

Regular Meeting
May 7, 2007

The Chowan County Board of Commissioners met in regular session on Monday, May 7, 2007, at 9:00 a.m. on the Panel Room of the 1767 Courthouse.

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

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

Consent Agenda

Commissioner Winslow moved that the Consent Agenda, including the April minutes and the following tax releases and budget amendments, be approved.

Ayes 7

No 0

Tax Releases

R Blount	\$112.72	vehicle repossessed
CMCooper	\$137.51	listed in Perquimans County
JP Creef	\$159.90	listed in Pasquotank County
Fam.Med.Edenton	\$114.47	vehicle sold
TJackson	\$111.92	vehicle sold
RBWebb	\$100.53	vehicle totaled

Budget Amendments

DSS	\$500	funds to assist foster children to independent living (age 18)
EMS	\$411	insurance proceeds/vehicle accident

RiverSound Development

County Manager Cliff Copeland announced that the hearing for the RiverSound Development was not scheduled on this May agenda because the applicant has not yet received some of the necessary permits. The hearing will be rescheduled as soon as the permits are received and can be advertised.

Resolution – Honoring the John A Holmes Junior Reserve Officers’ Training Corp
County Attorney Peter Rascoe introduced Cadet Lt. Col. Evans, Cadet Lt. Col. Jordan, Cadet Major Thigpen and Cadet Command Master Sgt. Allen, representing the Holmes JROTC unit, and School Superintendent Dr. Allen Smith. Mr. Rascoe read the following resolution. Commissioner Belfield moved that the resolution be adopted and Chairman Cole presented the resolution to Cadet Lt. Col. Evans and Dr. Smith.

Ayes 7

No 0

Dr. Smith thanked the Commissioners for the recognition paid to the Cadets and said that the Holmes JROTC unit members are a fine example for all students.
Cadet Lt. Col. Evans thanked the Commissioners for their support.

RESOLUTION
HONORING THE
U.S. ARMY RESERVE OFFICERS' TRAINING CORPS UNIT
OF JOHN A. HOLMES HIGH SCHOOL
EDENTON-CHOWAN SCHOOLS

WHEREAS, the United States Army Junior Reserve Officers' Training Corps (JROTC) was created by Congress in the National Defense Act of 1916 which declared that the purpose of the JROTC is to instill in students in United States secondary educational institutions the value of citizenship, service to country, personal responsibility, and a sense of accomplishment; and,

WHEREAS, the JROTC Unit at John A. Holmes High School of the Edenton-Chowan Schools, known as the "Aces Battalion" and led by its well qualified and inspirational adult instructors, has constantly exemplified all the attributes of citizenship, service, personal responsibility, and accomplishment in its presence and work for the community of Chowan County and the Town of Edenton; and,

WHEREAS, the Aces Battalion has constantly assisted the state, local, and charitable agencies and organizations of its community in the organization and performance of various public events by serving as color guards, honor guards, event marshals, docents, and interpreters; and,

WHEREAS, the sharp presence of the student members and adult instructors of the Aces Battalion at public events in the community, including parades, athletic contests, and all types of public ceremonies has instilled a strong sense of pride in citizens and serves as an inspiration for the youth of the community to aspire to the same principles of the JROTC purpose.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Chowan County Board of Commissioners does hereby formally recognize and honor the dedication, citizenship, service, and commitment of the Reserve Junior Officers' Training Corps Unit, "Aces Battalion", of John A. Holmes High School of the Edenton-Chowan Schools, and does hereby order that this resolution be spread upon the official minutes of the Board.

Adopted by the Chowan County Board of Commissioners, this the 7th day of May, 2007.
Nancy B. Morgan
County Clerk
Chowan County Board of Commissioners

Fisher Field Ballfield Lights

Mr. Copeland presented proposals for lease/purchase bids for financing the Fisher Field ballfield lighting, as follows:

BB&T 3.88%; RBC Centura 3.91%; Wachovia 4.68%.

Commissioner Allgood moved that the low bidder, BB&T be awarded the lease/purchase contract and that the resolution in the lease/purchase contract also be approved.

Ayes 7

No 0

Mr. Copeland announced that the dedication of the new lights and a ceremonial first pitch will take place at 5:30pm. tonight, May 7.

Resolution – Workforce Development Professional Month

By motion of Commissioner Downum, the following resolution was approved to recognize Workforce Development professionals for their commitment to their communities.

Ayes 7

No 0

Workforce Development Professional Month 2007

Resolution

WHEREAS, the economic development of every region in North Carolina and the ability of our businesses and industries to compete in the global economy is more than ever before dependent on the availability and quality of a skilled workforce; and,

WHEREAS, the complexity and fast-paced change in our economy and labor markets puts new demands on individuals and employers at all levels; and,

WHEREAS, job seekers need the assistance of knowledgeable and dedicated professionals to facilitate the process by which our workforce identifies, prepares for, obtains and maintains employment and self-sufficiency; and,

WHEREAS, employers depend on similar levels of professional services to help them recruit and retain a competitive workforce and to continually upgrade the skill sets of their incumbent employees.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Chowan County Board of Commissioners joins with the North Carolina Commission on Workforce Development, the North Carolina Employment and Training Association, and the North Carolina Society for Human Resource Management in designating the month of May to honor all those individuals in all Workforce Development organizations and partnerships who play such vital roles in our economy.

Adopted by the Chowan County Board of Commissioners, this the 7th day of May, 2007.

Nancy B. Morgan

County Clerk

Chowan County Board of Commissioners

Resolution – Older Americans Month

Commissioner Belfield made a motion that the following resolution be approved to honor the older Americans who are citizens of Chowan County.

Ayes 7

No 0

Older Americans Month
Resolution

WHEREAS, Chowan County is home to more than 3,500 citizens 60 years of age or older; and,

WHEREAS, the nation, state, and geographical area of jurisdiction are experiencing a major shift toward a maturing society; and,

WHEREAS, older people are diverse, respected citizens who continue to contribute to the nation's social and economic well-being; and,

WHEREAS, the oldest of the baby boomers are celebrating their 61st birthday this year, and the number of individuals providing care to family members and friends is expanding significantly; and,

WHEREAS, the opportunities and challenges that lie ahead require consideration of health and long-term services and supports, and work together to rebalance and modernize the current systems to provide adequate plans to address the needs of current and future generations; and,

WHEREAS, older people are entitled to live lives of dignity and independence through:
Streamlined access to information and community services;
Information about cost-effective prevention practices and activities that will improve health and quality of life; and,
Innovative, affordable options of care and support that will provide an array of choices about how and where to live.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Chowan County Board of Commissioners does hereby proclaim May 2007 to be Older Americans Month, and urge all citizens to honor older adults, and those who care for them, during May and throughout the year.

Adopted by the Chowan County Board of Commissioners, this the 7th day of May, 2007.

Nancy B. Morgan

County Clerk

Chowan County Board of Commissioners

Resolution – Support for Feasibility Study to Establish a Northeastern North Carolina Heritage Area

Chamber of Commerce Director Richard Bunch and Tourism Development Director Nancy Nicholls presented a resolution for the Board’s consideration in support of seeking funding for a feasibility study to establish a Federal Heritage Area in Northeastern North Carolina. Congressman Butterfield has entered a proposed bill for funding and local support is crucial. Federal money to a Federal Heritage Area will support specific projects in the sixteen-county region.

Commissioner Alligood made a motion that the following resolution be approved.

Ayes 7

No 0

**RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF AN ACT TO DIRECT THE SECRETARY OF
THE INTERIOR TO CONDUCT A STUDY OF THE SUITABILITY AND
FEASIBILITY OF ESTABLISHING THE
NORTHEASTERN NORTH CAROLINA HERITAGE AREA IN NORTH
CAROLINA**

WHEREAS, the sixteen counties in North Carolina’s Northeast Region have many natural, historic, cultural and recreations resources that represent distinctive aspects of American heritage worthy of recognition; and

WHEREAS, North Carolina’s Northeast Commission, with the support of the North Carolina Department of Commerce, Division of Tourism, Film & Sports Development; the North Carolina Arts Council; and the Region’s local chambers of commerce, tourism professionals, arts councils and community and economic development organizations, has spearheaded the Northeastern North Carolina Heritage Initiative; and

WHEREAS, The Northeastern North Carolina Heritage Initiative has joined the communities in the Northeast Region in a regional effort to strengthen and revitalize their economies through heritage tourism development; and

WHEREAS, the House Resolution introduced by Congressman G.K. Butterfield requests that the Secretary of Interior conduct a study to determine the feasibility of designation of the Northeastern North Carolina Heritage Area; and

WHEREAS, this prestigious designation would provide the mechanism to preserve the Northeast Region’s nationally significant landscape, create a new economic development and tourism tool for our region, develop new partnerships, and introduce Northeastern North Carolina to its rightful place in the hearts and minds of all Americans; and

WHEREAS, the Chowan County Board of Commissioners recognizes the importance of tourism to our local and regional economies and that designation as a National Heritage Area will provide national recognition to our counties and Region, as well as provide federal and private funding to preserve and promote our historic, cultural, natural and recreational resources.

BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED THAT the Chowan County Board of Commissioners requests that the North Carolina Congressional Delegation support legislation for the Northeastern North Carolina Heritage Area Initiative and voice its support to members of the House Committee on Resources for passage.

Adopted this 7th day of May, 2007 by the Chowan County Board of Commissioners.
Nancy B. Morgan, County Clerk

Juvenile Crime Prevention Council

Mildred Vanterpool and Sherry Babb presented information on the activities of the Juvenile Crime Prevention Council. Commissioner Belfield, DSS Director Ben Rose and Recreation Department Director Robbie Laughton represent Chowan County on the JCPC. An intensive supervision program, After School Plus program, psychological assessments and JCPC certification program were funded through the \$87,503 in the Chowan County funding. Ms. Vanterpool noted the community resources available to the JCPC, including the Boys and Girls Club, Teen Court, 4-H, Scouts and Recreation Department programs, the Edenton-Chowan Schools and the 21st Century, Governor's One on One and the Pete Thompson Home. Chowan County JCPC programs served a total of 166 juveniles during the 2005-06 year.

Human Services Committee Report

Mr. Copeland reported that a training session is scheduled for tomorrow, Tuesday, for Department Heads and administration about strengthening the County's worker compensation program. Due to a fatal claim and two long-term recuperation claims, the County is currently experiencing high worker compensation insurance costs. Building coverage has increased since the rate increase for "hurricane zones". Commissioner Gardner commented that insurance companies, for the most part, have abandoned northeastern North Carolina, with increased rates and reduced services. Changes have been made in the personnel policy, as previously addressed, and the County has appointed a physician for worker compensation services.

Gang Task Force Update

Mr. Rose, Chairman of Chowan County's Gang Task Force, and Sheriff Dwayne Goodwin talked about the issues being addressed by the Task Force and the Chowan County Sheriff's Office. Mr. Rose has appointed sub-committees to address specific issues and a community survey is being designed. Mr. Rose is also implementing a program on the County website for information about the gang issues and ways to address specific needs. In an effort to begin intervention at an earlier age, it is also planned to have a counselor in the middle school next year. Mr. Rose stated that although all these actions respond to the gang activity, parental involvement is essential. Sheriff Goodwin said that the previous School Resource Officer Greg Whitehurst was able to produce some positive progress, and due to his promotion, SRO Ken Townsend has filled the position at the high school this year. Both officers worked with identified at-risk groups. Sheriff Goodwin said that students must be involved in after school programs, athletics, and other clubs and activities, that students must be moved away from the gang culture. He, too, stressed the absolute need for parental involvement and wants to see programs developed for parental counseling. Commissioner Belfield emphasized the need for training to begin at home and asked if when the Sheriff visits parents, if the parents are receptive to the effort to separate the child from the gang activities. The Sheriff responded that several issues hinder parents from accepting their role, including being uneducated in understanding the symbols and actions of gang activity, some denial, and a definite lack of supervision and parental care is obvious.

Sheriff Goodwin talked about the question if organized gang activity is in Chowan County. He said that he hesitates to try to define a gang, that in his opinion, anytime one has two organized groups fighting over anything, there is a gang issue, no matter what they call themselves. He knows that these small town groups want to be associated with the known gang names, for notoriety, but that only in two or three instances has he seen any out-of-town influence.

The question was asked about the positive influence that uniforms might provide, to get rid of the “colors” issues.

Sheriff Goodwin said that law enforcement “cannot arrest away the problem” and that the support and work of the families and the community is essential to any success that might be accomplished to eliminate this gang-like activity.

Inspections/Planning Report

Planner Wes Haskett distributed monthly reports, noting that 21 zoning permits were issued in April, 326 building inspections performed and 12 nuisance code violations abated. Revenue collected during the month of April totaled \$15,610.

Appointment of County Clerk

This being the last official meeting for County Clerk Nancy Morgan, prior to retirement, Mr. Copeland introduced Susanne Stallings. Mrs. Stallings has accepted the position vacated in the County Manager’s Office by Mrs. Morgan’s retirement. Mr. Copeland recommended that Mrs. Stallings be appointed County Clerk, effective June 1. Deputy Clerk Carrie Byrum will continue to serve in that capacity.

Commissioner Winslow moved that Mrs. Stallings be appointed County Clerk.

Ayes 7

No 0

Mrs. Stallings received the oath of office as County Clerk from Mrs. Morgan.

Public Comment

Judy Adams noted the successful National Day of Prayer sponsored by the Black clergy in Chowan County on May 3. She requested that the County and other churches and civic organizations join this effort to address community issues, including the gang-related issues so on the mind of the community.

Executive Session

By motion of Commissioner Alligood, the regular meeting was recessed to conduct an Executive Session, to consider a proposal to acquire property.

Ayes 7

No 0

The matter was discussed, the Executive Session adjourned and the regular meeting reconvened by motion of Commissioner Alligood.

Ayes 7

No 0

Commissioner Belfield moved that the County proceed to purchase two properties at the entrance to the Chowan County Public Safety Center on the corner of Granville Street and Freemason Circle, as follows:

501 N. Granville Street (Thelma Moore and Thelma Ford)

Tax value of \$35,000; asking price \$39,000 plus closing costs and a relocation cost of \$2,500.

503 N. Granville Street (Herbert Brooks)

Tax value of \$39,000; asking price \$40,000.

Demolition costs are not yet determined. The lots will be converted to greenspace and will be maintained by the Town of Edenton.

Ayes 7

No 0

North Carolina Teacher of the Year

Mr. Rascoe announced that local teacher James Bell, and son-in-law of Commissioner Alligood, was selected as the North Carolina Teacher of the Year and has been so recognized by Governor Easley. Commissioner Alligood commented that he is “mighty proud”.

The meeting was adjourned.

Nancy B. Morgan, County Clerk

Board of Equalization and Review

The Board of Commissioners offered oaths of office as the Board of Equalization and Review, which were received by County Clerk Nancy Morgan.

Tax Administrator Lynda Hendricks served as Clerk to the Board of Equalization and Review.

Following the Board of Equalization and Review, the Board of Commissioners conducted a dedication ceremony at the Northern Chowan County Community Center, where the gymnasium was named the R. Wayne Goodwin Gymnasium, in honor and memory of deceased Chairman of the Board of Commissioners Richard Wayne Goodwin, who passed away in October 2006.

Bennett’s Millpond

On the return trip to Edenton, Commissioners were invited to stop by Bennett’s Millpond to see the progress of the rehabilitation of the buildings and grounds at the Millpond under the supervision of Maintenance Director Orville Mason.