

October 3, 2011

The Washington County Board of Commissioners met in a regular session on Monday, October 3, 2011 at 6:00 PM in the County Commissioners' Room, 116 Adams Street, Plymouth, NC. Commissioners Alexander, Collins, Johnson, Manning and McCray were present. Also present were County Manager David L. Peoples, Clerk to the Board Julie J. Bennett, County Attorney/Assistant County Manager Cheryl Young and Finance Officer Frank Milazi.

Chair Johnson called for a motion to adjourn the September 6, 2011 meeting. Commissioner Manning made a motion to adjourn the September 6, 2011 meeting. Commissioner Collins seconded, motion carried unanimously.

Chair Johnson called the meeting to order. Commissioner Manning gave the invocation; Commissioner Alexander led the pledge of allegiance.

ADDITIONS / DELETIONS: None.

CONSENT AGENDA: Commissioner Collins made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda as listed below:

- a) Approval of Minutes
- b) NC Education Lottery Public School Building Capital Fund—Bulkhead Project—Creswell High School—\$9,000.00
- c) Resolution for Agent Designation
- d) Resolution Objecting to Merging Martin Community College with Another Community College

Commissioner Manning seconded, motion carried unanimously.

PUBLIC FORUM: None.

APPOINTMENT OF COUNTY MANAGER: Chair Johnson asked for a motion to appoint Mr. David L. Peoples as County Manager effective October 3, 2011.

Commissioner Collins made a motion to appoint David L. Peoples as County Manager effective October 3, 2011. Commissioner Alexander seconded, motion carried unanimously.

HURRICANE DISASTER RECOVERY INCLUDING WATER ISSUES, DEBRIS REMOVAL, DISASTER MITIGATION PROGRAM (RAISING HOUSES), RESTORATION GRANT: Ms. Ann Keyes addressed the Board. On September 10, 2011 Washington County was declared for public assistance. It has been reported that 720 people applied for individual assistance in Washington County. Ms. Keyes is working with DOT for debris removal. DOT has finished making the 1<sup>st</sup> sweep and the 2<sup>nd</sup> sweep will begin in 7 days. Ms. Keyes mentioned that she conducted some mosquito spraying with her truck. The County has received bids for mosquito spraying and Ms. Keyes asked that the County Manager be able to sign off on the

contract after it is reviewed by the County Attorney. Ground spraying has been done in some areas. Ms. Keyes also noted that there will be a meeting on October 14<sup>th</sup> to discuss the elevation of homes within the floodplain. Several assessments have been conducted regarding the flooding in Creswell. Ms. Keyes told the Board that debris pickup on private roads will not be reimbursed by FEMA unless it is a safety hazard and then it would be removed on a case by case basis. A suggestion was made after the hurricane to move an ambulance to the shelter during the next hurricane. Ms. Keyes stated she is working on reimbursements to the County through FEMA. If the reimbursement requested is less than \$63K, then the County will be reimbursed in a timely manner. Mosquito spraying will be reimbursed 100% by FEMA. The cost will be ~\$88,638 for 47,400 acres at \$1.87 per acre for the 3 towns (Plymouth, Roper and Creswell) and the County.

Commissioner Collins asked if GDS will pick up the storm debris on private roads (such as the one he lives on). Ms. Young stated that GDS does not have it in their contract to pick up storm debris.

Commissioner Alexander made a motion for Mr. Peoples to sign off on the mosquito contract once it is reviewed by the County Attorney. Commissioner Collins seconded, motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Howell addressed the Board and showed pictures of the flooding after Hurricane Irene in various areas in the county, mostly in Creswell. Some of the photos were taken four (4) days after the storm and there was still a large amount of flooding still visible.

Mr. Howell stated that there are 150 trees down across the Scuppernong River due to Hurricane Irene. Various areas need to be snagged. Since FY09, the 1% drainage tax has not been collected. There is ~\$100,000 in the drainage fund. Mr. Howell would like to be able to keep some of that money for spraying for alligator weed. Initially there was \$10,000 in the budget for beaver trapping; \$4,000 of that money has already been spent. Mr. Howell stated he had been looking into a grant option to be able to snag/drag the Scuppernong River; however, he would need the Commissioners approval to fund the match that is associated with this particular grant. The maximum grant we can apply for is \$75,000. Mr. Howell would like for the County to apply for \$50,000 (which means the County would have to match \$50,000 since is a 1 to 1 match). The grant applications are due October 17 and the project will need to be completed by September 2012.

Mr. Rufus Croom stated that he has been looking for other funding options, one being the Emergency Protection Water Shed work. NRCS has handled this in the past, but the rules have changed, namely that there must be structural damage or threat of loss of use of road/bridge and snagging can only be done up to 200 ft of that obstruction.

Mr. Croom also told the Board that he met with folks in Creswell last week who would like to create a travelway along the Scuppernong to be able to use equipment from the banks to remove trees rather than from the water.

Mr. Croom has been searching for fund sources but they are hardly any available. Ms. Keyes said that the County could try to put this effort forward as a project under the Hazard Mitigation plan.

Commissioner Collins asked what would it take to fix the Scuppernong River. Mr. Peoples stated that about four (4) years ago Washington County met with the Army Corp of Engineers. The County was told about a study which was done in the mid 1980's that discussed ways to make water more free flowing in the Scuppernong River without backing it up. It was noted that the Scuppernong River needed to be widened and dredged for this to happen and it would cost tens of millions of dollars to accomplish this. After an environmental assessment was completed and with knowledge that the costs would be astronomical to conduct this project the County knew the widening and dredging would not happen. In that meeting four (4) years ago with Army Corp of Engineers their position had not changed. They were not in a position to widen or dredge the Scuppernong River. The County was informed that the only thing that could be done when funds were available would be snagging and dragging.

Mr. Croom asked the Board for a directive on how to proceed. He noted that \$800,000 was spent after Hurricane Isabel on cleanup of the Scuppernong River, and that approximately \$200,000 - \$300,000 would be needed after this last hurricane. Mr. Croom stated that 4 ½ miles of the Scuppernong River (Phelps Bridge to Spruill's Bridge to Transportation Canal) need the most work.

Commissioner Manning suggested setting up a meeting with landowners to try and set up a service district to help improve the drainage issues. Chair Johnson asked Ms. Young to look into getting the meeting set up.

Commissioner Alexander made a motion to allow Mr. Howell and Mr. Croom to apply for the snagging/dragging grant for the Scuppernong River and match the grant (\$50,000) if the grant is approved. Commissioner Collins seconded, motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Peoples noted that the grant match (\$50,000) would be taken out of the drainage funds. Ms. Keyes stated that her and Mr. Howell's salary (in-kind) could possibly offset some of the cost. Ms. Keyes and Ms. Young will be meeting with FEMA and will be trying to obtain funds for the County for the grant match.

E-RECYCLING: Mr. Lou Manring spoke to the Board regarding electronic recycling stating that e-recycling has been mandated by the State as of January of this year. Washington County hasn't been participating in e-recycling and county residents do not have a way to recycle computers, televisions, cell phones or other electronic devices. Washington County is one (1) of eight (8) counties in the state that are not participating in e-recycling. Technically, the manufacturer is supposed to take back these electronic devices, but that is quite a hassle. A company named E-Secure has one of the simplest programs that the County could use. E-Secure will provide pallets with boxes located at the Washington County Landfill. The only thing the County will be responsible for is to shrink wrap the boxes on the pallets once they are full at a cost of approximately \$50 - \$100 a year.

Commissioner Collins made a motion to allow the County Manager to sign off on the contract with E-Secure after the County Attorney reviews it. Commissioner Manning seconded, motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Manring noted that he will need to amend the Solid Waste Management Plan to add the e-recycling effort and he will come back to the Board with that at a later date.

UNC SCHOOL OF GOVERNMENT ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COURSE: Ms. Jennifer Arnold, Executive Director of the Washington County Chamber of Commerce spoke to the Board regarding her recent attendance at the UNC School of Government Economic Development Course. Ms. Arnold showed a PowerPoint presentation. *(A copy is attached to and will become a part of these minutes.)* Ms. Arnold stated that she attended this course to learn more about Economic Development so she could work better with the County on economic development. Ms. Arnold noted that our Economic Development website is on point based on what was discussed during the course. Ms. Arnold said that by mentioning we are a Tier 1 county on our economic development website it interests developers who know that this means there are extra incentives from the State for economic development projects. Ms. Arnold said that the website should give enough information to make prospective developers call and request additional information. Ms. Arnold would like the Chamber to be seen as the ‘information hub’—the place to find all the information someone may be looking for. Washington County needs to continue to encourage small businesses to develop in our area. Ms. Arnold thanked the Commissioners for their support of the Chamber. Chair Johnson asked Ms. Arnold who represents the County at CONE (Chambers of the Northeast) and Ms. Arnold replied that she was the County’s representative.

BOARDS & COMMITTEES: Chair Johnson spoke to the Board regarding the following Board and Committee appointments.

Criminal Justice Advisory Board

On behalf of the Criminal Justice Advisory Board, Mr. Leo Davenport, Chair, has requested that the following members be re-appointed for a 1 year term.

Jackie Luchion  
Althea Baker  
Ronnie Horton  
Denise Blount

Roper Planning Board

On behalf of the Roper Planning Board, Dorenda Gatling, Roper Town Clerk, has requested the following members be appointed/re-appointed for a 3 year term.

Mike Harris (re-appointment)  
Robyn Roscoe (new appointment)

Roanoke River Basin Association (RRBA)

Mr. David Peoples would like to have Ms. Cheryl Young appointed as the County’s representative on the RRBA.

Commissioner Alexander made a motion to approve these appointments as presented. Commissioner McCray seconded, motion carried unanimously.

FINANCE OFFICER'S REPORT: Mr. Milazi presented the Finance Officer's First Quarter Report. Included in this report is a detailed EMS Transport/Summary Report from September 10 – August 11, 2011. Commissioner Collins asked why there was such a skew on the costs of Medicare over 180 days. Mr. David Clary, EMS Director, commented that this was during the time the County was dealing with the old EMS billing company and there were discrepancies over who was paid for which services. Commissioner Collins then inquired how much of that \$101,000 will be uncollectible. Mr. Clary stated that there is a 1 year billing timeframe. Commissioner Manning asked whose fault is this. Ms. Young stated that it is a combination of the County and the billing company. Ms. Young said that the reports that were coming into the county were unclear until documentation was received when the County was changing over to the new billing company.

Commissioner Collins thanked Mr. Milazi for the data.

Commissioner Johnson asked how are the other expenses for EMS shown (such as ambulance repair). Mr. Milazi explained that EMS has a regular budget like the rest of the departments which is separate than the billing for the transport expenses. Mr. Peoples did comment that if the County submits a 'clean claim' the County would be reimbursed in about 7 days. If the County submits something with an error, it can be a 45 day process or longer. The State will sometimes also be tardy in paying back the County even if it's a clean claim.

OTHER ITEMS BY CHAIR, COMMISSIONERS, COUNTY MANAGER, CLERK, COUNTY ATTORNEY:

Mr. Peoples thanked the Board for having the confidence in him to lead the County. Mr. Peoples noted that the Board and he have discussed some initiatives to be accomplished in the next 6 months in as cost effective and timely manner as possible.

Commissioner Manning made a motion to go into Closed Session. Commissioner McCray seconded, motion carried unanimously.

Commissioner McCray made a motion to go into Open Session. Commissioner Manning seconded, motion carried unanimously.

Commissioner McCray made a motion authorizing the County Manager to sign a 3-year lease with Mr. Bill Forbes for the Probation/Parole offices. Commissioner Manning seconded, motion carried unanimously.

Commissioner Alexander made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Manning seconded, motion carried unanimously.

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Tracey A. Johnson  
Chair

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Julie J. Bennett  
Clerk to the Board