

Regular Meeting
April 4, 2005

The Chowan County Board of Commissioners met in regular session on Monday, April 4, 2005 at 6:00 pm in the Panel Room of the 1767 Chowan County Courthouse.

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

Prior to the 6:00pm meeting, the Board of Commissioners met with the Board of Education at Holmes High School for a tour of some renovation work in the exceptional children area, the shop area and the guidance/career planning area of the school, including new heating and air conditioning, dropped ceilings, electric and data wiring and new windows.

Renovation work planned for this summer will include work in upstairs classrooms, restrooms, and asbestos abatement under the building.

The members of the two bodies then met in a work session as a follow-up to the February meeting. The members participated in a session moderated by Dr. Peggy Yates to identify priorities from the list of possibilities (from the last meeting) to improve/enhance the operations and services of the School System.

These priorities include: nutrition and wellness emphasis, expand character education and efforts to increase/improve parental involvement, increase foreign language offerings, identify ways to market Chowan County and work to find ways to provide affordable housing, particularly for young professionals who might come to Chowan County to work.

It was agreed among the group that the two Board Chairmen will appoint three members to serve on a Commissioners/Board of Education committee. This committee will be responsible to assign sub-committees to address the issues as identified as priorities and then to report to the Board of Commissioners and the Board of Education. These sub-committees may be comprised of staff members and community citizens familiar with the various topics. For example, the County Planner would be able to assist in the identification of ways to address affordable housing, and the County's Tourism Development Authority Director would be able to assist in the identification of ways to market the area to attract qualified teachers to Chowan County.

The meeting was adjourned.

Regular Meeting 6:00pm

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

Consent Agenda

Commissioner Belfield moved that the Consent Agenda, including the minutes of the March meeting and the following budget amendments, tax releases and refunds, be approved.

Ayes 7

No 0

Budget Amendments

DSS	5372	increase \$ 3,185	crisis funding
Soil/Water	4730	increase \$60,000	Isabel Emerg. Stream Cleanup Grant

Tax Releases

WA Bass	\$127.61	vehicle turned in
AD Manley	\$101.04	Title 38-veh adapted to disabled
MA Nagle	\$175.31	listed in Chatham Co
FC Shelton	\$415.93	tax value reduced to purchase price
CH Weaver	\$117.55	deceased-veh given to son in NY
Tax Refund		
Central Carolina Builders Corp	\$110.68	duplicate listing

Public Hearing – 2005 Small Cities Community Development Block Grant

The Chairman recessed the regular meeting and declared a public hearing open to receive comment on needs that may be addressed through a Small Cities CDBG application.

No comment was offered.

County Manager Cliff Copeland stated that the County will present a proposal in a second public hearing to be scheduled at a later date, to extend water lines on Highway 17 to the location of the Chowan River Bridge, to Wharf Landing and to the site of the proposed fishing pier.

The Chairman adjourned the public hearing and reconvened the regular meeting.

By motion of Commissioner Downum, the Board scheduled a second public hearing for the May 2 meeting at 9:00 a.m. to receive comment on the County's proposed application for CDBG-Economic Development Funds to extend water and sewer improvements to Wharf Landing and the proposed Chowan River Fishing Pier.

Ayes 7

No 0

Public Hearing – 2005-06 Rural Operating Assistance Program

The Chairman recessed the regular meeting and declared a public hearing to receive comment on the proposed application and use of Chowan County's allocation from the Rural Operating Assistance Program.

Finance Officer Lisa Jones presented the proposed use as follows:

WorkFirst/Employment Transportation Program	\$4,276
Rural General Public Transportation Program	\$32,737,

for a total funding of \$37,403.

No public comment was offered.

The public hearing was adjourned and the regular meeting reconvened by the Chairman. Commissioner Gardner made a motion that the County approved the recommended allocation, to be administered through Albemarle Regional Health Services.

Ayes 7

No 0

Public Meeting – Emergency Operating Center Funding

The Chairman again recessed the regular meeting and declared a public hearing open to receive comment on any environmental concerns related to the EOC project.

Staff Attorney Peter Rascoe reported that when the County acquired ownership of the property, Phase I and II environmental assessments were completed with no adverse findings. The proposed construction site is 500 feet from the creek, so no environmental impacts are identified. He also stated that adjacent landowners and Preservation North Carolina, the previous owner of the property, have been notified of the construction proposal.

No comment from the public was offered.

The public meeting was closed and the regular meeting reconvened by the Chairman. Mr. Copeland presented a Letter of Conditions as prepared by the USDA for the loan application for the construction of the EOC (\$7,580,200), and also for the loan application for the EOC equipment and improved security for County/Town facilities (\$3,376,400). Mr. Copeland emphasized that the County will apply for grant assistance from other sources to decrease the amount of money the County will need to borrow from USDA for this construction.

By motion of Commissioner Alligood, the County approved the two Letters of Conditions to be submitted to USDA in the application packages.

Ayes 7

No 0

Planning/Inspections Report

Wharf Landing Final Plat

Planner Elizabeth Bryant presented a final plat for the Wharf Landing condominium subdivision, as submitted by owner Paul Waff. The Planning Board reviewed the final plat and recommend approval by the Board of Commissioners.

Mr. Waff stated that 90 units and 150 boat slips are planned with a restaurant/inn.

Permits, including CAMA and stormwater permits, are in hand.

Commissioner Alligood made a motion that the County approve the final plat as submitted.

Ayes 7

No 0

Zoning Study

Mrs. Bryant stated that bidders to perform the zoning study were interviewed by a committee of staff and Planning Board members, and presented two proposals to the Planning and Enterprise Committee for its review. The Planning Board and the Planning and Enterprise Committee recommended that the County retain Wooten Associates to conduct the zoning study and to revise the subdivision ordinance as needed. Though the two proposals were both acceptable, the Wooten proposal and presentation emphasized the priority to conduct public information meetings, which the County staff believes is very important to a successful project. Wooten Associates also has good experience in

Chowan County, they have worked with Edenton on several projects, and has been doing this kind of work for many years.

Commissioner Cole moved that the County contract with Wooten Associates for the zoning study.

Ayes 7

No 0

Hazard Mitigation Grant Program

The State informed Mrs. Bryant that one home outside the Town, at Blackbeard Road, was approved in Phase I and II of the Hazard Mitigation buyout/elevation program. Also, one home on Mohawk Trail is expected to be approved in Phase III.

Mrs. Bryant requested that Holland Consulting Planners, who prepared the application, be retained to administer the mitigation grant.

By motion of Commissioner Belfield, the County agreed to retain Holland Consulting Planners to administer the mitigation grant.

Ayes 7

No 0

Chairman Goodwin noted that he and Planning Board member Craig Blanchard attended a zoning seminar with Mrs. Bryant and Mr. Rascoe last weekend, and commented on the complexity of the issues and thanked Mrs. Bryant and Mr. Rascoe for the excellent job they do to manage this work for the County.

Senior Tarheel Legislature

Rev. Jim Huskins reported the efforts of the Senior Tarheel Legislature in its recent meeting, including requests to the General Assembly as follows:

*Increase funding for home and community based services for older adults by increasing the Home and Community Care Block Grant by \$5 million.

*Re-enact the long-term care insurance tax credit as recommended by the NC Study Commission on Aging.

*Strengthen efforts to protect the quality of the State's air, water and soil and appropriate \$10 million in grant funds for communities to address environmental contamination.

*Increase funding for senior centers by \$3 million.

*Take steps to better support grandparents and other family members raising minor children.

Chowan Hospital Directors' Council

By motion of Commissioner Downum, Lee Miller was reappointed to serve on the Chowan Hospital Directors' Council.

Ayes 7

No 0

Interagency Council Juvenile Crime Prevention Council

Sheriff Fred Spruill presented the Interagency Council's recommendations for allocation of the County's Juvenile Crime Prevention funds as follows:

Juvenile Justice and At-Risk Students	\$56,861
Recreation Dept After School Program/Victims Restitution Program	\$22,850
Albemarle Dispute Center Mediation/Conflict Resolution Program	\$ 1,200

Commissioner Belfield moved that the Sheriff's recommendation be approved.

Ayes 7

No 0

Coastal Medical Transport's Application – Ambulance Service Franchise

Mr. Rascoe presented an application from Coastal Medical Transport to operate an ambulance service in Chowan County. EMS Coordinator Doug Belch summarized the County's Ordinance for Ambulance Franchises and presented a review of the financial impact to EMS if transfers were franchised, instead of performed by the Chowan EMS. Of the 963 transfers performed in January, February and March of this year, 402 were in-town transfers.

In discussion, Commissioner Alligood stated that he opposes services being franchised since point-to-point ambulance transfers will help support the County's obligation to provide emergency rescue services. He noted that the business of ambulance transfers is very lucrative, and the County has the equipment and the ability to retain the staff to provide this service.

No additional equipment would be required for the County to provide this service and the current staff is now providing the manpower, but will not be able to sustain this level of coverage. The staff suggested that the County might consider employing a two-person transfer team.

Mr. Rascoe requested that the County schedule a hearing at its May 2 meeting to hear evidence in order to make a determination if granting such a franchise to Coastal Medical Transport is appropriate to the County's ordinance.

Commissioner Belfield made a motion that the County schedule this hearing at its May 2 meeting. Mr. Rascoe will notify Coastal Medical Transport of the hearing.

Ayes 7

No 0

Amendment to Personnel Policy – County Positions Requiring Sufficient Physical Agility to Safely Perform Job Duties

Mr. Rascoe presented a proposed amendment to the Personnel Policy to address the need to establish sufficient physical agility requirements to safely perform job duties, which are determined by the County Manager and Department Heads, to require performance of minimum standards of sufficient physical agility without endangering the safety and well being of the employee or others, shall be required to submit to, and successfully pass, a minimum standard agility test as a condition of employment. The test shall be designed and implemented by the appropriate Department Head.

After initial employment, employees in the same positions requiring sufficient physical agility to safely perform the job shall be required to periodically perform a physical agility test at such intervals as determined appropriate by the employees' Department Head.

Positions to be determined to require physical agility to safely perform may include, but are not limited to, certain full-time or part-time positions of the Chowan County Sheriff's Office, the Chowan County Department of Emergency Services, and other public safety or emergency services related positions.

Department Heads supervising those positions determined to require physical agility to safely perform, shall design and submit for approval of the County Manager or appropriate elected Department Head, the actual tests, remedial policies, and consistent disciplinary policies related to unsuccessful completion of the tests. Such tests and policies shall be reviewed annually.

An inter-department study committee will work with the departments and is in the process of initiating a county-wide program of fitness, Chowan Fitness Initiative, to encourage all County employees to participate in the wellness and fitness program. Commissioner Alligood made a motion that the County approve this Fitness Initiative and authorize the identified Department Heads to proceed to implement appropriate standards.

Ayes 7

No 0

County Ordinance for the Management of Solid Waste

Mrs. Jones presented a proposed addition to the Solid Waste Ordinance, pertaining to commercial use of the County convenience centers. The convenience centers are for residential use and commercial waste must be deposited at the landfill.

The attorneys for the three participating counties, Chowan, Perquimans and Gates, have reviewed this Ordinance and recommend its adoption. All three counties are requested to adopt identical ordinances to simplify operations and enforcement.

Commissioner Belfield moved that the County approve the Ordinance as submitted.

Ayes 7

No 0

Resolution Supporting Federal Funding of the Albemarle Resource Conservation and Development

Commissioner Winslow moved that the County approve the following resolution supporting efforts to secure federal funding for the Albemarle RC&D. In this same motion, the County was authorized to serve as fiscal agent and contract with an interim part-time employee to fill the position vacated when Rodney Johnson retired, by a reimbursable agreement for all expenses.

Ayes 7

No 0

Resolution

WHEREAS, Chowan County is located within the geographic service area of Albemarle Resource Conservation & Development; and,

WHEREAS, Albemarle RC&D plays an important role in protecting the environment in a way that improves the local economy and standard of living in Chowan County; and,

WHEREAS, the Chowan County Board of Commissioners believes that natural resource conservation continues to be of prime importance in Northeast North Carolina; and,

WHEREAS, Albemarle RC&D provides technical assistance and project administration for vital resource project; and,

WHEREAS, the lack of adequate Federal funding will cause Albemarle RC&D to no longer have the assistance of a full-time coordinator.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Chowan County Board of Commissioners does hereby encourage and support any and all efforts to secure adequate Federal funding to full staff the Albemarle RC&D, allowing the organization to continue to serve Chowan County and Northeast North Carolina.

Adopted today, April 4, 2005.

Nancy B. Morgan, County Clerk

Resolution of Appreciation to the City of Norfolk, Virginia and the Norfolk Police Department/Norfolk Police Harbor Patrol Unit Dive Team
Commissioner Winslow made a motion that the County approve the following resolution to be presented to the City of Norfolk and the City of Norfolk Police Department at a Norfolk City Council meeting as can be scheduled. Mr. Rascoe, Mr. Belch and Emergency Management Coordinator Patty Madry will present the Resolution to the City of Norfolk and its Police Department.

Ayes 7

No 0

Resolution

WHEREAS, adequate emergency response to the needs of the public is a primary mission of the Office of Emergency Management of the Chowan County Department of Emergency Services; and,

WHEREAS, the Chowan County Office of Emergency Management did, during the months of January and February, 2005, coordinate two separate multi-agency recovery efforts for two drowning victims in adjoining waters of the Chowan River and the Albemarle Sound; and,

WHEREAS, the City of Norfolk, Virginia, and the Norfolk Police Department graciously and unselfishly offered the expertise and technical services of the Norfolk Police Special Enforcement Division's Harbor Patrol Unit-Dive Team to the Chowan County Office of Emergency Management during these two recovery efforts; and,

WHEREAS, the ultimate successes of these two efforts were based primarily on the direct involvement and expertise of the Norfolk Police Harbor Patrol Dive Team in the

implementation of its side scan sonar unit in order that both drowning victims were located, recovered, and returned to their families for proper internment.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Chowan County Board of Commissioners does hereby express its gratitude to the City of Norfolk, the Norfolk Police Department, and the Norfolk Police Harbor Patrol Unit-Dive Team for the expertise and technical support provided to the Chowan County Office of Emergency Management of the Department of Emergency Services during emergency efforts conducted in the Chowan River and the Albemarle Sound during January and February of 2005.

Adopted today, April 4, 2005.

Nancy B. Morgan, County Clerk

Board Appointment – COA Board of Trustees

By motion of Commissioner Belfield, Commissioner Harry Lee Winslow was reappointed to the COA Board of Trustees.

Ayes 7

No 0

Sewer Study

Mr. Copeland presented the preliminary sewer rate study as prepared by Management Applications Consulting, based on the engineering study conducted by Diehl and Phillips. Assumptions used in this study include:

*3.00% cost of debt

*50-year useful life of the collection system

*40-year term for debt structure for the collection system

*collection system cost of \$8,650,500 and \$4,000,000 in grants to offset costs

*30 year useful life and term for debt structure for treatment plant

*treatment plant cost of \$4,321,094 and \$2,000,000 in grants to offset costs

*treatment plant operating cost of \$2/1000 gal treated

*582 customers connected to the system in the first year

*designed annual flow per State's standard formula is 78,475,000 gallons.

Rate estimates range from about \$50 to \$75/month for a self-supporting system. Growth will reduce costs. Mr. Copeland discussed the use of either a service district or a connection assessment per household.

He mentioned the fact that lots in the southern part of the County, particularly the impacted areas of Cape Colony and Country Club where lots are not developable because of drainage issues that will not support septic tanks, would be marketable with the sewer service and would significantly increase property values in the community.

He recommended that the County proceed to schedule an information meeting with the residents in the impacted area including Cape Colony and Country Club Drive sections to discuss the options and advantages to the system.

Public Comment

None

Manager's Report

Mr. Copeland presented the executive summary from the Voice Interoperability Plan for Emergency Responders (VIPER) as prepared for the State and local governments to upgrade communications to 800 MHz.

725th Quartermaster Company, North Carolina National Guard

He announced that the local National Guard unit has been activated to Iraq and a ceremony is scheduled for Thursday morning at the Martin Center in Williamston. Chowan County will host a reception in honor of the Guardsmen and women. Commissioners and others are invited to attend.

The meeting was adjourned.

Nancy B. Morgan, County Clerk

Board of Equalization and Review

The Chowan County Board of Commissioners met on April 4, 2005 as the Board of Equalization and Review.

Tax Administrator Lynda Hendricks served as Clerk.

County Clerk Nancy Morgan received the oaths from the Board of Commissioners members to serve as the Board of Equalization and Review.

No citizens appeared to make any appeals.

The meeting was adjourned.

Nancy B. Morgan

County Clerk