

MINUTES – JANUARY 22, 2008

The Caswell County Board of Commissioners met in regular session at the Historic Courthouse in Yanceyville, North Carolina at 6:30 p.m. on Tuesday, January 22, 2008. Members present: George W. Ward, Jr., Chairman, Jeremiah Jefferies, Vice-Chairman, Nathaniel Hall, Larry G. Hamlett, Kenneth D. Travis, and C. Hester Vernon, III. Absent: William E. Carter. Also present: Kevin B. Howard, County Manager. 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 Hall requested that a personnel issue be added to Closed Session, however, Chairman Ward stated that the item would need to be added to the next meeting's agenda since the full Board was not present.

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

APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA

Commissioner Vernon moved, seconded by Commissioner Hamlett 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 17, 2007 Meeting
- 2) Budget Amendment No. 6
- 3) Tax Director's Monthly Report for December, 2007

Total Amount of Taxes Collected for December, 2007	\$2,111,716.51
Tax Maps/Cards	\$ 49.25
County Maps	\$ 23.70
NSF Charge	\$ 147.98
EMS	\$ 1,163.99

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Chairman Ward opened the floor for public comments.

Mr. George B. Daniel of Blanch, NC, came before the Board and stated that he was present tonight to ask the Board of Commissioners to recognize one of its favorite sons, Mr. Carl Blake Willis, who is currently the pitching coach for the Cleveland Indians. Mr. Daniel detailed Mr. Willis' early years as a star pitcher for Piedmont Academy in Providence and both the Mickey Mantle and Connie Mack summer leagues in Danville, Virginia. Mr. Daniel added that Mr. Willis was awarded an athletic scholarship to attend the University of Carolina at Wilmington, where his excellent diamond play for the Seahawks earned the 1992 retirement of his #42 jersey and his subsequent induction into UNC-W's Hall of Fame in 1998. Mr. Daniel informed the Board that Mr. Willis was drafted into professional baseball by the Detroit Tigers in 1982, serving as relief pitcher, as well as for the Cincinnati Reds, Chicago White Sox, and the Minnesota Twins. Mr. Daniel stated that Mr. Willis is best remembered for his two scoreless innings pitched in Game Three of the 1991 World Series in Atlanta which enabled his Minnesota Twins to go on to defeat the Atlanta Braves for the World Series Title. Mr. Daniel added that Mr. Willis continues to remain in professional baseball having completed his tenth season with the Cleveland Indians and is now in his fifth season as the Tribe's pitching coach. Mr. Daniel informed the Board that the Boy Scouts of America, Cherokee District, will be honoring Mr. Carl Blake Willis on February 1, 2008, at 6:30 p.m. at the Caswell County Civic Center, at which time Mr. Willis will be inducted into and receive the first Award of Excellence presented by the Boy Scouts of Caswell County. Mr. Daniel requested that the Board of Commissioners consider the adoption of a Resolution in recognition and tribute to the excellence exhibited in the career achievements of Mr. Willis and proclaim February 1, 2008 as Carl Blake Willis Day in Caswell County. Mr. Daniel informed the Board that the Boy Scouts is sponsoring this event as an annual fundraiser and issued an invitation for the Board to attend.

#### INFORMATION SESSION ON LOCAL OPTION SALES TAX REVENUE SOURCES

Mr. Todd McGee, Communications Director, North Carolina Association of County Commissioners, came before the Board to hold an information session on the Local Option Tax Revenue sources approved by the North Carolina General Assembly.

Mr. McGee presented each Board member and staff with a commemorative pin honoring the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the North Carolina Association of County Commissioners this year. Mr. McGee stated that the theme that has been adopted is "100 Years of County Unity" and added that he hoped that the Commissioners would be able to join in on some of the exciting events scheduled for the annual conference and throughout the year.

Mr. McGee reported that the North Carolina General Assembly last year gave to counties a couple of additional revenue options. Mr. McGee stated that the North Carolina Association of County Commissioners had made it clear to the General Assembly that counties were struggling to meet their infrastructure needs.

Mr. McGee presented and discussed the following:

### Local Option Revenues

- Property Tax
  - Full authority to Commissioners
- 1/4 penny sales tax
- 0.4 percent land transfer tax
  - New authorities require citizen approval via referendum
  - Can only enact one

### Referendum Issues

- Voting Rights Act of 1965 = yes
- Special election
- Both taxes may be on ballot
- Can be resubmitted to voters – 30 days
- No limitation on number of attempts

### Ballot Form

- ( ) FOR ( ) AGAINST  
Real property transfer tax at the rate of up to (X) percent (X%) of value or consideration.
- ( ) FOR ( ) AGAINST  
Local sales and use tax at the rate of one-quarter percent (0.25%) in addition to all other State and local sales and use taxes.

### Local Option Revenues – Who Pays?

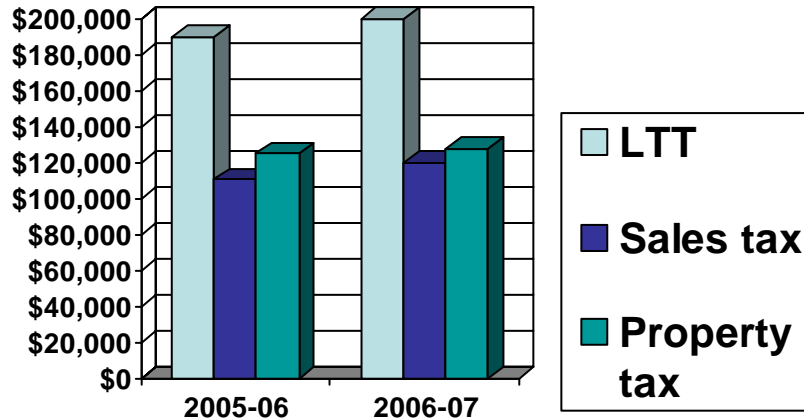
- Property tax
  - All property owners pay each year
  - County sets rate
- ¼ penny sales tax
  - Point of sale collection
  - Everyone who purchases goods in the county pays (not on food)
- 0.4 percent land transfer tax
  - Only those who sell property pay

### Local Option Revenues – Pros/Cons

- Property tax
  - Pro: Property values rarely go down
  - Con: Rapid increases in home value
- Sales tax
  - Pro: More broad-based
  - Pro: Typically very stable
  - Con: Regressive; not based on ability to pay

- Con: Lack of retail base contributes to slow growth
- 0.4 percent land transfer tax
  - Pro: Sellers realize profits from government investments
  - Pro: Population boom = demand for housing
  - Con: Amount collected fluctuates wildly

Caswell County Experience



Sales Tax v. Transfer Tax

- Sales Tax
  - Little to no opposition
  - 6 of 12 counties who pursued sales tax only have succeeded
  - Approximately 56 percent for
- Land Transfer Tax
  - Realtors spending millions
  - 0-for-11
- May put both on ballot
  - 0-for-5

Running a Campaign

- Build a coalition
- Specify how tax proceeds will be used
- Communicate with citizens
- Commission involvement
  - Speaker's Bureau
  - Adopt a resolution

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Mr. Howard, County Manager, reported that the land transfer tax would bring in revenues in the amount of \$189,000, while the ¼ cents sales tax would bring in \$168,000.

Commissioner Vernon stated that he has given this a lot of thought and agrees with Mr. McGee in that the Board needs to have a specific use for whichever revenue option it chooses. Commissioner Vernon added that it would be very helpful to show a need when asking the citizens to vote and the Board would need some time to develop this. Commissioner Vernon stated that with the economy the way it is now, he felt that the Board needs to continue to look at this further.

After further discussion, Commissioner Jefferies moved, seconded by Commissioner Vernon to delay making a decision on the revenue options approved by the North Carolina General Assembly until the November election in order for the Board to make a decision as to for what the additional revenue would be designated. The motion carried unanimously.

### COMMISSIONER STATEMENT

Chairman Ward informed the Board that he failed to recognize a Commissioner during *Public Comments* as had been requested and he would now like to allow Commissioner Vernon to make his comments.

Commissioner Vernon stated that this past week pointed out something to him that a lot of people do not realize and that is what we have in this County. Commissioner Vernon added that the County had a number of tragedies and felt that Caswell County has one of the finest Sheriff's Departments, Dispatchers, EMS, and Volunteer Fire Departments. Commissioner Vernon stated that a lot of these individuals are volunteers and they put their lives at risk. Commissioner Vernon added that the citizens of this County need to show these individuals their appreciation every opportunity they can for what they are doing for them.

### APPROVAL OF AMENDED MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING FOR COOPERATIVE, COMPREHENSIVE AND CONTINUING TRANSPORTATION PLANNING AND THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE PIEDMONT TRIAD RURAL TRANSPORTATION PLANNING ORGANIZATION (RPO)

Ms. Hanna Cockburn, Planning Program Manager, Piedmont Triad Council of Governments, came before the Board to request that it approve the amended Memorandum of Understanding. Ms. Cockburn stated that she would also like to discuss other transportation issues with the Board.

Ms. Cockburn reported that the Piedmont Triad Rural Planning Organization was formed in 2002 in response to the federal requirement for world consultation with local officials. Ms. Cockburn added that this is the State of North Carolina's response and noted that world planning organizations were formed all across the State.

Ms. Cockburn shared and discussed the following presentation entitled, *The RPO, TIP, MOU and You*

## **The Overview**

- About the RPO
- So what is the TIP?
- RPO vision and prioritization
- Your TIP priority list
- The MOU
- What's on the horizon?

## **The Piedmont Triad RPO**

- Chartered in May, 2002
  - 5 Counties
  - 22 Municipalities
- Two Committees
  - Technical Coordinating (Staff)
  - Transportation Advisory (Elected Officials)
- PTCOG serves as Lead Planning Agency
  - Administers state and local funds
  - Provides staff support and technical assistance

## **What does an RPO do?**

- Develop long range transportation plans
- Collect and analyze transportation data
- Develop and prioritize TIP projects
- Provide forums for public involvement

## **Our Shared Vision:**

- A regional transportation system that:
  - Enhances mobility
  - Provides economic opportunity
  - Improves our quality of life

## **What is the TIP?**

- The Transportation Improvement Program is. . .
  - A project programming tool
    - Seven year list of projects
    - Identifies federal and/or state funding
    - All travel modes
- A Wish List
  - Three categories of projects. . .
    - Deliverable (years 1-3)
    - Planning (years 4-7)
    - Unfunded (post-year)
- A Federal requirement

## **Prioritization Process & Philosophy**

- County-level committees that:
  - Review existing priorities
  - Identify and rank new projects
  - Establish local transportation goals
- Transportation projects that support:
  - Mobility
  - Economic vitality
  - Community quality of life

## **Caswell County Priority List**

### State/Regional

- NC 86
- NC 119
- NC 158

### County

- NC 150
- NC 87

### Local

- Cherry Grove Road
- Kerr's Chapel Road
- NC 62 Connector

### Plans/Studies

- CTP (underway)
- Bicycle map

## **TIP – Action Required**

- Consideration of County TIP List
- List will be presented at the TIP hearings
  - Division 7
    - February 20<sup>th</sup>, Seymour Center, Chapel Hill
  - Division 8
    - February 19<sup>th</sup>, Richmond Community College, Hamlett
  - Division 9
    - January 28<sup>th</sup>, Division 9 Office, Winston-Salem

## **The Revised MOU**

The Memorandum of Understanding . . .

- A 7-party agreement establishing the RPO
  - Each County in RPO, COG, and NCDOT
  - Municipalities may sign, but are not required
- Establishes RPO organizational structure

- Committees and membership requirements
- Establishes COG as lead planning agency
- Established roles and responsibilities for all parties
- Revisions required by NCDOT

**So What Changed?**

- Clarified RPO’s core duties
- Streamlined membership
- Established use of alternates
- Clarified quorum requirements
- Demonstrates compliance with open meetings law

**MOU – Action Required**

- Consideration of Revised MOU
  - Resolution
  - Chairman’s signature on MOU
- Next Steps . . .
  - Each RPO County
    - Any Municipality (county seats, in particular)
  - PTCOG
  - NCDOT

**What’s on the Horizon?**

The RPO is . . .

- Integrating environmental and land use considerations into transportation planning
- Actively pursuing the formation of a statewide TAC Association
- Looking beyond the TIP for funding
- Preparing for federal reauthorization

Ms. Cockburn provided the Board with the following information on local projects.

**Caswell County  
Transportation Project Priority List  
2009-2015 TIP**

**Regional Projects**

*Critical requests*

1. **NC 86 (R-3418).** *Revise Description* – From Virginia State Line to Orange County Line. Widen to multi-lane cross section; add turn lanes and shoulders.
2. **NC 119 (R-3105).** *Revise Description* – From South of SR 1817 (Station Road) in Alamance County to NC 62 in Caswell County. Include additional segment from NC 62 to Virginia State Line. Widen to multi-lane cross section.

*Priority requests*

- 3. NC 158 (R-2575 and R-2586).** From US 29 at NC 14 to SR 1159 west of Roxboro. Widen to multi-lane, providing access control, turn lanes and medians within the Yanceyville segment.

**County Projects**

*Priority requests*

- 4. NC 150 (Not on current TIP).** From US 158 in Caswell County to NC 87 in Rockingham County. Widen existing lanes and pave shoulders.
- 5. NC 87 (R-2560).** From SR 1547 in Alamance County to US 29 in Reidsville. Widen to multi-lane cross section.

**Local Projects**

*Priority requests*

- 6. SR 1133 (not on current TIP).** Improve existing cross-section of Cherry Grove Road from NC 87 to NC 62; pave shoulders.
- 7. SR 1001 (not on current TIP).** Improve existing cross-section of Kerr's Chapel Road from SR 1001 to NC 87; pave shoulders.
- 8. NC 62 (not on current TIP).** 2 mile connector on new location, from NC 62 south of Yanceyville city limit to NC 86 east of Yanceyville city limit.

**Plans and Studies**

- Bicycle route map and signage.
- Continued support for a county-wide comprehensive transportation plan.

Commissioner Hall moved, seconded by Commissioner Jefferies to adopt the Amended Memorandum of Understanding for Cooperative, Comprehensive and Continuing Transportation Planning and the Establishment of the Piedmont Triad Rural Transportation Planning Organization. The motion carried unanimously.

**CASWELL COUNTY SENIOR TRAIL PLAN**

Ms. Donna Pointer, Senior Center Director, came before the Board and introduced Mr. Paul Kron, Planning Director, Piedmont Triad Council of Governments. Ms. Pointer stated that the mission of the Senior Center is to promote the well-being of the senior citizens and they have been looking at ways to offer programs and opportunities on the inside as well as the outside. Ms. Pointer added that months ago it became evident that several groups were interested in trails and outside opportunities, and at that point the Area Agency on Aging, which is housed at the Piedmont Triad Council of Governments, started working with Mr. Paul Kron, Director of Planning, and his staff to develop some trail plans.

Mr. Paul Kron presented the Board with an Executive Summary of the Caswell County Senior Center Trail Plan. Mr. Kron informed the Board that the Senior Center Trail Steering Committee has been working with COG's planning and aging departments for the past year to develop this trail plan and prioritize the trail segments. Mr. Kron stated that the Caswell Recreation Commission Trails Committee has endorsed this plan and is exploring resources to fund trail development. Mr. Kron noted that the Plan includes a funding strategy for both construction and maintenance. Mr. Kron stated that formal endorsement of the plan is critical to seeking implementation funding.

Mr. Kron stated that the Executive Summary details the different trail recommendations and priority trail segments connecting with the new Senior Center on Firetower Road. Mr. Kron added that an Implementation Plan is also included to guide advocates, government staff, and elected officials on how best to construct and build the priority trail segments outlined in this plan. Mr. Kron noted that the full report includes the contents of the Executive Summary, plus: 1) the benefits of physical activity to older adults; 2) County Health Department survey data; 3) public involvement summary; 4) existing conditions; and 5) a full appendix on trail construction and building.

Mr. Kron presented the following **Overview**:

The Caswell County Senior Center Trail Plan materialized out of discussions with the Caswell County Senior Center, the Piedmont Triad Council of Governments Aging and Planning Departments, Caswell County Parks and Recreation Department, Health Department, and Recreation Commission. This plan, when implemented, will show citizens of Caswell County the community value of tying together parks, schools, and the new Senior Center, while encouraging the development of other trail connection projects across the County. The development of this plan is made possible through the Piedmont Triad Council of Governments Area Agency on Aging Title III-D project funding, designed to promote health and physical activity among senior adults. Funds for construction of the proposed trails are not included in the funding for this planning process. The Senior Center design and construction is made possible by a \$2 million grant from the Danville Regional Foundation.

The Caswell County Senior Center Trail Plan is located along Firetower Road north of downtown Yanceyville, in the heart of Caswell County. The proposed trails are designed to complement and enhance the new Senior Center. The trail plan is also intended to promote senior health and wellness. As proposed trails are developed, the plan and trails will serve as a template for developing future trails all across Caswell County, while acting as a catalyst for new trail development.

The *2007 State of the County Health Report* includes a section on the lack of physical activity facilities. The County conducted a health assessment survey to find out what needs and issues there were related to physical activity. The following shows a high level of interest from residents for more greenways and trails to improve the opportunities for physical activity:

- Respondents indicate that they would be more physically active if the following were offered:

Greenways or Walking Trails	50%
Pools	36%
Bike lanes and paths	24%
Sidewalks	22%
Aerobics	21%
Golf	2%
Other	6%

The Senior Center Trail Plan will work to address the issue of inadequate physical activity and high levels of obesity in children and older adults. More opportunities for physical activity combined with better nutrition will work to reverse the obesity trend in Caswell County.

Mr. Kron presented and discussed the following **Plan Recommendations:**

The Steering Committee input and results of the public workshops were used to determine trail recommendations. After detailed field work was completed on proposed trail segments, the Steering Committee met in December of 2007 at the current Senior Center to prioritize trail segments in order of importance. The recommendations for projects included the following top five projects ranked in order of priority:

1. **Stream Walk Trail**  
A 10 foot wide paved walking trail connecting the Senior Center back door with the South Rattlesnake Creek Tributary.
2. **Senior Center Outer and Inner Loop Trail and Connectors**  
An 8 foot wide natural multi-use trail providing multiple loops in and around the Senior Center.
3. **Clubhouse Connector**  
An 8 foot wide natural multi-use trail connecting Nick Hooper Road, Clubhouse Drive, and NC 86 with the Senior Center Outer and Inner Loop trails.
4. **Mountain Bike Trail**  
A 5 foot wide natural trail designed primarily for mountain bicycling that lies to north of the Oakwood Elementary School.
5. **Town Path Connection and School Intersection Project**  
A 10 foot wide paved multi-use path running parallel to Firetower Road connecting the intersection of the new Senior Center Driveway and the Oakwood School driveway with downtown Yanceyville south of NC 86. Phase I of this project would connect the Town Park with the Senior Center and include an intersection improvement project at the school and Senior Center driveway intersection. Phase II

would include a trail connection from the Town Park south across NC 86 and include an intersection improvement project at Firetower Road and NC 86.

Mr. Barry Smith, Recreation Commission Chairman, stated that he would also like for the Board to endorse their efforts to raise funds to develop a Strategic Plan.

After discussion, Commissioner Travis moved, seconded by Commissioner Jefferies to approve the Caswell County Senior Center Trail Plan as presented and to endorse the efforts of the Recreation Commission to raise funds for a Strategic Recreation Plan. The motion carried unanimously.

### RECESS

The Board held a brief recess.

### CASWELL COUNTY HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION

Ms. Karen Oestreicher, Chairperson, Caswell County Historical Association came before the Board to present a funding request to help them keep the Historical Museum open. Ms. Oestreicher informed the Board that the Historical Association funds are down to \$3,000 and it costs them \$1,200 each month for utilities and operating expenses to keep the building open, with their current income being the rent from the Chamber of Commerce. Ms. Oestreicher added that their fuel bill for January was \$750. Ms. Oestreicher asked if the Board could appropriate \$300 - \$500 per month for the next two years to the Historical Association to help defray the utility costs to keep the Museum open. Ms. Oestreicher informed the Board that they are currently pursuing grant funds to help with their costs.

Ms. Oestreicher stated that the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Committee identified tourism and broadband as the two top projects that Caswell County needs to grow and they are currently working on several tours that they would like to conduct. Ms. Oestreicher added that research and genealogy is another focus of the Association and they probably have five requests per day for assistance in this area, which they do for \$25 per hour.

Ms. Oestreicher informed the Board that their main sources of income are dues, rent from the Chamber, genealogy research, and any donations and they need help from the Board to keep the Museum open.

Upon questioning from Commissioner Hamlett, Ms. Oestreicher answered that the Historical Association receives \$150 per month from the Chamber for rent.

Ms. Oestreicher informed the Board of efforts the Historical Association had made in preserving energy and cutting costs.

Mr. Cy Vernon, Vice-President, Historical Association, came before the Board and stated that this is a pretty serious issue at this point because they are down to \$3,000, and

basically down to two and one-half months operation. Mr. Vernon added that they are giving serious consideration to closing the Museum in order to have funds for maintenance. Mr. Vernon noted that it is costing the Historical Association more to keep the Chamber in the Museum than they are receiving for rent per month. Mr. Vernon added that the Museum has a good collection of artifacts, especially with the recent acquisition of the Maud Gatewood collection and it would be a shame to limit access to that exhibit because Maud Gatewood was a very important artist in North Carolina and the Museum is the house in which she was born. Mr. Vernon informed the Board that the Historical Association also has an outstanding debt of \$10,000 because when the Museum was purchased, there were certain improvements that were made and money was borrowed to make those improvements.

Ms. Oestreicher informed the Board that the Museum's artifacts have been appraised and are valued at over one-half million dollars. Ms. Oestreicher stated that the Museum is significant as far as tourism is concerned.

Ms. Oestreicher stated that the Historical Association Board has a meeting on January 31<sup>st</sup> and unless they can receive some assistance from the County, they will have to seriously consider closing the Museum.

Upon a request of Commissioner Hall, Ms. Oestreicher shared with the Board other collections in the Historical Museum.

After considerable discussion, Commissioner Travis moved, seconded by Commissioner Hamlett to refer the funding request by the Caswell County Historical Association to the Building and Grounds Committee, with a recommendation to be brought back to the Board at its February 4, 2008 meeting. The motion carried unanimously.

CONSIDERATION OF ADOPTION OF RESOLUTION CREATING NEW FIRE  
INSURANCE DISTRICT BOUNDARIES USING THE GIS SYSTEM

Mr. Vernon Massengill, Fire Marshal, came before the Board to request that it consider the adoption of a Resolution creating new fire insurance district boundaries using the GIS System. Mr. Massengill informed the Board that the State requires the County Board of Commissioners to adopt every fire insurance district boundary in the County and also requires the County to state that it is using the GIS System or the wording system. Mr. Massengill recommended that the County use the GIS System in creating fire insurance district boundaries.

After discussion, Commissioner Vernon moved, seconded by Commissioner Travis to adopt the following *Resolution Approving Insurance District Boundaries*. The motion carried unanimously.

CASWELL COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS  
RESOLUTION  
APPROVING INSURANCE DISTRICT BOUNDARIES

**WHEREAS**, fire district boundaries for incorporated volunteer fire departments are established by boards of county commissioners pursuant to N.C.G.S. 153A-233, which districts are also used for insurance grading purposes; and

**WHEREAS**, the fire district boundaries in the unincorporated portion of Caswell County need to be revised to change the way they have historically been described by a point to point description to by reference to maps created on the GIS system, and to reflect annexations by municipalities in the County; and

**WHEREAS**, the Caswell County Fire Marshal has created new fire insurance district maps using the GIS system for various fire districts which are incorporated by reference into Exhibit A to this Resolution; now, therefore, be it

**RESOLVED** that the Caswell County Board of Commissioners approves the boundary lines of the Fire Insurance Districts shown on Exhibit A, exclusive of current or future municipal town limits, and as represented in the scaled GIS produced map certified by the County Fire Marshal referenced in Exhibit A.

Adopted the 22<sup>nd</sup> day of January, 2008.

S/George W. Ward, Jr.  
George W. Ward, Jr., Chairman  
Caswell County Board of Commissioners

ATTEST:

S/Wanda P. Smith  
Wanda P. Smith  
Clerk to the Board

REQUEST BY BREWER'S KENNELS

Ms. Nancy Brewer came before the Board to request that it consider granting her a commercial exemption to the *Disturbing the Peace Ordinance*. Ms. Brewer stated that she has taken all possible measures to reduce any noise from her kennels and she will keep on taking any reasonable measures to keep peace on Longs Mill Road. Chairman Ward informed Ms. Brewer that her formal request will start the process and the matter will be referred to staff.

Commissioner Hamlett asked Ms. Brewer if she has had any complaints about noise from her kennels since she went to court and she answered that she had not. Commissioner

Hamlett informed the Board that when Ms. Brewer went to court, the Judge ruled that if there are any more complaints concerning noise at her kennels and the individual who had been complaining about the noise calls the District Attorney, she will automatically be sentenced to 20 days in Jail. Ms. Brewer noted that she has appealed this and the time in Jail has been reduced to 10 days. Ms. Brewer stated that this is a very big deal with her because she has had to hire an Attorney and this business is her income. Upon questioning from Commissioner Hamlett, Ms. Brewer answered that she is a Master Trainer and is registered in socialization of dogs.

Commissioner Hamlett stated that he felt that the sentence imposed by the Judge was rather harsh and that it is ridiculous for someone to go to Jail because of barking dogs. Commissioner Hamlett added that he felt that this matter needs to be referred to the County Attorney for a possible solution.

After further discussion, Commissioner Hamlett moved, seconded by Commissioner Travis to refer this issue to the County Attorney for possible consideration of a variance of the *Disturbing the Peace Ordinance* and report back to the Board at its February 4, 2008 meeting. The motion carried by a vote of five to one with Commissioner Jefferies voting no.

#### COUNTY MANAGER'S REPORT

Mr. Kevin Howard, County Manager, reported that the State Bureau of Investigation has plans to construct a new crime lab in the Greensboro area and has requested assistance from Triad area local law enforcement agencies to provide funding to purchase the needed equipment. Mr. Howard stated that the amount of the requested contribution is based on county population. Mr. Howard added that Sheriff Welch has requested that the Board approve an appropriation of \$2,137 from DEA Funds for Caswell County's contribution to the new crime lab. After discussion, Commissioner Travis moved, seconded by Commissioner Hamlett to approve the Sheriff's request for a one time local partnership contribution of \$2,137 from DEA Funds to the State Bureau of Investigation dedicated to financing the scientific equipment needs for the Triad lab. The motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Howard requested that the Board declare a canine in the Sheriff's Office as surplus property and authorize him to dispose of it by private sale. Commissioner Hall moved, seconded by Commissioner Jefferies that a canine in the Sheriff's Office be declared as surplus and to grant the County Manager the authority to negotiate disposal of the canine by private sale. The motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Howard informed the Board that Sheriff Welch is preparing a pre-application grant request to the NC Governor's Crime Commission for computer equipment and software. Mr. Howard stated that the local match for the grant is \$4,300, and if awarded by the State, the Sheriff would like to utilize DEA Asset Forfeiture Drugs for the matching funds. After discussion, Commissioner Vernon moved, seconded by Commissioner Travis to grant the Sheriff authority to utilize DEA Asset Forfeiture Drugs in the amount

of \$4,300 for the local match if he is awarded a grant from the NC Governor's Crime Commission for computer equipment and software. The motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Howard discussed with the Board dates for a joint meeting with the Board of Education. Mr. Howard was directed to present the dates of February 13 and 20, 2008 to the Board of Education as possible dates for a joint meeting at the Civic Center.

Mr. Howard reported that the Senior Center will have its groundbreaking sometime in February.

Mr. Howard reported that the proposed water project at Pelham Industrial Park was the top priority for the Golden Leaf Foundation grant and a meeting will be scheduled in Raleigh to discuss this project, as well as the other three top projects, with their Board members.

### ANNOUNCEMENTS

Chairman Ward stated that tomorrow the County Manager would prepare a Resolution in recognition and tribute to the excellence exhibited in the career achievements of Mr. Carl Blake Willis and proclaim February 1, 2008 as Carl Blake Willis Day in Caswell County and then poll the Commissioners for approval and adoption. The Board was agreeable to this.

Chairman Ward questioned the County Manager as to the bond coverage for County employees. Mr. Howard answered that the County has a blanket bond for all employees and the County is at or above the limit set by State Statutes for specific County officials. Mr. Howard added that there would be a full report at the next Board meeting.

Chairman Ward questioned Mr. Howard as to whether he was preparing for a Retreat. Mr. Howard answered that he was waiting for the Board to set a date for the Retreat.

Commissioner Hamlett raised questions concerning the Gasoline Report and whether the County is in line with the budget. Mr. Howard answered that he is watching EMS very closely as far as gasoline costs.

Commissioner Jefferies stated that he would like for the Board of Commissioners to present a plaque in memory of Ms. Bobbie Jean Taylor to her family at the annual NAACP Banquet on February 16, 2008, for all that she has done for Caswell County. The Board was agreeable to this.

Commissioner Travis stated that he did not see how the County could appropriate an additional \$300 - \$500 per month to the Caswell County Historical Association. Commissioner Travis added that requests like this should be made at budget time. Commissioner Travis stated that he would hate to see the Museum closed, but the extra allocation would just be putting an additional burden on taxpayers. Commissioner

Jefferies stated that the Town of Yanceyville should be approached to help with keeping open the Museum.

Commissioner Hall informed the Board that a citizen contacted him concerning a tax bill. Commissioner Hall stated that the individual received a 2006 tax bill in the amount of \$80.92, and by the time he got involved in trying to figure out what was going on, the tax bill was \$1,300. Commissioner Hall added that the individual went to the Tax Office and wanted to know what happened to make it increase from \$80.92 to \$1,300 and he was told that there was some interest. Commissioner Hall stated that he told the individual that he would try to find out what happened, and therefore, called the Tax Office today and asked to be told what made up the bill. Commissioner Hall added that the Tax Office Clerk told him the bill was \$80.92, \$4.25 was added by the Tax Office, and the rest was legal fees, and the bill has now increased to \$1,500. Commissioner Hall stated that he had a major problem with this last year when it was decided that all delinquent taxes go to the Contract Attorney. Commissioner Hall added that this is not ethical or moral to place \$1,400 in penalties on an \$80 bill. Commissioner Hall informed the Board that he will continue to bring this issue up until the Board handles it in a different way. Chairman Ward instructed the County Manager to research the procedures approved by the Board, research the recommendations made for the Tax Office by the Finance/Audit Committee, and find out what the Tax Director has done to collect the \$80.92 bill, and bring this information back before the Board at its next meeting.

Mr. Howard announced that the Human Relations Commission Banquet has been rescheduled for Saturday, February 16, 2008.

#### CLOSED SESSION

Commissioner Hamlet moved, seconded by Commissioner Travis that the Board enter into closed session 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.

#### THE ADJOURNMENT

At 9:45 p.m. Commissioner Hamlett moved, seconded by Commissioner Jefferies to adjourn the meeting. The motion carried unanimously.

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Wanda P. Smith  
Clerk to the Board

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George W. Ward, Jr.  
Chairman

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