

Regular Meeting
Tuesday, July 16, 2013
8:00 am
Chowan County Public Safety Center
305 West Freemason Street

Minutes

The Chowan County Board of Commissioners held their regular meeting on Tuesday, July 16, 2013 at 6:00 pm at the Chowan County Public Safety Center Present: Chairman Keith Nixon, Commissioners Jeff Smith, Greg Bonner, Emmett Winborne, Ellis Lawrence, Alex Kehayes and John Mitchener.

Staff present: County Manager Zee Lamb, Finance Officer Willie Mack Carawan and Board Clerk Susanne Stallings.

Chairman Nixon called the meeting to order.

Approval of Agenda

Commissioner Mitchener moved to approve the agenda with the addition of discussion of a fire station for the southern portion of Chowan County. Chairman Nixon asked for all in favor, the motion passed (7-0).

Public Comment

Recognition

Recreation Director Jason Petersen and the Board recognized the 16U Edenton Chowan All-star Softball team. The team was successful in winning the district tournament and then continued on to win the State tournament. Mr. Petersen stated that because of the girls' excellent record they have been invited to the World Series to compete for the title. The World Series will be held in Wilson, North Carolina beginning August 2, 2013. The Board congratulated the girls on their win and wished them well at the World Series.

Finance Committee

BA1213-084

Account Code	Line Item	Debit	Credit
11-9800-980-60	Transfer to EMS	\$ 50,137.00	
11-3990-990-00	Fund Balance		\$ 50,137.00

BA1213-085

Account Code	Line Item	Debit	Credit
11-4953-445-00	4H United Way	\$ 296.00	
11-3990-990-09	Fund Balance – 4H United Way		\$ 296.00

BA1213-086

Account Code	Line Item	Debit	Credit
11.3980.980.41	Transfer from Hurricane Recovery	\$.02	
11.4261.351.00	Courthouse – M &R Bldgs		\$.02
33.3980.980.11	Transfer from General Fund		\$ 6,785.00
33.9930.995.00	Future Appropriation	\$ 6,785.00	

BA1213-087

Account Code	Line Item	Debit	Credit
11-3990-990-00	Fund Balance		\$ 43,649.00
11-9800-980-60	Transfer to EMS	\$ 43,649.00	
60-3980-980-11	Transfer from General		\$ 43,649.00
60-3437-410-00	Ambulance Services	\$ 43,649.00	

BA1314-001

Account Code	Description	Increase	Decrease
23-3990-990-00	Fund Balance	\$ 18,000.00	
23-4340-580-00	Capital Outlay - Bldg Impr	\$ 18,000.00	

BA 1213-088

Account Code	Line Item	Debit	Credit
73-3414-110-00	Town of Edenton Tax Coll		\$88,615
73-4140-601-00	Town of Edenton Tax Coll	\$88,615	
75-3100-180-00	HB 1779 Motor Veh Int		\$585
75-4140-630-00	HB 1779 Motor Veh Int	\$585	

Appropriating the additional revenues that were collected and disbursed

Mr. Carawan noted the Board gave authority to make the transfers 084-088 at the last meeting.

The Board discussed the two transfers from the General Fund to EMS and noted that additional revenues are expected for FY 1213 to that fund.

Commissioner Mitchener moved to approve the budget amendments. Chairman Nixon asked for all in favor, the motion passed unanimously (7-0).

Farmers Market

Vero Brentjens, the President of the Edenton Farmers Market presented the Board with a request to relocate the market from County owned property on Dicks Street to the Detention Center located on Court Street. She stated that some of the vendors have indicated a desire to relocate downtown with concerns about the current location. She stated that the market was offered space by Vidant Hospital however some of the larger vendors do not want to go to that location. She stated that the waterfront is a preferred location, but not a viable option because there is no protection from the rain.

The Board discussed the liability insurance that the County allows the Market to be on when operating on County Owned property.

Commissioner discussed the proposed location and discussed concerns with the market interfering with Superior Court.

Ms. Brentjens stated that the market has considered changing its operating days to a weekday to accommodate more residents. She stated this was common for markets to operate during the week.

The Board discussed various options for County property and many Board members supported offering space at the Agricultural Extension building. Ms. Brentjens stated this would have to be acceptable to her vendors and she would relay the offer.

Chairman Nixon requested that the Board send the matter to the Planning/Enterprise Committee for more discussions.

Swain repairs and alterations

Mr. Lamb stated he has met with Muriel Harmon to discuss repairs she is recommending for Swain Auditorium. He stated she is putting together an application to Golden Leaf for monies to make repairs to the auditorium.

Ms. Harmon stated that she is coordinating an event where the East Carolina Symphony will perform at Swain Auditorium in September. She stated there are repairs that are necessary for the performance. She requested that the back wall behind the stage be cleaned and repainted from water damage. She stated work to the exterior to seal the leaks is also needed to prevent future damage. She asked that the curtain on the backstage be removed to improve the acoustics noting this was recommended by the symphony's maestro. She stated that if the County began making repairs to the auditorium it would be beneficial for the grant possibility. She noted the stage floor needs to be cleaned, lights need to be checked and replaced and the front entrance to the auditorium needs to be cleaned.

Commissioner Mitchener stated the Board has been aware of the needs at Swain and has it on the long term agenda.

Mr. Lamb noted the County spent monies last year making repairs to the electrical system and the walls. He thanked Ms. Harmon for taking the lead on seeking these funds from Golden Leaf. He noted that there will be additional stains on the wall after it is painted because of the water leaking.

The Board discussed the usage of the building.

Ms. Stallings will obtain that information from the Senior Center and forward it to the Board.

Chairman Nixon discussed getting the Tourism Development Authority involved in the Swain Building. He noted that he plans to tour a similar facility in Suffolk VA to see if there are any ideas on rehabilitating and getting more use out of the auditorium. He recommended putting this topic up for discussion at the Planning/Enterprise Committee.

Spay Neuter Agreement

Barbara Yates stated she was representing AWARE a non-profit that would like to establish a spay-neuter program in Chowan County. She stated this program is for people on government assistance programs like Medicaid or food stamps to be able to receive no cost spay-neuter services. She stated that this program is funded through a special license plate. She stated that she felt this service would expand programs available at the Shelter.

Mr. Lamb noted a correction was needed to the date in the agreement to follow the fiscal year. He stated that he would review the agreement in more detail.

Commissioner Mitchener moved to approve the agreement and then withdrew his motion.

Chairman Nixon recommended placing this on the August 5, 2013 agenda.

Tax Collections Update

Tax Administrator Hosea Wilson provided the Board with an update on Tax collections. He provided the Board with a list of the top delinquent accounts. He stated that he would like to discuss outsourcing the foreclosure process with the Board in the future. He stated that he would bring a potential contractor to a future meeting. He stated many of the clients of that firm do not have multiyear delinquencies like Chowan currently has. He noted that this service is of no cost to the County. He stated another goal he would like to set for the Tax office is to begin accepting debit/credit cards in the office. He stated that he was aware the County previously accepted cards and did away with it in the office because of the expense to the County.

Commissioner Kehayes asked for clarification on the laws regarding those fees.

Mr. Lamb stated that the courts ruled that vendors can now pass that credit card fees along to the consumer.

Mr. Wilson stated that he felt the service would be more convenient to the public when they come in to pay their tax bill. He also noted that there is a delay in printing the FY 2013-14 tax bills he stated he is working to iron out all the issues that occurred from the software conversion. He stated his priority is to ensure the accuracy of the bills before they are mailed out.

Appointments

The Board discussed the vacancy on the ABC Board. The Board recommended the Clerk advertise the vacancy to accept applications. It was noted that the current Board member is eligible for reappointment.

Commissioner Winborne made a motion to reappoint Mr. Coston. He later rescinded his motion.

Chairman Nixon requested that this matter be put on the August 5, 2013 agenda.

Solid Waste Commercial

Mr. Lamb noted that at the last Board meeting the Board reduced the residential solid waste fee effective September 1, 2013 by \$1.50. He stated he was asked by the Town if that included the 4 commercial categories as well. He stated he would recommend reducing the three categories by \$1.50 also.

Chairman Nixon recommended putting this on the August 5, 2013 agenda.

Hydrilla

Chairman Nixon stated he would recommend scheduling a special meeting to invite neighboring counties, stakeholders and local officials.

Mr. Lamb stated he felt it would be beneficial to invite Senator Jenkins and Representative Steinburg also.

The Board discussed the fact that Raleigh legislators are still working on the budget and this meeting would need to hold off until mid to late August.

Scott Alons the County Soil and Water representative requested to be included in the meeting and planning. He recommended getting the Division of Water Resources and others in the fishing industry involved in the public meeting.

Ms. Stallings stated she would forward a letter to Representative Steinburg to discuss setting up this meeting.

Fire Department Discussion

Commissioner Mitchener stated that he would like to continue discussions on expanding the fire coverage to the southern portion of the County. He stated he has met with Town officials and feels this is a topic of discussion that should become a priority.

Commissioner Smith recommended that Commissioner Mitchener receive a copy of the 2007-08 fire protection study that was done on this topic.

The Board discussed the agreement between the County and the Town for fire protection services. Board members recommended setting up a meeting between the County manager, Town Manager and Board leadership and having the manager check with the auditor on the comingling of the fire tax monies.

Timely and Important Matters

IPad Discussion

Ms. Stallings explained that some Board members have requested upgrades on the iPads which require a different type of device to be ordered. She explained that she would like authorization to order the iPads to the Board specifications and clarification on the ownership of the iPads.

The Board discussed purchasing the iPads themselves or letting them be County owned.

The Board by consensus authorized the Clerk to purchase the basic iPads as priced and if Commissioners requested additional upgrades they would have to reimburse the County for the difference. The Board also clarified that the iPads would be owned by the County and would be declared surplus when no longer used by a Board member.

Fund Balance

Mr. Lamb discussed the estimates for Fund Balance noting that the audit has not been done and the final appropriation to fund balance would be determined by the auditor.

Riversound

Mr. Lamb reported that the roads have been tested and any problems identified at Riversound Development. He stated the project appears to be nearing the end and hopefully will be completed soon to allow for lot owners to obtain building permits.

Historic Jail and Jailers House

Chairman Nixon discussed the need to make repairs to the roof of the Jailers House. He requested that staff obtain bids on the project and discuss this at the next Planning/Enterprise Committee meeting.

New legislation for DSS

Commissioner Kehayes stated that new legislation requiring drug testing for public assistance is scheduled to be approved. He stated he may request that the Social Services Director speak to the Board on the impact of this legislation on the County's local DSS Budget.

COA Campus Advisory Board

Commissioner Lawrence noted an upcoming vacancy on that Board. Ms. Stallings will advertise the vacancy.

Closed Session

Commissioner Smith moved to go into closed session in accordance with NCGS 143-318 (11) (a) (5). Chairman Nixon asked for all in favor, the motion passed (7-0).

The minutes of the closed session are sealed.

Commissioner Mitchener moved to close the closed session. Chairman Nixon asked for all in favor, the motion passed (7-0).

Being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

D. Keith Nixon, Chairman

Susanne Stallings, Clerk