

Chowan County Board of Commissioners
Regular Meeting
Monday, December 1, 2008
6:00pm
1767 Chowan County Courthouse
117 East King Street

The Chowan County Board of Commissioners held their regular meeting on Monday, December 1, 2008, at 6:00 pm in the 1767 Chowan County Courthouse, 117 East King Street Edenton, NC.

Present: Ralph Cole, Jimmy Alligood, Bill Gardner, Kenny Goodwin, Louis Belfield and Harry Lee Winslow. Commissioners Elect Present: Eddy Goodwin, Emmett Winborne and Keith Nixon. Also present was County Manager, Peter Rascoe and Clerk to the Board, Susanne Stallings.

Chairman Cole called the meeting to order and Commissioner Kenny Goodwin offered the invocation.

Old Business

Chairman Cole presented the agenda for Old Business.

Commissioner Gardner moved that the Board approve the minutes of the November 3, 2008 meeting as submitted. Chairman Cole asked for all in favor, the motion carried unanimously (6-0).

Outgoing Commissioner Remarks

Commissioner Bill Gardner read a statement into the record.

Mr. Chairman, commissioners, commissioners – elect, ladies and gentlemen. It has been an honor and privilege to serve the last four years on the Chowan County Board of Commissioners. Needless to say, much has happened in the last four years.

When campaigning for Commissioner in 2004, I offered no agenda. Only that I would serve the citizens of Chowan County without regard to race, social status, or political party affiliation. Looking back, I am satisfied that I honored my initial pledge. Even so, I now believe that I made a mistake. I **should** have had an agenda; an agenda that emphasized the duties of oversight and that proper checks and balances exist so that Government be carried out in an open, transparent manner.

In a 2004 Virginian-Pilot interview, when asked what my first order of business would be as a new commissioner, I answered “the first thing I’m going to do is to learn how to be a County Commissioner.” I thought ‘who better to learn from than a County Manager who had a longstanding reputation around the entire State as an excellent leader, administrator, and public servant. Four years later, I can say that I have learned many things, not just the need for oversight and transparency. First and foremost, I have learned that the virtues of empathy, sympathy, goodwill, hopefulness, and optimism are important personal attributes of a good public servant. But, they are not enough. When undertaking the work of the people, these

important qualities must be coupled with rationalism and realism so as to maintain the integrity of our political system.

I have long held the position that the greatest issue in Chowan County is that we all become educated as to role of county government in our lives. And that we know the costs associated with the services that local government provides. Never has this statement proven more relevant than at this time. I am hopeful that the County will seize this unique opportunity, and that we each will resolve to do our part to help. Every citizen has a role. I really feel like we are on the edge of a new era in Chowan County, where increased public involvement will lead to a better understanding and appreciation of local government.

When I look back at the last four years, I can think of many fond memories and accomplishments, far too many list. I will say, though, without a doubt, that the single greatest thing that Chowan County has going for it is its dedicated employees. This includes department heads, and administration, especially County Manager Peter Rascoe. I know in my heart that he is the best possible person in the world to be our county manager at this time and I am proud to have played a part in selecting him for the job. I am confident that his many abilities will allow us to meet any challenges that the future holds for our county.

When I think of the new board, again I am confident that they will be able to effectively deal with any upcoming challenges. I know first-hand that Chairman Cole, and commissioners Goodwin, Alligood, and Belfield are all men of honor and will serve as such. Also, I consider Keith Nixon and Emmett Winborne to be personal long-time friends and know that they will do an excellent job. In fact, I will take a little credit for Keith Nixon being here tonight. I have been talking to him for many years about getting involved in local government. Now, as for commissioner –elect Eddy Goodwin, though I don't know him well yet, I trust that he will do an outstanding job. The way I figure it. He's got to be good if he beat ME!

Regardless of current public opinion and personal concerns, I would like to express my gratitude to Cliff Copeland. Cliff taught me the importance of empathy, sympathy, goodwill, hopefulness, and optimism. Mr. Chairman, commissioners, commissioners – elect; as you undertake the business at hand, especially with regards to personnel policies, I ask that you make these decisions, not in haste, but only after careful consideration of all the issues, which of course includes the ability of the citizens to pay property taxes, Always keep in mind that you are ultimately responsible for the quality of service that local government provides with respect to public health, safety, and welfare.

Again, I have enjoyed serving on the Board for the last four years; it has truly been an honor. Thank You.

Commissioner Harry Lee Winslow thanked the staff, the public and the Board for the opportunity to serve.

The outgoing Commissioners stepped down and the Clerk called upon the newly and re-elected Commissioners to receive their oaths.

Oaths

Clerk to the Board, Susanne Stallings administered the oaths of office to the following Elected and Incumbent Commissioners:

Emmett Winborne
D. Keith Nixon
Edward C. "Eddy" Goodwin
Kenny Goodwin
Ralph Cole

Organizational Meeting

Ms. Stallings moderated the Organizational meeting for the election of a Chairman in accordance with GS 153A-39 (1) & (2). She then opened the floor for nominations for Chairman.

Commissioner Emmett Winborne nominated Eddy Goodwin.

Ms. Stallings called for any further nominations (there were none). She then closed the floor for nominations and asked for all in favor for the nomination of Eddy Goodwin to serve as Chairman. The motion carried unanimously (7-0).

Chairman Eddy Goodwin opened the floor for nominations for Vice Chairman.

Commissioner Kenny Goodwin nominated Emmett Winborne.

Chairman Eddy Goodwin called for any further nominations (there were none). He then closed the floor for nominations and asked for all in favor for the nomination of Emmett Winborne to serve as Vice Chairman. The motion carried unanimously (7-0).

Commissioner Alligood thanked the past Commissioners and said that he appreciates the opportunity to serve with the new Board.

Vice Chairman Emmett Winborne read a statement into the record.

As I sit here tonight, I am personally honored to represent my county and my district. I thank my family who is here tonight for their never ending support. Thank you again family!

As we 7 members of this board move forward, we have an enormous task. Our citizens expect us to represent them well. Many things have to change in the way we do business.

We as a board have to question everything. We have to enact policies that will move Chowan County forward. We have to say no to things that are not needed and yes to those that are needed.

We as a board have to also live within our means. We can not spend money we do not have.

Now that I have addressed what the board needs to do, I ask now for you, the citizens of Chowan County, to help also. You have to be our eyes and ears. Let us know how you feel and what you think about issues. We are here to represent you.

To the department head and employees of the county, I appreciate all of the hard work that you do for our county. I ask that you, the department heads,

when forming the 2009 – 2010 budget, please keep in mind that there is a very fine line between needs and wants. I, as a board member, want to give you every tool needed to carry out your job in an efficient way. But I also want you to remember that the day of wants is over for Chowan County.

To our county manager, Peter Rascoe, I look forward to working with you. I am confident that you will carry out our policies in a way that will make Chowan County proud.

In closing, our county may be down at present time. But with hard work from every board member, every citizen, every department head, every county employee, and our county manager, I know that we can bring Chowan County back!

I now sit here with the other members of this board ready to go to work for the betterment of Chowan County.

Thank you.

Chairman Eddy Goodwin noted that the Board would need to approve a meeting schedule for 2009. He noted that staff had requested that the following meeting dates and locations be incorporated into the meeting schedule.

- a. 1/20/09 Joint Meeting with the Board of Education at John A. Holmes High School
8:30am-1:00pm
- b. 2/02/09 Regular meeting to be held at COA dining hall

Commissioner Kenny Goodwin said that he would recommend that all meetings be held on the first Monday of the month at 6:00pm to allow more public participation and recommended that the two suggestions by staff be incorporated into the 2009 meeting schedule.

Vice Chairman Winborne said that he agreed that the night meetings would allow more participation from the public.

Commissioner Alligood stated he was always in favor of night meetings.

Commissioner Kenny Goodwin said that if any meeting locations were changed in the future, the meetings would be advertised accordingly.

Being no further discussion on the 2009 meeting schedule with the two suggested changes, Chairman Eddy Goodwin asked for all in favor, the motion carried unanimously (7-0).

Chairman Eddy Goodwin said that he wanted to review the committee appointments and speak with each of the commissioners individually to determine their interest in serving on the various committees. He said that this item would be put on the January 2009 agenda.

Consent Agenda

Chairman Eddy Goodwin presented the consent agenda and asked for any questions or comments from the Board.

Commissioner Belfield moved that the Board approve the consent agenda as presented.

Chairman Eddy Goodwin asked the County Manager to explain the process by which the consent agenda is presented.

Mr. Rascoe explained the items contained in each of the sub paragraphs. And that, each of these are considered by staff as monthly routine budget matters pertaining to operations and which maintain the budget balance. Mr. Rascoe also confirmed that any one of these matters can be pulled off the consent agenda by any of the Commissioners for discussion and debate.

Attorney, John Morrison noted that consent agendas are customary with local governments in North Carolina. He said the purpose of a consent agenda is to move routine procedural items along He said that items in a consent agenda are typically routine but the Board has the obligation to review the consent agenda and make any necessary efforts to understand the items in the agenda if needed. He said that the consent agenda is only a time saving tool and can be approved with one single motion.

a. Budget Amendments

3531 DSS	\$2,800	Increase	New Federal/State Funding Allocation For Work First Functional Assessment
3531 DSS	\$35,581	Increase	Increase in CRISIS funding
Fund 11 Gen Fund	\$43,720	Increase	QZAB Capital Project close out
4950 Extension	\$4200	Increase	Dept of Insurance Grant
4268 Sr. Center	\$942	Increase	Health Promotions Grant
4268 Sr. Center	\$1308	Increase	Outreach Grant
4268 Sr. Center	\$13,089	Increase	General Purpose Grant for State Ctr. Of
	Excell.		
4370 EMS	\$120,000	Increase	Purchase of Ambulance in prior year

4370 EMS	\$15,500	Increase	2008 EMS Toolkit Grant carry-over from last Fiscal year
4952 EFNEP	\$2,000	Increase	Chowan Hospital Foundation Grant for Expanded food and nutrition education program
4930 CDBG/SSH	\$300,772	Increase	Grant Carry-over

b. Tax Release

Bird, S.	\$216.65	Military, SITUS Missouri
Bird, S.	\$174.24	Military, SITUS Missouri
High, H.	\$101.17	Vehicle Sold

c. Budget Transfers

4331 Safety	\$730	Increase	Embarq database update for FirstCall
4330 Emrg Mgmt		Decrease	
5110 Health	\$955	Increase	Adult Day Care Block Grant
9900 Contg.		Decrease	Match
5110 Health	\$973	Increase	ICPTA Title III match
9900 Contg.		Decrease	
8200 Central Svs.	\$7,778	Increase	Unemployment
9900 Contg.		Decrease	

Being no further discussion on the consent agenda, Chairman Eddy Goodwin asked for all in favor, the motion carried unanimously (7-0).

Public Comment

Pete Moran read a comment from the Virginia Pilot that was a comment made by the former County Manager with regards to construction of the Public Safety Center for a new 911 facility for the Police Department which was mentioned as being destroyed by floods. He questioned why the County would hire a lobbyist to pay for such.

Commissioner Kenny Goodwin said that the statement was made by Mr. Copeland and that Mr. Copeland was the only person who could answer why that statement was made.

Resolution Honoring Glenn Perry

Mildred Vanterpool, Chairwoman for the Chowan County Board of Elections presented a resolution for The Board of Commissioners and the Chowan County Board of Elections to honor Glenn Perry for his years of service assisting with the County's elections process.

Director of Elections, Rebecca Lowe reminisced of her time working with Mr. Perry and thanked him for his service to Chowan County.

The following resolution was supported by the Board with no objection:

RESOLUTION

Honoring Glenn H. Perry for service to the Chowan County Board of Elections

WHEREAS, Glenn H. Perry began public service to Chowan County on September 1, 1965 when he was appointed Deputy Sheriff and served as Jailer; and,

WHEREAS, Glenn H. Perry served as the Sheriff of Chowan County from October 14, 1985 to January 1, 1987 when he retired; and,

WHEREAS, Glenn H. Perry began serving the Chowan County Board of Elections in 1966 as a part-time worker; and,

WHEREAS, Since 2005 Glenn H. Perry has served the Chowan County Board of Elections by delivering the voting equipment to all precincts until 2005 and would remain on call the entire day of elections in case of any equipment problems; and,

WHEREAS, Glenn H. Perry's wife Agnes (Jean) would wash and iron the curtains from the old machines a few days before each election and Glenn would set up places to count the paper ballots; and,

WHEREAS, Glenn Perry has served the Chowan County Board of Elections through eleven Presidential Elections since 1966; and,

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Chowan County Board of Commissioners recognizes, appreciates, and honors the service of Glenn H. Perry to Chowan County and the Chowan County Board of Elections.

ADOPTED 1st day of December, 2008.

Mr. Perry remarked that he was appreciative of the recognition and said that he appreciated the opportunity to serve.

Resolution Supporting Funding of ARC&D

Mr. Rascoe said that Chowan County has been notified that potential funding cuts are proposed for ARC&D (Albemarle Resource Conservation & Development) which will no longer allow the agency to have a full-time coordinator for the Northeast. He said that the Board is asked to consider a resolution that supports any efforts to secure funding to fully staff ARC&D. He presented the following resolution requesting that Congress keep funding of ARC&D in place:

RESOLUTION SUPPORTING THE FUNDING OF ALBEMARLE RC&D

WHEREAS, Chowan County is located within the geographic service area of Albemarle Resource Conservation & Development (RC&D); 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 resources 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 projects; 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 encourages and supports any and all efforts to secure adequate Federal funding to fully staff Albemarle RC&D, allowing that organization to continue to serve Chowan County and Northeast North Carolina.

ADOPTED 17th day of November, 2008.

Commissioner Alligood moved that the Board adopt the resolution as submitted. Chairman Goodwin asked for all in favor, the motion carried unanimously (7-0).

Unsafe Building – 731 Yeopim Rd.

Chief Building Inspector, Holly Colombo presented a request for order of demolition for an unsafe building at 731 Yeopim Rd. He said that the owners were notified of the state of the building and to date, the building is not secured. He said the owners were notified of the meeting of the Board and were not present. He said that it is recommended that the Board approve the order for demolition, contingent on sufficient funds being budgeted

Commissioner Winborne asked how this process starts.

Mr. Colombo said the process is complaint driven. He said that the approximate cost of demolition is \$4,000-\$5,000.

Mr. Rascoe said that the unsafe building ordinance allows the county to place a lien on the property if the cost of the demolition is not recouped. He said that based on the budgetary situation this request would allow the County to finish the legal requirements of the ordinance. He said that monies are not budgeted for the demolition and staff would have to come back to the Board to request the monies for the demolition.

Chairman Goodwin asked how the Board re-coups the money.

Mr. Colombo said that the County has set up payment arrangements with the property owners in the past.

Mr. Rascoe said that the County has also foreclosed on properties and the past has always been 100% recovery of the monies spent.

Commissioner Kenny Goodwin said that he did not think that the lot was a buildable lot.

Mr. Colombo said that the lot is buildable and is listed with a tax value of \$14,128 and has a water meter on it. He said septic may be the only issue. He also noted that the file indicates all the owners were notified.

Commissioner Alligood said that this is a lengthy process and this is not the first notification. He said that if he lived beside this property he would have concerns with it being dangerous, and eye sore and affecting the adjoining property value. He said that staff has allowed the owner 6 months and moved that the County proceed with the demolition.

Chairman Eddy Goodwin asked if any neighboring property owners were present. (There were none)

Commissioner Kenny Goodwin said that the owner should be given more time to abate the property.

Commissioner Nixon asked if a complaint was submitted.

Commissioner Alligood clarified his motion to state that the County proceed with demolition while however allowing the homeowner a stay of 60 days to abate the unsafe conditions and after such time, if the conditions are not abated, staff will report to the Board at its February meeting to request the monies to be transferred for the demolition of the structure.

Chairman Eddy Goodwin asked for all in favor, the motion carried unanimously (7-0).

Sheriff Dept Annual Report

Sheriff Dwayne Goodwin provided the Board with an update on the annual activities of the Sheriff's Dept., Jail and 911 Communications. A copy of the PowerPoint presentation will be kept on file in the meeting file of the Board of Commissioners labeled December 1, 2008.

FY 07-08 Audit Report

The County's Auditor, J.P. Timberlake reported that the 2007-08 audit is not yet complete. He said that his office has requested additional information and he hoped that financial statements would be drafted by December 15th with hopes that the final audit would be complete by January 15, 2009. He said that he appreciates the Board's patience and he will deliver the completed report personally.

Finance Report

Finance Officer, Lisa Jones provided financial reports for the month of October. She presented a cash flow projection through June 2009 which will be available on the Chowan County website and also included in the December 2008 Board of Commissioner meeting file. She also shared that the County has a cash balance of -\$186,256 noting that the State Treasurer's Office predicted a balance of -\$458,714. Ms. Jones noted that there is a total investment balance of \$728,107. She also presented an analysis of Sales Tax Collections totaling \$597,482 collecting at 24%. Ms. Jones presented a highlight of the Sheriff's budget and gave a line by line analysis.

Chairman Eddy Goodwin asked the Sheriff if he had participated in the 10% cuts.

Sheriff Goodwin said yes.

Manager's Report

County Manager, Peter Rascoe provided the Manager's report. He noted that he is working on a proposal with the ECDC in response to recent questions about the money flow from the County and Town to Economic Development. He said that staff is developing a proposal for the Board's consideration to make the Chamber of Commerce the fiscal agent for Economic Development. He said the County is currently appropriating \$65,000 and the Town appropriates \$35,672 to Economic Development. He said the County's contribution was reduced in August in response to the financial crisis. He said the proposal will be presented to the Board after it is fine tuned. Mr. Rascoe also presented a press release from the Department of Commerce showing that Chowan County has dropped to a Tier I County. He said the bright side to the placement is that the rating will make Chowan eligible for more federal monies in the future and allows more tax credits for business. He said that he and the finance office are still working closely with the State Auditor and with the local auditor.

Clerk to the Board, Susanne Stallings noted that Chowan County received one scholarship to cover the costs of the school for new commissioners. She said that four Commissioners have registered and the scholarship will reduce the burden for the four Commissioners.

Chairman Goodwin said that he would give up his first month's pay to cover the costs of the school. Commissioner Nixon said that he wanted to do the same.

Commissioner Kenny Goodwin recommended that the Board do away with fax machines and receive correspondence from staff through email as a cost savings measure.

Executive Session

Commissioner Belfield moved that the Board hold a closed session pursuant to North Carolina General Statute 143-318.11(a) (3), attorney/client privilege. Chairman Goodwin asked for all in favor, the motion carried unanimously (7-0).

The minutes of the Executive Session will remain sealed until approved for public inspection by the Board of Commissioners.

Commissioner Alligood moved that the Board close the Executive Session. Chairman Goodwin asked for all in favor, the motion carried unanimously (7-0).

There being no further business before the Board, the meeting was adjourned.

Eddy Goodwin
Chairman

L. Susanne Stallings
Clerk to the Board

(SEAL)