Roads Program and comments.

Ayes 7

No 0

Designation of Officials to Execute Documents – Embarq Contract

By motion of Commissioner Goodwin, Finance Officer Lisa Jones and County Manager Cliff Copeland were authorized to sign documents on behalf of the County to complete the contract renewal with Embarq for the telephone equipment upgrade for Central Communications. This new equipment will transfer to the new Public Safety Center.

Ayes 7

No 0

Resolution – To Preserve and Protect the Commercial Fishing Industry

Hardy Plyer, commercial fishing representative on the NC Waterfront Access Study Commission, requested that the County and all coastal counties consider a resolution supporting the commercial fishing industry. With the increased utilization of waterfront properties for residential development, commercial fishermen are losing access to the sounds and rivers.

Commissioner Gardner made a motion that the County support the following resolution.

Ayes 7

No 0

Resolution

WHEREAS, the Board of Commissioners of the County of Chowan recognizes that commercial fishing plays a vital role in the economy, heritage, culture and history of North Carolina and Chowan County; and,

WHEREAS, commercial fishing is an asset of Chowan County that should be responsibly promoted for improved economic development, as supported by the State of North Carolina's 21st Century Community Initiative; and,

WHEREAS, commercial fishing plays an important role in the tourism economy; and

WHEREAS, commercial fishing is valuable to the preservation of the social fabric of Chowan County; and,

WHEREAS, commercial fishermen play an important role in research and hands-on education of the traveling public; and,

WHEREAS, from a health and economic standpoint, it is important that commercial fishermen be able to supply fresh local seafood to the traveling public, to restaurants and to families.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Board of Commissioners of Chowan County that the preservation of the commercial fishing industry is important as a supplier of fresh seafood and in the best interest of the people of Chowan County, and the public in general.

Adopted today, February 5, 2007.

Nancy B. Morgan, County Clerk

Request from Martin County – Herring Fishing

Martin County has requested the support of Chowan County and other northeast counties in its efforts to request the State of North Carolina Division of Marine Fisheries to lift the moratorium on herring fishing and allow a limited harvest quota of 100,000 pounds of commercial fishing and a twenty-five fish per person per day recreational herring fishing. The Martin County resolution states that “there does not seem to be consensus that an outright moratorium will provide any more benefit than a limited harvest quota in the long-term recovery of the fish stocks, particularly if the State is not able to identify funding for research and restoration efforts”. In its request for limited fishing, the resolution states that a limited harvest will “preserve a longtime local tradition and history” and the resolution also requests “the State of North Carolina to fund the research and restoration efforts necessary for the long-term recovery of the river herring fish stocks”.

Commissioner Goodwin commented that commercial fishermen told him that the moratorium has been amended.

By consensus of the Board members, the County Manager was asked to contact the Division of Marine Fisheries to determine the current status of the moratorium before a decision is determined.

Public Comment

None

Manager’s Report

County Manager Cliff Copeland extended his sympathy to Commissioner Belfield in the loss of his mother, Mrs. Elizabeth Belfield. Mr. Copeland noted that after Mrs. Belfield and her husband had educated four children with college degrees, that Mrs. Belfield, at the age of 79, completed her high school diploma.

Verizon Wireless

County Attorney Peter Rascoe announced that the County staff will meet with Verizon Wireless later this week to receive information on the location and the height of the proposed tower at a proposed location on Rocky Hock Road. The additional tower is slated to improve in-house service in the northern part of Chowan County, particularly the Arrowhead Beach/Chowan Beach area.

Affordable Housing Study

The consultant's report was received today, February 5 and a meeting of the committee will be scheduled.

George C. Moore Company Closing

Announcement was received last week that George C. Moore Company will close April 27, 2007, leaving 91 current employees out of work. Job fairs and educational opportunities information are being organized for March for the benefit of the Moore employees.

Board of Education Retreat

Mr. Copeland stated that he was invited to the Board of Education retreat to discuss County financing with school construction projects in mind. The State bond issue prospects were discussed.

Chairman Cole asked Mr. Copeland to invite Superintendent Smith to visit the Commissioners to discuss the Board of Education's plans for school construction.

Medicaid Expenses

Mr. Copeland distributed some notes provided by DSS Director Ben Rose from the NC Association of Social Services, concerning the discussion about the General Assembly Fiscal Research Division's presentation of a Medicaid Program Overview. A representative from the NC Association of County Commissioners attending the meeting, said that the overview quoted some "inaccurate, out of date or just plain wrong" information about national state participation rates. 2006 Medicaid expenses represented 15.8% of the state's General Fund expenditures, a total of \$2.9 billion. Medicaid covered 1.6 million state residents, or 18.1% of the state's population.

Valhalla Water Treatment Plant

Engineer for the Water Department, Bill Diehl, is assisting the Water Department in replacing strainers in the filters at the water plant. The first filter will be serviceable by March 1 and filters #2 and #3 will be serviceable by April 1.

Sandy Point Development Awarded Variance

At a meeting of the Coastal Resources Commission last week, the Sandy Point Development received the needed variances and permits for the project. The Corps of Engineers permit is expected in March. The developers hope to begin site construction this fall.

Sale of Surplus Foreclosed Property

In 2005, the County foreclosed on a 24 x 10 feet parcel located between the County parking lot and what is now the United Country Real Estate building. Following the foreclosure, the County attempted to sell the parcel to United Country without success. An offer to purchase has now been received for \$1500. County Attorney Peter Rascoe stated that without other options to sell the property and to get it back on the tax books, he recommended that the County accept the offer of \$1500 and authorize Tax Administrator Lynda Hendricks and himself to proceed with the sale. Commissioner Alligood made a motion that the County accept the offer of \$1500 and authorize the sale.

Ayes 7

No 0

General Assembly Ethics Bill

Commissioner Winslow noted the recent resignation of several of the COA Board of Trustees members who objected to the Ethics Bill which requires them to disclose their personal assets, as well as the personal assets of their family members. They objected to having to disclose the personal assets of their family members. Commissioner Winslow requested that the Board of Commissioners support the objections of the Board of Trustees.

Commissioner Belfield made a motion that the County Manager be authorized to submit a letter to the General Assembly requesting that the Ethics Bill be reconsidered as it pertains to family members.

Ayes 7

No 0

The meeting was adjourned.

Nancy B. Morgan, County Clerk