

Regular Meeting
Thursday, June 27, 2013
6:00 pm
Chowan County Public Safety Center
305 West Freemason Street

Minutes

The Chowan County Board of Commissioners held their regular meeting on Thursday, June 27, 2013 at 6:00 pm at the Chowan County Public Safety Center. This meeting was rescheduled from the originally scheduled July meeting because of the holiday conflict. Present: Chairman Keith Nixon, Commissioners Jeff Smith, Greg Bonner, Emmett Winborne, Alex Kehayes and John Mitchener.

Commissioner Ellis Lawrence was absent.

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

Chairman Nixon called the meeting to order and led the pledge.

Commissioner Smith then provided the invocation.

Approval of Agenda

Chairman Nixon noted the Board would need to add a Closed Session to the agenda at the end, in accordance with NCGS 143-318 (11) (a) (5).

Commissioner Mitchener moved to approve the agenda with the recommended change. Chairman Nixon asked for all in favor, the motion passed (6-0).

Public Comment

Chairman Nixon called for public comment, there was none.

Recognition

Chairman Nixon, Recreation Director Jason Petersen recognized J&J Environmental on the labor and materials donated to improve Chowan County properties. The Board and audience applauded Mr. and Mrs. Jimmy Droze.

Consent Agenda

- a. Minutes

Commissioner Mitchener noted a correction to the June 3, 2013 minutes. Commissioner Smith moved to approve the minutes. Chairman Nixon asked for all in favor, the motion passed unanimously (6-0).

b. Budget Amendments

Mr. Carawan provided the Board with internal budget transfers.

BA 1213-082 approved later in the meeting under Timely and Important Matters.

BA 1213-083 approved later in the meeting regarding payoff of the library note.

Mr. Carawan noted that there are several budget amendments needed to close out the FY 2012-13 fiscal year. He noted that some amendments will involve salary lines.

Chairman Nixon stated that the Board was advised by the auditor to go ahead and give authority to make the transfers before the end of the fiscal year.

Mr. Lamb stated that the amendments will be brought to the Board at the next meeting for a full vote.

Commissioner Mitchener moved to give the Manager and Finance Officer authority to make the transfers and report them to the Board on July 16, 2013.

Chairman Nixon asked for all in favor, the motion was approved unanimously (6-0).

Commissioner Smith requested that the budget amendment forms be revised to show the department name on the form.

Library Appointment

Commissioner Smith moved to appoint Shelby Strother to the Library Board. Chairman Nixon asked for all in favor, the motion passed (6-0).

JS move to appoint Shelby Strother, (6-0)

Centerhill Crossroads Fire Department Capital Request.

Mr. Lamb stated that during the budget process there was a discussion regarding a capital request from Centerhill Crossroads Fire Department. He stated the request was to install a new roof on the fire department building. He stated no decision was made during the budget planning process by the full Board. He stated the request still remains to allow Centerhill \$18,000 from the Fire district fund to install a new metal roof on the building.

Commissioner Winborne noted that the fire department is donating \$10,000 of the monies it has raised towards the project. He stated that the fire department is seeking \$18,000 from the fire fund to cover the remainder of the expense. He stated that he was informed that Centerhill Fire Department consistently turns in \$40,000 annually of unspent monies. He stated that if the fire department is turning in monies at the end of the year that is a good place to use the monies. He noted a metal roof will carry a 40 year warranty and this is a onetime capital improvement. He

stated there are more monies budgeted because the Board doubled the debt payments. He stated his support of the request.

Commissioner Smith stated that this is a proper use of fire fund monies. He stated that you cannot just look at total numbers when calculating the percentage of the fire fund is Centerhill money. He stated that it costs all County residents the same to operate a fire department. He stated that with the fire department being rural and raising its own monies to cover expenses such as this, the Board should take that into consideration when considering a request.

The Board discussed the fire fund and how monies are built into it. It was noted that Edenton Fire Department is given an annual appropriation based on a formula as is Belvidere Chappell Hill Fire Department. It was noted that this is the only Fire Department where the monies are managed by the County.

Commissioner Winborne noted an example of when Center Hill Crossroads Fire Department purchased its own tools for a fire truck.

Chairman Nixon stated he supports the Centerhill Crossroads Fire Department but is also concerned about the southern part of the County that does not have its own fire department. He discussed the fact that the monies in the Fire Fund are co-mingled from the fire tax collected from the different fire districts. He stated he was also concerned with the debt that is owed on equipment at Centerhill Crossroads.

Mr. Lamb provided the Board with a summary of the fire tax collections for each of the districts. He noted the County provided Belvidere Chappell Hill Fire Department \$12,800 and collects 17,000 in fire tax. He stated that Edenton collects \$322,000 and is given 290,000 in fire tax and Centerhill collects \$153,000 in fire tax and receives \$180,000. He noted that historically Centerhill has not spent approximately \$40,000 appropriated annually. He stated that some of the money in the fire fund balance could be assumed to be monies not spent by Centerhill. He discussed the fact that the funds are co-mingled and stated the auditor has never indicated any concerns with that.

Commissioner Smith stated his concern with not co-mingling the funds. He stated that the northern end of the county would not be able to collect as much as a district with more values and a larger population. He stated he didn't want the fire districts to become the haves and the have not's. He stated he felt all districts deserve the same fire protection.

The Board discussed various options for finding the \$18,000.

Fire Chief Mike Hamilton spoke regarding the request. He noted upcoming inspections and requirements that the fire department must meet including the state mandated standards that must be met. He stated that the budget estimate is an estimate. He noted the various community

organizations that utilize the fire department. He stated his appreciation for the support from the Board.

Commissioner Winborne moved to appropriate \$18,000 from the fire fund balance (not from monies that may be turned in in FY 2013-14).

Mr. Lamb noted that a budget amendment would be brought to the next meeting.

Chairman Nixon asked for all in favor, the motion passed unanimously (6-0).

Commissioner Winborne requested that the Fire Department host the Board for one of their monthly meetings once the roof is replaced.

Board Equipment

Board Clerk Susanne Stallings provided a summary of iPad costs to the Board from 4 vendors. The price estimates included additional features and accessory costs. The Board discussed the ownership of the iPads. It was decided that Board members would contact the clerk to pick the specific features they wanted on their iPad and that accessories would be purchased individually by the Board members.

Hydrilla

Mr. Lamb stated that a Board member requested a discussion on Hydrilla. He stated that Representative Bob Steinburg has discussed this issue and is working with the leadership in Raleigh to develop a plan to address the Hydrilla. He stated that there is a cost share program where 50% of the cost must be matched. He stated that a project in Rocky Hock was addressed in FY 2012-13 by the Board. He stated there are areas in the County that need to be addressed. He stated that he would like to see the State assist counties affected by Hydrilla but that Counties will most likely be asked to contribute monies to treat Hydrilla. He stated he would like for the Board to set monies aside for next year and that was not budgeted in the FY 2013-14 budget planning process.

Commissioner Winborne asked how much money the manager would recommend budgeting. He added that Representative Steinburg has proposed finding monies for treatment in the fees for fishing licenses.

Mr. Lamb stated he would recommend setting \$5,000 to \$6,000 aside.

Scott Alons with Soil and Water Conservation discussed the match program and the existing projects that are funded with private residents funding the treatment.

The Board discussed the difficult task of determining what areas require treatment and then deciding which to do first.

Mr. Alons discussed a plan of work that is designated every September through October.

Chairman Nixon stated he felt the treatment would be most effective with a comprehensive plan. He stated he felt the Counties should seek monies from Golden Leaf or other grant sources as well. He recommended getting neighboring counties involved also. He stated he would place the topic on a work session agenda for more discussion.

External Board and Committee reports

Commissioner Mitchener provided a report on the Senior Center Advisory Board.

Commissioner Kehayes provided a report on the activities of the East Carolina Behavioral Health Board. He noted that the proposed legislation to limit the membership on an area LME Board has passed. He stated that the membership will rotate between the 19 counties and his name was picked to serve a three year term.

Chairman Nixon reported on the activities of the TDA Board and the Health Department Board.

Timely and Important Matters

Senior Center Van

Mr. Lamb stated that Ms. Parker has been unable to locate a van. He stated that she has located one for around \$21,000. He requested approval of the additional monies (\$744 to \$1,000) to purchase the van. He stated the purchase can be made in the current fiscal year and a budget amendment would be brought back to the Board.

BA-1213-082-T \$21,000 for capital equipment, from contingency to purchase a used van for the Senior Center.

Chairman Nixon asked where the monies would come from.

Mr. Lamb stated that there is \$26,380 in contingency.

Commissioner Mitchener moved to authorize the manager to spend up to \$21,000 for the purchase of the van and bring a budget amendment back at the next meeting.

Commissioner Smith stated his concern over the cost going up on the van and stated he still feels that if staff waited they could find one within their price range.

Chairman Nixon asked for all in favor, the motion passed (5-1 Smith).

Spraying weeds at Pembroke Creek

The Board began discussions on spraying the weeds at Pembroke creek. The discussion was tabled until after the closed session to allow time for the Finance Officer to review the budget for this property.

Library Trustee Loan

Chairman Nixon gave a history on the loan from the Library Trustees to the County for cost overages on the library construction. He stated the total loan was \$75,000 and the County has been making payments. He stated that \$45,000 is still owed. He recommended that the Board pay off the loan using monies from the USDA reserve line that still remains. He then passed the gavel to Vice Chairman Smith.

BA-1213-083 \$45,000 Capital Reserve Note to Debt Service.

Chairman Nixon moved to pay off the remaining \$45,000 loan to the Library trustees.

Commissioner Winborne stated his support of the motion.

Commissioner Mitchener stated his support of the motion.

Vice Chairman Smith asked for all in favor, the motion passed (6-0).

Vice Chairman Smith passed the gavel back to Chairman Nixon.

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 (6-0).

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 (6-0).

Pembroke Creek

The Board discussed the weed spraying. Chairman Nixon recommended that if possible the weeds be treated soon with the additional monies in the Recreation budget (capital monies). He stated the director could bring the request back to the Board if he is unable to locate monies to treat the weeds at Pembroke Creek.

Being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

D. Keith Nixon, Chairman

Susanne Stallings, Clerk