

MINUTES – SEPTEMBER 4, 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 Tuesday, September 4, 2007. 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 Travis moved, seconded by Commissioner Hamlett to approve the agenda as presented. The motion carried unanimously with Commissioner Jefferies absent.

APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA

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

The following items were included on the Consent Agenda:

- 1) Approval of Minutes of August 20, 2007 Meeting
- 2) Budget Amendment No. 20 – FY 2006-2007
- 3) Budget Amendment No. 2 – FY 2007-2008
- 4) Budget Amendment No. 3- FY 2007-2008

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Chairman Ward opened the floor for public comments.

There were no public comments made.

PRESENTATION OF SCHEDULE OF VALUES FOR REVALUATION FOR 2008

Mr. Thomas Bernard, Tax Director and Mr. Robert Ezzell, Property Manager with Pearson's Appraisal Service, Inc. came before the Board to present the Schedule of Values for revaluation for 2008.

Mr. Robert Ezzell informed the Board that a Schedule of Values is a range of values and takes into account land, houses, outbuildings, and commercial buildings which should take in every building in the County and project any future building in the County over the next four year period.

Commissioner Hall questioned Mr. Ezzell as to how the Schedule of Values relates to the valuation of property. Mr. Ezzell answered that appraisal of a house starts with a base rate grade per square foot which is \$65 per square feet and then explained the factors which are used in calculations which include any bathrooms after the standard one, type of heating and air-conditioning system, etc. and then the condition of the house which addresses depreciation factors. Mr. Ezzell stated that then replacement minus depreciation is considered. Mr. Ezzell added that after the house, variables such as outbuildings are included, and the property is then appraised, with variables such as land size adjustment, wooded, cleared, road frontage, off the road, etc. Upon questioning from Commissioner Hall, Mr. Ezzell answered that appraisal of land also starts with a base rate, based upon what an acre of land sells for in Caswell County only. Mr. Ezzell noted that values of waterfront lake lots depend on the view of the water and added that Hyco Lake lots are currently selling for approximately \$237,000.

(At 6:45 p.m. Commissioner Jefferies entered the meeting).

Commissioner Travis questioned Mr. Ezzell as to how they determine in appraising property whether it is commercial or residential and referred to businesses being conducted in homes or behind their homes. Mr. Ezzell answered that if someone has a sign up then they can determine that it is commercial property. Commissioner Travis stated that the County is losing a lot of money because property is not being appraised for what it is being used. Mr. Ezzell noted that if he knows that the property is commercial, it will be appraised as commercial property, but he does not always know this. Mr. Ezzell added that there is not a law that requires business owners to submit an income statement to him or the Tax Office. Mr. Ezzell informed the Board that when he visits a commercial building he can only appraise the structure itself, he cannot tax the business.

Upon questioning from Commissioner Hall, Mr. Ezzell answered that of the three methods of appraisal, Pearson Appraisal Services, Inc. uses the Sales Comparison Method.

WATERLINE EXTENSION REQUEST

Mr. Kevin Howard, County Manager, informed the Board that Mr. Ed Carter has requested that the County extend a waterline to property he owns on the Shady Grove Road. Mr. Howard stated that Mr. Carter would like for the waterline to come under NC Hwy 86 to his property and extend the line as he develops the property. Mr. Howard added that this request was originally brought before the Board in January, 2007, but he could not determine that the project had been completely addressed. Mr. Howard noted that this will not be a cost to the County; however, the County will have to get permits

from the NC Department of Environment and Natural Resources to operate a distribution system.

Mr. Howard stated that he would like direction from the Board as whether to move forward with this request.

Commissioner Hamlett suggested that the Board pursue extending the waterline down all of the Shady Grove Road.

After discussion, Chairman Ward directed the County Manager to start the process and obtain cost figures to extend the waterline across NC Hwy 86 to Mr. Ed Carter's property on the Shady Grove Road.

REPORT ON NCACC ANNUAL CONFERENCE

Commissioner Vernon reported on the North Carolina Association of County Commissioners' Annual Conference which he attended in Cumberland County on August 16-19, 2007.

Chairman Ward congratulated Commissioner Vernon on being reappointed to the North Carolina Association of County Commissioners' District Board as Co-Chair of the Agriculture Committee.

Commissioner Vernon reported that he served as District Director of District 17 of the North Carolina Association of County Commissioners for the past two years, and due to a rotation system, was ineligible for reappointment, however, the incoming Chairman of the Association asked that he co-chair the Agriculture Committee which put him back on the Board of Directors.

Commissioner Vernon reported that there were a number of seminars and exhibits at the Conference and there was also an opportunity to get to know Commissioners from other parts of the State.

Commissioner Vernon reported on a session in which the topic was counties and cities working together. Commissioner Vernon stated that there was a lot of discussion about what went on in the last legislative session and everyone was encouraged to stay in touch with their legislators.

Commissioner Vernon reported that Mr. Joe Bryant of Wake County was elected third Vice-President at the Conference.

COUNTY MANAGER'S REPORT

Mr. Kevin B. Howard, County Manager, provided the Board with a County Manager's Report and informed them that he would periodically prepare these reports. Upon

questioning from Mr. Howard, the Board agreed that they would like to have the County Manager's Report inserted into their agenda books.

Mr. Howard updated the Board on the Senior Center Project and informed them that the project is a little behind schedule. Mr. Howard reported that he would be meeting with Dewberry & Davis on Thursday to discuss the project. Mr. Howard added that the project is still expected to go out for bids in mid-September and construction should be completed by late May or early June.

Mr. Howard updated the Board on the sale of the Guilford Mills Building and informed them that the successful bidder for the building is unable to obtain financing to purchase the building.

Mr. Howard reported that after the Lease Agreement between Caswell County and NC Department of Correction was tabled, in further research, he learned that most counties in North Carolina get market rate for their buildings and offices and try to build in an increase to cover inflation. Mr. Howard informed the Board that the market rate for Caswell County and the Yanceyville area is from \$3.00 to \$9.00 per sq. ft., depending on the condition and size of the structure. Mr. Howard informed the Board that the County is currently charging NCDOC \$200 for office and he felt the amount should be \$500 - \$600. After further discussion, Commissioner Hall moved, seconded by Commissioner Travis that the County Manager negotiate the Lease between Caswell County and North Carolina Department of Correction for office space at market rate and that all leases with Caswell County be negotiated at market rate as they expire. The motion carried unanimously.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Commissioner Jefferies informed the Board that he recently spoke with a Person County Commissioner and he told him that his Board would be willing to meet with the Caswell County Board of Commissioners on the Dan River Water Project.

Commissioner Hall informed the Board that a 100-mile bicycle ride is being scheduled to come through Caswell County on October 2, 2007. Commissioner Hall stated that volunteers would be needed to help with this event.

Commissioner Hall noted that in last week's newspaper there was a small article about two schools out of six making annual progress. Commissioner Halls stated that no scores were given, but out of six schools in the County, only two made annual progress. Commissioner Hall informed the Board that after the second year, the BOE has to notify all of the parents in that school that they have the right to transfer their child to another school. Commissioner Hall stated that in the past there has been a lot of discussion about teachers' supplement, but there has been no discussion about what was needed to get math, history, civics, and reading scores up. Commissioner Hall informed the Board that in civics and history, there is a 30% - 40% pass rate. Commissioner Hall noted that anything that costs money will eventually come back to the Board of Commissioners.

Commissioner Hall suggested that the Board of Commissioners meet with representatives of the NC Department of Public Instruction to have them explain what is going on, the statistics and what they mean. After discussion, Chairman Ward suggested that the County Manager contact the Board of Education to schedule a joint meeting to discuss some of the concerns noted.

Commissioner Hall noted that several years ago the Board had a lot of concerns and spent a significant amount of time developing an Outdoor Storage Ordinance. Commissioner Hall questioned what is being done with those individuals who were out of compliance and at the point of the County taking legal action, and felt that it is time to focus on this issue again and enforce the Outdoor Storage Ordinance. Mr. Howard informed the Board that the recently hired County Planner is reviewing the files and is currently working on this, and when a County Attorney is hired, legal proceedings can begin.

Commissioner Hall stated that back in the Spring, the Finance/Audit Committee made some recommendations for the Tax Office and questioned the status of this. Chairman Ward stated that he has spoken to the Tax Director about this and has discussed this with the County Manager. Chairman Ward added that a workshop is being planned to address tax office issues, as well as EMS, personnel, and budgetary concerns and the Tax Director could come in at this time and inform the Board as to what he has done as far as the Finance/Audit Committee's recommendations.

Chairman Ward reported that the Caswell Family Medical Center is applying for grant funding to expand/renovate its current facility in order to provide additional diagnostic procedures and provide space for medical specialists who would come on site to see patients. Chairman Ward informed the Board that upon the request of the Caswell Family Medical Center, he is prepared to send a letter of support from the Board of Commissioners for this grant funding, if the Board so desires. The Board was agreeable to the Chairman sending a letter of support to the Caswell Family Medical Center.

Chairman Ward reported that the North Carolina Association of County Commissioners is planning a meeting to educate the public about the revenue options granted to counties by the NC General Assembly.

CLOSED SESSION

Chairman Ward moved, seconded by Commissioner Jefferies that the Board enter into closed session to discuss matters relating to the location or expansion of industries or other businesses in the area served by the public body (NCGS 143-318.11(a)(4)), and to consider the competence, terms of appointment, and performance of an individual public officer (NCGS 143-318.11(a)(6)). The motion carried unanimously.

REGULAR SESSION

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

THE ADJOURNMENT

At 8:40 p.m. Commissioner Jefferies moved, seconded by Commissioner Hamlett to adjourn the meeting. The motion carried unanimously.

Wanda P. Smith
Clerk to the Board

George W. Ward, Jr.
Chairman
