

MINUTES – JANUARY 22, 2007

The Caswell County Board of Commissioners met in regular session at the Historic Courthouse in Yanceyville, North Carolina at 6:30 p.m. on Monday, January 22, 2007. Members present: George W. Ward, Jr., Chairman, Jeremiah Jefferies, Vice-Chairman, William E. Carter, Nathaniel Hall, Larry G. Hamlett, Kenneth D. Travis, and C. Hester Vernon, III. Also present: Jeffrey H. Earp, County Manager, Robert V. Shaver, Jr., County Attorney, and Shannon White representing The Caswell Messenger. Wanda P. Smith, Clerk to the Board, recorded the minutes.

MOMENT OF SILENT PRAYER

Chairman Ward opened the meeting with a Moment of Silent Prayer.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Commissioner Travis moved, seconded by Commissioner Jefferies to approve the agenda as presented. The motion carried unanimously.

APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA

Commissioner Jefferies moved, seconded by Commissioner Hall to approve the Consent Agenda as presented. The motion carried unanimously.

The following items were included on the Consent Agenda:

- 1) Approval of Minutes of December 18, 2006 Meeting
- 2) Budget Amendment No. 11
- 3) Tax Director's Monthly Report for November, 2006

Total Amount of Taxes Collected	\$1,870,524.11
Tax Maps/Cards	\$ 58.00
County Maps	\$ 7.90
NSF Charge	\$ 150.00
- 4) Tax Director's Monthly Report for December, 2006

Total Amount of Taxes Collected	\$2,024,696.61
Tax Maps/Cards	\$ 112.20
County Maps	\$ 35.55
Beer License	\$ 5.00
Wine License	\$ 25.00
NSF Charge	\$ 55.00

5) Lease Agreement Between Caswell County and Alamance, Caswell Rockingham Mental Health

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Chairman Ward opened the floor for public comments.

Mr. Doug Sharpe, 281 Lakeside Lane, Providence, NC, came before the Board and stated that he is originally from Georgia, moved to Danville, VA, and two years ago purchased a home and moved to Shady Side Subdivision in Caswell County. Mr. Sharpe noted that he has two sons who attend school in Danville, VA so there is no cost from his family to the County as far as its School system. Mr. Sharpe expressed his disappointment in Caswell County due to the amount of trash that is on the side of the roads and also the lack of zoning in the County. Mr. Sharpe stated that he bought his \$500,000 home in Shady Side because of the covenants on the property and that he would not have to look outside his home and see mobile homes. Mr. Sharpe added that his house is part of his retirement plan and these covenants help protect his property value. Mr. Sharpe stated that a lot of people who would like to move to this area and have nice homes would not do it without zoning. Mr. Sharpe added that he would like to see the Board consider adopting zoning for the County.

Mr. Cliff Matkins, 37 Clear Springs Circle, Blanch, NC, came before the Board and stated that he grew up in Caswell County, moved away, and came back three years ago. Mr. Matkins added that he built a nice home and he plans to live in the County, therefore, the proposed land transfer tax probably would never affect him. Mr. Matkins stated that he would like to see the County grow and progress, but absolutely did not feel that the proposed tax is the way to proceed because it would discourage any kind of building and the type of property transactions needed for the County to grow and progress.

Mr. J. D. Foster, 1625 Bethesda Church Road, Ruffin, NC, came before the Board and stated that he was born and raised in Caswell County and is not before the Board tonight to ask for anything for himself. Mr. Foster added that he is very concerned about Caswell County and he wants the best for the County. Mr. Foster stated that it was reported in The Caswell Messenger that the only way for the County to collect money is through the proposed land transfer tax, but this is not true. Mr. Foster noted that every year the Board establishes the property tax, and the Board needs to set a tax rate that will pay the bills for the County, whether anyone likes it or not. Mr. Foster stated that the Board does have a means for collecting, and they are charged with this responsibility, and they do not need to add on another tax. Mr. Foster noted that the County also needs jobs in the County and commended Mr. Mark Atwater and his remarks published in The Caswell Messenger and stated that he and his family started a company and have stayed here, paid taxes and provided jobs and the County needs more of that. Mr. Foster added that if the Board does not have it so that people want to come to Caswell County, people will be driven away. Mr. Foster stated that it is the Board of Commissioners' job to act and do what is right for Caswell County.

Mr. Ed Carter, 839 Hom-a-Gen Lane, Providence, NC, came before the Board and stated that he first read about the proposed land transfer tax in early December. Mr. Carter noted that he had just sold a home in South Carolina and it cost him \$952 to sell it. Mr. Carter added that it occurred to him that the citizens of Caswell County did not really know what this proposed land transfer tax might be. Mr. Carter stated that he then called The Caswell Messenger to see if the paper had received any responses to this proposed tax since Commissioner Vernon had asked for input from the citizens and they had received none. Mr. Carter added that he then endeavored to tell everyone in the County about the proposed land transfer tax in The Caswell Messenger and he requested that written responses be sent in to the paper. Mr. Carter presented the Board with 191 responses that had been sent in to The Caswell Messenger and added that it is clear that the opinions of those who wrote in are resoundingly against the proposed land transfer tax and are also very much against farmland owners being exempt from the tax. Mr. Carter added that in addition to the comments from the citizens, he felt that it would be helpful and constructive to expose the Board to a way to raise money in the County that is certainly more productive and that is to use his model of Shady Side. Mr. Carter noted that when he purchased the property in 2000, the taxes were under \$250, and for the year 2006, taxes totaled over \$28,000 and will be more than \$35,000 next year. Mr. Carter added that when all 31 houses are built, there will be over \$85,000 of revenue coming from that neighborhood that is virtually costing the County nothing. Mr. Carter stated that Caswell County is a nice county and it is a place that people will choose and not settle for, but the County must be protected because people who spend hundreds of thousands of dollars to build a home should not have to worry about the risk of something undesirable next to them damaging their property values. Mr. Carter informed the Board that in the year 2000 he asked the Board to zone Shady Grove Road and of the 98 citizens who signed a petition, 95 were in favor of zoning. Mr. Carter stated that the Board at that time promised to zone Shady Grove Road when it zoned the entire County and here it is, year 2007, and no progress at all has been made. Mr. Carter added that he felt it was ironic that, besides the Atwaters, he is the only successful developer in Caswell County and urged the Board to take steps to bring his competitors to the County. Mr. Carter stated that the Commissioners' job would be so much easier and pleasant if they just had the money they need to manage the County and this is the way they can get the money.

Ms. Sallie Abreu, 250 Shorehour Drive, Danville, VA, came before the Board and stated that she is a realtor with Wilkins & Company, the listing company for Shady Side. Ms. Abreu added that she has lived in the area all of her life and her mother was born on Shady Grove Road. Ms. Abreu stated that she was thrilled to list Shady Side, which is a grand development, and they have promoted it heavily. Ms. Abreu added that it is listed on the cover of their *Homes Magazine* which is distributed throughout the country and it is also listed on the internet. Ms. Abreu informed the Board that she sold two home sites and three homes in Shady Side and the total value of those sales was \$1.35 million. Ms. Abreu noted that there are five more lots that will soon have homes built on them and these people want to build there because of the restrictive covenants. Ms. Abreu stated that Caswell County needs to zone, encourage developers, and protect homeowners. Ms. Abreu added that zoning helps realtors, increases real estate values, and will attract more developers like Mr. Ed Carter. Ms. Abreu offered her input on zoning in Caswell County

and stated that the County could in its development, attract retirees to the area who will eventually build and pay taxes.

Mr. Forrest Altman, 1200 Jack Pointer Road, Semora, NC, came before the Board and stated that he believes in taxes because they are necessary and appropriate, and without them there would be fewer roads, schools, and policemen. Mr. Altman added that he believes in the right of public officials to impose taxes. Mr. Altman stated that he thought the land transfer tax is a valid and fair tax. Mr. Altman added that he agrees with much of what Mr. Ed Carter has to say, but does not agree that the land transfer tax is a bad tax. Mr. Altman noted that he does agree with Mr. Carter in that if the tax is imposed, it should apply to everyone. Mr. Altman informed the Board that they have his best wishes for careful consideration and judicious deliberation in the matter.

Ms. Rose Satterfield, 160 West Main Street, Danville, VA, came before the Board and stated that she is a dentist in Roxboro and Yanceyville. Ms. Satterfield informed the Board that her mother was born on Shady Grove Road and she grew up in New Jersey. Ms. Satterfield stated that she moved back to Danville three years ago and last year she found a beautiful 35-acre parcel of land on the Allison Road near the Park Springs intersection. Ms. Satterfield added that she is in the last stages of getting ready to build a home on this land and expressed her love for Caswell County. Ms. Satterfield stated that the land she bought on Allison Road is totally encircled by trees which makes the site of her new house very private and protects her view and privacy. Ms. Satterfield expressed her worry about the absence of zoning in the County and noted that there is a huge field across the road from her property and it could grow up into mobile homes. Ms. Satterfield stated that this would hurt her property value and view and felt that it should be zoned for single-family homes. Ms. Satterfield added that her investment here in Caswell County would be much better and the beauty of it would be protected with zoning. Ms. Satterfield added that zoning would attract developers and other professionals to Caswell County.

Mr. Mark Atwater, PO Box 250, Yanceyville, NC, came before the Board and stated that he was present to discuss the land transfer tax. Mr. Atwater informed the Board that he and his brother, Chip Atwater, own Royal Textile Mills and are part-owners of Caswell Pines Golf Club and residential community. Mr. Atwater stated that what he hears most from residents is that it is a great place to live, but a hard place to make a living and he has been fortunate enough to be able to do both. Mr. Atwater added that discussion of a land transfer tax does nothing for the County's potential and people moving here are coming to enjoy rural lifestyle, a fairly affordable life, and hopefully, a good education system. Mr. Atwater stated that one way the Board may be able to come up with additional funds is to advertise the County's attributes to help people come in and see what life is about in Caswell County. Mr. Atwater added that he would employ the Commissioners to continue in the effort to spend tax dollars wisely and fiscal responsibility and try to consider ways to save money. Mr. Atwater stated that he felt that a land transfer tax is a method to kill incentive and an agricultural county like Caswell needs incentive.

Mr. Bob Oakley, 7358 Kerrs Chapel Road, Elon, NC, came before the Board and stated that he grew up on a tobacco farm in Caswell County, moved away to find a job, and nearing retirement moved back to the County. Mr. Oakley added that he is speaking for nine homeowners in his neighborhood and they are all opposed to the land transfer tax. Mr. Oakley stated that most of them feel that Caswell County's tax rate is higher than other counties. Mr. Oakley added that the people in his area do not feel that it is fair to add another tax in addition to the property tax that they now pay and the fact that the County is reevaluated every few years and values continue to go up.

Mr. Dan Vaden, 150 Lakeside Lane, Providence, NC, came before the Board and stated that he and his wife operate a graphics design firm in Danville, VA and lived there all of his life until 2006 when they built and moved to Shady Side. Mr. Vaden stated that he has worked on a lot of projects in Caswell County over the years. Mr. Vaden added that they would never have moved to Shady Side if the adjoining properties had not had protective covenants. Mr. Vaden stated that they knew it would have been a mistake if they had invested there with the potential of having mobile homes across the street from them. Mr. Vaden added that Caswell County would be much better off with zoning and the protection it provides. Mr. Vaden informed the Board that people are moving from all over the country to Shady Side and Caswell County benefits from this. Mr. Vaden stated that Caswell County needs to encourage more careful developments like this and it shows that when development is done right, the County's tax base will increase dramatically. Mr. Vaden stated that he did not know of any reason that the Commissioners would not want to promptly and correctly zone Caswell County.

Mr. Jason Elliott, 72 Gammon Road, Providence, NC, came before the Board and stated that his residence on weekends is on Gammon Road. Mr. Elliott added that he is in the Air Force, stationed at Goldsboro, NC and he drove 136 miles to be in attendance at this meeting. Mr. Elliott stated that he cannot come to a county that does not have zoning. Mr. Elliott added that when he buys his home and a mobile home park moves in, he will have lost his investment. Mr. Elliott stated that he is outraged with the whole zoning issue. Mr. Elliott added that he will be getting out of the Air Force in six months and he will be attending more Board meetings in the future.

(The Board held a brief recess).

#### CASWELL COUNTY BOARD OF ELECTIONS

Mr. Andrew Murray, Chairman, Caswell County Board of Elections, came before the Board to present a final report on the purchase of new voting machines for the County. Mr. Murray provided the Board with a breakout for the initial purchase of 58 ES&S Voting Machines which were mandated under the Help America Vote Act passed by the federal government in 2002. Mr. Murray noted that there is a possibility of the Board of Elections receiving additional funds because Caswell County is a low wealth county. Mr. Murray provided the following information:

\$232,395.00 Total cost of purchase  
 -160,790.00 Money received from 2002 HAVA Legislature  
 - 30,000.00 Each county received from the State of NC  
-22,000.00 Buy back of 56 Infinity Voting Machines by MicroVote  
 \$ 19,605.00 Amount paid by Caswell County (Includes voting equipment, racks,  
 software, computer, training, & coding).

FINANCIAL REPORT FOR FIRST TWO QUARTERS OF FISCAL YEAR

Ms. Gwen Vaughn, Finance Officer, came before the Board and presented the County's financial report for the first two quarters of the fiscal year, which includes the period of July 1, 2006 – December 31, 2006.

Ms. Vaughn provided the following Statement of Revenues and Expenditures:

	Major General Fund	Nonmajor Other Gov. Funds	Enterprise Solid Waste Management	Enterprise Caswell Div of Trans	Other Funds
Revenues	\$10,614,203	\$668,311	\$538,343	\$188,641	\$691,292
Expenditures	\$10,415,947	\$687,633	\$395,881	\$169,821	\$378,951

Ms. Vaughn reported that the total amount of Appropriated Fund Balance is \$756,406.

Ms. Vaughn reported that the tax levy collection rate is currently at 69%.

Ms. Vaughn provided the Board with General Fund Budget Percentages, Sales Tax Distribution, and Sales Tax Distribution Comparison. Ms. Vaughn also provided a report on the General Fund 2006-2007 Fund Balance and noted that the Unappropriated General Fund/Fund Balance is \$2,216,084.

Mr. Jeff Earp, County Manager, clarified that as far as expenditures and revenues in the General Fund, both are at the same percentage, which is better than last year. Mr. Earp added that the tax collection rate is two percent ahead of last year's rate at this time. Mr. Earp assured the Board that the County is exactly where it should be at this period of the year for the Fiscal Year Budget adopted in July.

REQUEST FROM CASWELL COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION FOR  
ADDITIONAL CAPITAL FUNDING

Dr. Douglas Barker, Caswell County Schools Superintendent, came before the Board to present a request from the Board of Education for additional Capital funding. Dr. Barker stated that he is back before the Board to continue discussions that occurred during the budget process six months ago. Dr. Barker added that a promise was made that if the Board of Education would work together with the Board during the budget process that the \$100,000 would be restored to the Schools' budget. Dr. Barker stated that \$100,000 was recommended by the County Manager for Schools Capital Outlay and there was no

way for the Board of Commissioners to balance its budget without cutting the \$100,000 that had been requested for Schools. Dr. Barker added that the statement was made that if the County received Medicaid relief, the Board would give that \$100,000 back to the School System for what it was intended. Dr. Barker noted that the County has now received Medicaid relief, adding that the State placed a cap on Medicaid costs to the County and the County is now \$80,000 below what was projected. Dr. Barker informed the Board that the School System has now spent 98% of certain line items in Capital Outlay already because of the \$100,000 cut. Dr. Barker stated that in order to plan the Schools' budget for the remainder of the year, he would ask that the Board restore the \$100,000 to the School System in order for them to meet their obligations for the school year. Dr. Barker noted that this is the third time he has been before the Board with this request and was told to present this request at its January meeting when Medicaid cost figures would be known.

Commissioner Hamlett recommended that a Committee comprised of three Commissioners review this request further.

After further discussion, Commissioner Hamlett moved, seconded by Commissioner Jefferies that an exploratory committee comprised of three Commissioners be established to study the request made by Superintendent Barker, consider possible options, and bring a recommendation back to the full Board at its February 5, 2007, meeting. The motion carried by a vote of four to three with Commissioners Hall, Travis, and Vernon voting no.

Chairman Ward appointed Commissioners Carter, Hamlett, and Jefferies to serve on this exploratory committee.

#### REQUEST FOR ADDITIONAL FUNDING FOR TAX FORECLOSURE INVOICES

Mr. Jeff Earp, County Manager, presented a request for additional funding for tax foreclosure invoices. Mr. Earp noted that in the Budget Ordinance for 2006-2007, the Board stipulated that any amount over \$20,000 for tax foreclosures was to come back before the Board for approval before payment.

Mr. Earp presented the following update on the foreclosure cost incurred by the Tax Department for the fiscal year 2006-2007 as of January 15, 2007. Mr. Earp stated that the County has received revenues in the amount of \$137,876.43 and has incurred cost in the amount of \$202,684.92, with outstanding invoices in the amount of \$62,382.52.

TAX COLLECTIONS  
PROFESSIONAL SERVICES/ATTORNEY FEES REPORT  
Period of July 1 – January 17, 2007

	<u>Adopted</u> <u>Budget</u>	<u>Amended</u> <u>Budget</u>	<u>Collections</u> <u>YTD</u>
<u>REVENUE</u>			
Foreclosure Fees	165,000.00	265,000.00	121,959.08
Cost & Judgments	18,000.00	56,000.00	<u>15,917.35</u>
Total Revenue			\$137,876.43
<u>EXPENDITURES</u>			
Prof. Service/Attorney Fees	20,000.00	158,000.00	
July			3,131.20
August			0.00
September			0.00
October			137,171.20
November			0.00
December			<u>0.00</u>
Total Expenditures (Paid)			\$140,302.40
Outstanding Invoices			\$ 62,382.52
Oct. - \$ 8,871.52			
Nov. - \$ 6,807.84			
Dec. - \$16,245.24			
Jan. - \$30,457.92			
Total Revenues			\$137,876.43
Total Expenditures + O/S Invoices			\$202,684.92
Revenues (Over/Under)			(\$64,808.49)

Commissioner Travis questioned from where the County could appropriate \$62,382.52. Mr. Earp answered that this appropriation could be made by adopting a budget amendment or from Fund Balance.

Commissioner Jefferies stated that the Budget Ordinance for 2006-2007 stipulates that any monies over the budget appropriation of \$20,000 was to be brought back before the Board for approval before payment. Commissioner Jefferies noted that \$135,000 was recently presented to the Board for payment and now an additional \$62,382.52 in invoices is being presented for payment. Commissioner Jefferies questioned why the Board's directives had not been carried out in this matter. Mr. Earp answered that a subcommittee of three Commissioners was appointed to study these procedures and with no decisions having been made, business has been carried on as usual.

Chairman Ward stated that he would like to see a meeting scheduled which will include the Tax Director, County Manager, and Attorney to sit down and try to develop a plan to collect taxes and fine tune the process.

Upon questioning from Commissioner Hamlett, Mr. Earp answered that \$425,000 was budgeted for prior years taxes and the County has collected \$235,149.76, which is 55% of the revenues projected for the first six months.

Commissioner Travis stated that the Board needs to stop all tax foreclosure proceedings until it can have a meeting with the Attorney collecting the taxes to discuss the process.

After further discussion, Commissioner Travis moved, seconded by Commissioner Jefferies that the Attorney processing the foreclosure proceedings be contacted tomorrow morning and advised to stop all proceedings until a meeting can be scheduled. The motion carried by a vote of five to two with Commissioners Hamlett and Vernon voting no.

Chairman Ward stated that a meeting of the Audit Committee would be scheduled as soon as possible and would include the Tax Director, County Manager, County Attorney, and Attorney processing the tax foreclosures.

#### DISCUSSION OF PURCHASE OF NEW OR USED EMS UNIT

Mr. Jim Gusler, EMS Director, came before the Board and provided the Board with quotes from American Emergency Vehicles for a new four-wheel drive and two-wheel drive F-450 ambulance. Mr. Gusler stated that the cost difference between a two and four-wheel drive would be approximately \$3,200. Mr. Gusler added that automatic chains would also need to be added to the two-wheel drive unit which will cost an additional \$2,000. Mr. Gusler informed the Board that the cost for a new 2008 four-wheel drive vehicle would be \$128,611 and the cost for a new 2008 two-wheel drive vehicle would be \$125,811. Mr. Gusler stated that it is still his recommendation that the Board approve the purchase of the 2005 four-wheel drive unit formerly owned by Davie County and offered by Northwestern Emergency Vehicles in the amount of \$80,000. Mr. Gusler clarified that the 2005 unit has 33,536 miles. Mr. Gusler stated that he felt the serviceability and life of the unit would entail three remounts or 10 to 12 years on the box.

Upon questioning from Commissioner Hamlett, Mr. Gusler answered that the warranty on the 2005 unit is five years or 100,000 miles. Upon questioning from Commissioner Carter, Mr. Gusler answered that approximately 50,000 miles per year is being put on EMS front-line units. Commissioner Hall questioned preventive maintenance costs and after warranty maintenance costs.

After considerable discussion, Commissioner Carter moved, seconded by Commissioner Vernon to approve the purchase of the 2005 Ford F-450 four-wheel drive Type I AEV ambulance at a cost of \$80,000. The motion carried unanimously.

Commissioner Vernon noted that \$24,000 is allocated for the purchase of a unit from the insurance payment of the wrecked ambulance.

Commissioner Vernon moved, seconded by Commissioner Jefferies that the Board authorize that the full amount of \$80,000 for the ambulance unit be financed and paid in installments, with the first payment being made in the next fiscal year, and to reserve the \$24,000 for needed expenditures and possible shortfalls in this fiscal year.

Commissioner Hall stated that the Board got into its financial situation because of the last two budget periods, holding off and not facing up to bills that it knew were confronting them. Commissioner Hall added that the Board needs to face up to its debts and financial responsibility and that is not to play games with the budget, but rather be fiscally prudent.

Mr. Gusler informed the Board that he is in no way at a point where he feels comfortable with the EMS fleet because it is aged and he is going to have issues within the next two years as far as unit replacement. Mr. Gusler provided the Board with the following proposed replacement/rotation program:

FY06-07	Replace Unit 203 Davie County Unit 3 years useful life left
FY07-08	Remount Unit 204/Replace Unit 205
FY08-09	Remount Unit 202
FY 09-10	Remount Unit 203 (Davie County Unit)
FY10-11	Replace Unit 204

Upon a vote of the motion, the motion carried by a vote of four to three with Commissioners Carter, Hall, and Travis voting no.

REQUEST FROM CASWELL COUNTY SHERIFF FOR MATCHING FUNDS TO  
APPLY FOR A NC CRIME COMMISSION GRANT

Sheriff Michael L. Welch came before the Board and stated that he was present to make a formal request to proceed in applying for a Governor's Crime Commission grant. Sheriff Welch added that he has been working for the past two months on a partnership with the City of Roxboro, Person County Sheriff's Office, and Yanceyville Police Department to form an investigative unit. Sheriff Welch stated that the grant is for the purchase of equipment that will be used and owned by each agency. Sheriff Welch noted that the equipment will consist of drug intelligence software and computer system and added that the system will allow intelligence information to be shared among the agencies through a networking connection. Sheriff Welch informed the Board that each agency's grant application will be included in one application, and each agency will be responsible for its own match and that the deadline for the grant application is January 31, 2007. Sheriff Welch stated that the total cost for the project for the Caswell County Sheriff's Office is approximately \$24,286 and the anticipated local match would be \$6,071.50. Sheriff Welch noted that, if the grant were to be awarded, it would begin July 1, 2007. Sheriff

Welch stated that he would like for the Board to consider allowing the Sheriff's Office to apply for this grant and to support the matching funds.

Upon questioning, Sheriff Welch answered that DEA funds could be used for the local match for this grant. Sheriff Welch informed the Board that the Sheriff's Office is anticipating a DEA award of over \$70,000 within the next four to six months.

Upon questioning, Sheriff Welch clarified that he was not present to request DEA funds and added that he has the authority to determine use of DEA funds, however, he comes before the Board of Commissioners to inform them of this use.

Commissioner Hall stated that personally, he has been quite pleased with the Sheriff's Department and what Sheriff Welch is doing, how things are going, and his approach to attacking crime across the County. Commissioner Hall added, however, that four to seven years ago the County had a Fund Balance of approximately 16% and at that time it was recommended that the County's Fund Balance should be at 20% to 24%. Commissioner Hall stated that last year the County's Fund Balance was at 11%, and when the Board received its audit in December, the Fund Balance was at 8.5%. Commissioner Hall added that for the last two years, the County's budget was balanced by going into Fund Balance. Commissioner Hall noted that the County is in a deficit year now, and the Fund Balance will probably drop again. Commissioner Hall stated that the minimum recommended by the Local Government Commission is eight percent and he has suspected that the County would receive a letter from LGC once they received and reviewed the County's audit. Commissioner Hall added that he would be hard pressed to vote for any spending until the Board gets a handle on expenditures for the County and felt that the Board needs to become fiscally responsible.

Sheriff Welch clarified that this request is just to move forward with submitting the application. Sheriff Welch stated that the Sheriff's Office Drug Enforcement Program has proven to be an investment to provide opportunities for them to continue to investigate and try to uncover a lot of the problems that are affecting the residents in the County.

Upon questioning from Commissioner Hamlett, Sheriff Welch answered that currently there is approximately \$4,000 in the DEA Account.

Sheriff Welch informed the Board that he has enough funds in Lapsed Salaries in his department to cover the expenditure for this match. Sheriff Welch stated that the most important thing is to continue forward with the application process.

After further discussion, Commissioner Travis moved, seconded by Commissioner Vernon to allow Sheriff Welch to proceed with the submission of an application for a Governor's Crime Commission grant and that the local match for this grant in the amount of \$6,071.50 be appropriated from the Lapsed Salaries in the Sheriff's Department. The motion carried by a vote of six to one with Commissioner Hall voting no.

## RECESS

The Board held a brief recess.

### REQUEST TO APPLY FOR NCACC SAFETY/WELLNESS GRANT

Ms. Nichole McLaughlin, Human Resources Officer, came before the Board to present a request to apply for a North Carolina Association of County Commissioners Safety/Wellness Grant. Ms. McLaughlin informed the Board that the North Carolina Association of County Commissioners offers a Safety/Wellness Grant Program that allows members access to start up funds for programs they are interested in implementing for their employees. Ms. McLaughlin stated that the grant is available to any member who has participated in any of the Risk Management Pools and the amount of money that a member can receive depends upon the number of pools in which the member participates and its number of employees. Ms. McLaughlin noted that the NCACC requires that the Board of Commissioners approve the Grant Proposal before submission.

Ms. McLaughlin reported that the programs and activities that will be offered to employees include a Health Risk Assessment, Blood Pressure Screening, Ergonomics/Lifting Training, Health Fair, Walking Wednesdays, Financial Wellness Seminars, and Stress Management Training.

Ms. McLaughlin stated that with an established Safety and Wellness Program, the County can begin to get employees focused on safety and health issues and the training provided with a Safety Program can help lower the County's Workers' Compensation claims and premiums. Ms. McLaughlin added that wellness activities can show employees how to live a healthy lifestyle and reduce their medical claims. Ms. McLaughlin noted that, most importantly, the Safety/Wellness Program will let employees know that the County cares about their safety and health.

Ms. McLaughlin informed the Board that the grant is fully funded by the North Carolina Association of County Commissioners and requires no matching funds from the County.

After further discussion, Commissioner Travis moved, seconded by Commissioner Vernon to approve the request by the Human Resources Officer to apply for a North Carolina Association of County Commissioners Safety/Wellness Grant. The motion carried unanimously.

### REQUEST FROM CASWELL COUNTY CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

Mr. Jeff Earp, County Manager, presented a request from the Caswell County Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors for the use of the URL site caswellnc.com for the Chamber. Mr. Earp informed the Board that this domain is the former home of the County website. Mr. Earp added that the Chamber has agreed to pay the \$8.95 annual fee for the site.

After discussion, Commissioner Travis moved, seconded by Commissioner Vernon to approve the request by the Caswell County Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors to transfer the former URL site – caswellinc.com from the County to the Chamber. The motion carried unanimously.

REQUEST FROM PTCOG TO CREATE AND APPOINT MEMBERS TO THE  
CRIMINAL JUSTICE PARTNERSHIP BOARD

Mr. Jeff Earp, County Manager, presented a request from Mr. Matt Reese, Piedmont Triad Council of Governments, to create and appoint the following individuals and positions to the Criminal Justice Partnership Board:

Jeff Earp, County Manager  
Hon. Mark Galloway, District Court Judge  
John Satterfield, Clerk of Superior Court  
Hon W. Osmond Smith, Superior Court Judge  
Jimmy Watlington, Community Corrections Representative  
Michael Welch, Sheriff  
Greg Gibson, Yanceyville Police Chief  
Bill Daniel, Practicing Defense Attorney  
Joel Brewer, District Attorney  
Rosa Carrington, Section 8 Housing Director  
Representative from TASC  
Representative from Health Department  
Representative from Social Services  
County Commissioner  
General community representative for victims  
General community representative for offenders/recovering drug users – often a family member or retired employee who works with this population

Mr. Earp informed the Board that the former Criminal Justice Partnership Board had been dissolved and this would be a newly created Board so that it may move forward in submitting a plan to submit to the Department of Correction for funding.

After discussion, Commissioner Hamlett moved, seconded by Commissioner Vernon to approve the creation and membership of the Criminal Justice Partnership Board as presented. The motion carried unanimously.

DISCUSSION OF MILEAGE REIMBURSEMENT AND POLICY

Mr. Jeff Earp, County Manager, informed the Board that effective January 1, 2007, the mileage reimbursement rate is 48.5 cents per mile. Mr. Earp noted that this rate is for the use of a personal vehicle by Caswell County employees for business miles driven.

Mr. Earp stated that there has been a request by Commissioner Travis that the County review its policy governing use of personal cars for County business. Mr. Earp added

that there are a number of County employees that, in lieu of using a County vehicle, use their personal vehicle for transportation and are reimbursed. Mr. Earp noted that this includes the Chief Building Inspector, Environmental Health staff, Health Department nurses, and some Social Services staff. Mr. Earp stated that he brings this to the Board's attention to see if there is interest in revisiting this policy and bring back a recommendation for change in this policy.

Commissioner Travis stated that it is his understanding that approximately \$600 per month is paid to the Chief Building Inspector for mileage reimbursement and he would like to find out how much the County is paying per month for these County employees to drive their own vehicles. Commissioner Travis added that the Board needs to determine if this is the most economical method for the County to use or should it look for alternatives.

After discussion, Chairman Ward directed County staff to obtain cost figures on the mileage reimbursement and the use of personal vehicles by employees for County business.

#### REQUEST FROM NCACC FOR APPOINTMENT OF A NCAC LEGISLATIVE LIAISON

Mr. Jeff Earp, County Manager, reported that the North Carolina Association of County Commissioners is requesting that all 100 counties appoint one County Commissioner as its Legislative Liaison. Mr. Earp stated that each county's Legislative Liaison will serve as a conduit of information between the Association (via Commissioner Vernon, District 11 Director), and the Board of Commissioners. Mr. Earp reported that the NCACC will provide counties with regular agenda items and will provide Legislative Liaisons with talking points and educational materials that can be used to boost media and public awareness of legislation that impacts counties. Mr. Earp added that the Legislative Liaisons initiative is one part of the NCACC's strategic goal to enhance the ability of County officials to represent counties and the NCACC on local and statewide issues.

After discussion, Commissioner Hall moved, seconded by Commissioner Travis to appoint Chairman Ward as the Board's North Carolina Association of County Commissioners Legislative Liaison. The motion carried unanimously.

#### APPOINTMENT TO JUVENILE CRIME PREVENTION COUNCIL

Commissioner Hamlett moved, seconded by Commissioner Vernon to appoint Ms. Anna-Lisa Hunter and Ms. Connie Windham to the Juvenile Crime Prevention Council. The motion carried unanimously.

#### APPOINTMENT TO RECREATION COMMISSION

Commissioner Travis moved, seconded by Commissioner Jefferies to appoint Mr. Barry Smith, Ms. Anita Graves, Mr. Lonnie Johnson, Mr. Herley Totten, Ms. Kate Wandscher,

Ms. Susan Merritt, and Ms. Jennifer Eastwood to the Recreation Commission. The motion carried unanimously.

### PIEDMONT CONSERVATION COUNCIL

Mr. Forrest Altman addressed the Board briefly on membership composition of the Piedmont Conservation Council. Chairman Ward directed the Clerk to the Board to review this further.

### DISCUSSION OF BOARDS AND COMMITTEES

Chairman Ward presented the following Commissioner appointments to Boards and Committees for the Year 2007.

### BOARDS AND COMMITTEES

2007

#### Chairman Ward

Planning Committee for Services to the Elderly  
Juvenile Crime Prevention Council  
Recreation Commission  
NCACC Legislative Liaison  
\*Piedmont Triad Partnership Committee  
\*\*Personnel Committee  
\*\*Building & Grounds Committee

#### Vice-Chairman Jefferies

Social Services Board  
Alamance-Caswell Area Mental Health Board  
\*\*Personnel Committee  
\*\*Building & Grounds Committee

#### Commissioner Carter

Farmer Lake Board  
Library Board  
Caswell County Transportation Advisory Board  
\*\* Building & Grounds Committee

#### Commissioner Hall

Piedmont Triad Council of Governments  
Board of Health  
Caswell County Joint Nursing Home/Adult Care Home Community Advisory Committee  
\*Caswell County Partnership for Children  
\*Home Health Advisory Committee  
\*\*Audit Committee  
\*\*Economic Development Committee

Commissioner Hamlett  
Recreation Commission  
Planning Board  
E-911 Board  
Kerr-Tar Work Force Development Board  
\*\*Personnel Committee

Commissioner Travis  
Farmer Lake Board  
Social Services Board  
\*\*Audit Committee  
\*\*Economic Development Committee

Commissioner Vernon  
Economic Development Board  
Civic Center Committee  
Piedmont Emergency Medical Services Advisory Board  
Local Emergency Planning Committee  
\*Rural Planning Organization  
\*NCACC District Board of Directors  
\*\*Audit Committee  
\*\*Economic Development Committee

\* Board of Commissioners does not make appointments to these Boards.  
\*\*Subcommittees

#### CHANGES IN APPOINTMENTS FOR 2007

Chairman Ward replaces Commissioner Vernon on Personnel Committee.  
Commissioner Vernon replaces Chairman Ward on Audit Committee.  
Commissioner Jefferies replaces Commissioner Hall on Building & Grounds Committee.

#### COUNTY MANAGER'S REPORT

Mr. Jeff Earp, County Manager, provided the Board with a letter from the NC Housing Finance Agency informing the County that it has been approved to participate in the Duke Home Energy Loan Pool.

Mr. Earp provided the Board with the *Annual Statement for the 2006 Secondary Road Construction* which was submitted by the North Carolina Department of Transportation.

Mr. Earp informed the Board that the Community Foundation of the Dan River Region has approved a grant of \$3,925 to Gunn Memorial Public Library and it is to be used to purchase *Peek-A-Book*, two-year subscription, service agreement and installation equipment for children's programs.

Mr. Earp informed the Board that he received a letter from the State of North Carolina Department of Justice concerning the Video Services Competition Act Legislation that went into effect January 1, 2007. Mr. Earp reported that this law enacts a number of changes that will impact cable television companies, video service providers, and state and local government entities. Mr. Earp added that there will be a meeting at Yanceyville Town Hall on February 7, 2007, at 10:00 a.m. with Mr. Dave Harris, PTCOG Cablevision Administrator to inform the Town and County of these changes.

Mr. Earp informed the Board that the County has been notified that it will be reimbursed \$5,198 for Liability and Property and Worker's Compensation for the Safety Program credit.

Mr. Earp announced that the Board of Commissioners has been extended an invitation by the North Carolina Department of Transportation to attend the Dedication Ceremony naming the bridge over North Hyco Creek, west of the Person County Line in Caswell County, as the *Trooper Joe Wright Bridge* on Tuesday, January 23, 2007, at 10:00 a.m. at the Caswell County Historic Courthouse.

Mr. Earp provided the Board with a letter from Ms. Jane Smith Patterson, e-NC, NC Rural Economic Development Center, Inc., requesting support for its 2007 legislative priorities.

Mr. Earp provided the Board with a letter from Mr. Barry Jacobs, Chairman, Orange County Board of Commissioners, inviting Caswell County to participate in a feasibility study for a multi-county, value-added, shared-use processing facility for local farm products. Mr. Earp stated that the cost of this feasibility study would cost approximately \$15,000 and Caswell County has been asked to consider contributing funds for this study.

Mr. Earp provided an update on the Senior Center Project and informed the Board that Requests for Qualification went out to prospective architects last week. The County Attorney stated that responses should be received within the next three weeks.

Chairman Ward reported on a meeting he and Commissioner Vernon held with Dewberry & Davis upon their request regarding the Senior Center project. Commissioner Ward added that he, along with the County Manager and County Attorney, plan to meet with Danville Regional Foundation officials tomorrow concerning the project.

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

Commissioner Hamlett questioned the County Manager as to whether the Sheriff's Department is fully staffed at this time. Mr. Earp answered that the Sheriff's Department is not fully staffed at this time.

Commissioner Jefferies questioned whether the County Manager had notified the State Highway Patrol of speed problems in Milton and Mr. Earp answered he has discussed this issue with two State Patrol Sergeants today. Mr. Earp noted that he is also receiving complaints about mud buildup, traffic, and parking on a road off of the Walters Mill Road.

Commissioner Carter reported on the School for New County Commissioners which he recently attended. Commissioner Carter stated that he, along with Commissioners Jefferies and Vernon, and the County Manager attended the Annual Martin Luther King, Jr. Breakfast at Carolina Pinnacle Studio and then went to the Yanceyville Municipal Building. Commissioner Carter noted that Senator Tony Foriest attended both events. Commissioner Carter stated that since he has been on the Board, there has been no discussion by the Board of Commissioners of implementing a land transfer tax and he has been receiving a lot of telephone calls about this issue.

Chairman Ward clarified that the land transfer tax was discussed at the North Carolina Association of County Commissioners' annual meeting and this information was brought back to the Board and discussed at its November 6, 2006 meeting. Chairman Ward added that the land transfer tax was voted on at the November 6, 2006, meeting and was defeated by a vote of five to two. Chairman Ward stated that he felt that discussion of this matter was over and ended at the November 6<sup>th</sup> meeting.

Chairman Ward requested that Commissioner Jefferies and any other Commissioner who would like to do so to attend the meeting tomorrow at 1:00 p.m. with Danville Regional Foundation officials.

## CLOSED SESSION

Commissioner Hamlett moved, seconded by Commissioner Travis that the Board enter into closed session to consider the competence, terms of appointment, and performance of an individual public officer (NCGS 143-318.11(a)(6)) and to preserve the Attorney/Client privilege (NCGS 143-318.11(a)(3)). The motion carried unanimously.

## REGULAR SESSION

Commissioner Hamlett moved, seconded by Commissioner Jefferies to resume regular session. The motion carried unanimously.

RESIGNATION OF COUNTY MANAGER JEFF EARP

Chairman Ward announced that Jeff Earp has submitted his resignation as County Manager of Caswell County, effective February 16, 2007.

Chairman Ward issued the following statement:

The Caswell County Board of Commissioners would like to announce that it has received and accepted the resignation of County Manager, Jeffrey H. Earp. Mr. Earp will be accepting another appointment in local government. The Board would like to express its appreciation to Mr. Earp for his dedication and commitment to the citizens of Caswell County for the last five years. The Board appreciates the unselfish and tireless efforts of Mr. Earp in administering the policies of the Board and overseeing the day-to-day operations of our local government. Mr. Earp will remain on the job until February 16, 2007. The Board would like to take this opportunity to wish Mr. Earp and his family much success in his future endeavors.

THE ADJOURNMENT

At 10:45 p.m. Commissioner Hamlett moved, seconded by Commissioner Travis to adjourn the meeting. The motion carried unanimously.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Wanda P. Smith  
Clerk to the Board

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George W. Ward, Jr.  
Chairman

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