

March 13, 2015

The Washington County Board of Commissioners met in a recessed session on Friday, March 13, 2015 at 10:00 AM in the Washington County Commissioners Room, 116 Adams Street, Plymouth, NC. Commissioners Johnson, Manning, Phelps and Walker were present. Also present were County Manager Jerry W. Rhodes, Clerk to the Board Julie J. Bennett, Finance Officer Frank Milazi and County Attorney Curtis Potter. Commissioner Sexton was unable to attend the meeting.

Vice-Chair Phelps called the March 13, 2015 meeting to order.

ADDITIONS/DELETIONS: Add Item 4A: Appointment to Steering Committee of the US Fish & Wildlife Service North Carolina Coastal Plain Refuge Complex Fall Workshop.

RESOLUTION: COMMUNITY COLLEGE REASSIGNMENT: Commissioner Johnson stated that she would like to be recused from this discussion and any action taken on this item.

Commissioner Walker made a motion to approve Commissioner Johnson's recusal from this discussion and any action taken on this item. Commissioner Manning seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Rhodes stated that he and Mr. Potter met with the Dr. Tansey, President, Beaufort County Community College (BCCC) and two (2) member of the BCCC Board of Trustees and two (2) staff members. BCCC is very interested in servicing Washington County.

Mr. Potter said that this offering of services has been studied several times in the past; however, there was not a facility ready and able to serve. Now we do have such a facility---the Washington County Roper Annex Building (formerly the Windows of the World building). Dr. Tansey and the BCCC Continuing Education Director have toured it. Dr. Tansey said BCCC would be able to provide services to Washington County within the year. BCCC also has a grant writer that can assist with getting grants for additional funds. Regarding Fire Services and EMS Service, Dr. Tansey said BCCC is in the process of acquiring a new firefighting facility. BCCC already offers EMS. BCCC is developing an Associate's Degree in Firefighting Technology. BCCC also offers 30 different summer camps for children. They also offer a CDL program at a cost effective rate. There was discussion of applying to Golden Leaf for funds and it was felt that this type of collaboration (BCCC and Washington County) is something Golden Leaf would support.

Mr. Rhodes told the Board that he had three (3) meetings scheduled with Dr. Britt, President of MCC but each meeting was cancelled by Dr. Britt.

BCCC is currently sending an instructor to PHS to teach auto mechanics.

BCCC will be able to bring services to the County such as EMS/Fire Training which they currently cannot.

Mr. Rhodes said that if BCCC is chosen it will not be considered a 'satellite' site because of the red tape required with that distinction. However, it would be the BCCC Washington County Learning Center. BCCC also said they would consider giving the County one or two seats on the BCCC Board of Trustees.

BCCC said they would pay for their staff and some equipment and office furnishings at the BCCC Washington County Learning Center. The County would maintain utilities, insurance and maintenance on the building and grounds.

Commissioner Phelps asked Representative Tine if the County should add in the current resolution that the County would like to choose BCCC. Representative Tine said he would like to have that support.

Commissioner Walker made a motion to approve the Community College Reassignment resolution with the addition of denoting that Washington County would like to designate BCCC as the community college to serve Washington County. Commissioner Manning seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

APPOINTMENT TO THE STEERING COMMITTEE OF THE US FISH & WILDLIFE SERVICE NORTH CAROLINA COASTAL PLAIN REFUGE COMPLEX FALL WORKSHOP: Ms. Bennett explained that Ms. Pam Wingrove, Natural Resource Planner of the North Carolina Coastal Plain Refuge Complex sent a letter to Chair Sexton requesting that the Board designate two people to the Steering Committee for planning their Fall Workshop. Mr. Jerry Rhodes, County Manager and Mr. Doug Lequire, Superintendent of Pettigrew State Park attended the informational meeting held in January, so Ms. Wingrove feels that the two of them would benefit their effort.

Commissioner Manning made a motion to appoint Mr. Jerry Rhodes, County Manager and Mr. Doug Lequire, Superintendent of Pettigrew State Park to the steering committee of the US Fish & Wildlife Service North Carolina Coastal Plain Refuge Complex Fall Workshop. Commissioner Walker seconded, motion carried unanimously.

DISCUSSION WITH REPRESENTATIVE PAUL TINE: Representative Tine commended the Board on their choice to be serviced by BCCC.

Rep. Tine mentioned that he has a meeting with the Chief of Staff for DOT and they will be driving through different divisions. He will take him to look at the Cherry Bridge in Creswell. Rep. Tine said he will be trying to get some discretionary funds to help with clearing under this bridge. Rep. Tine has also talked with Sheriff Barnes on changing some legislation regarding food that can be brought and delivered to the jail/detention (lessening the restrictions since we have limited resources).

Rep. Tine said that the Special Election bill that the Commissioners asked him to push through has been drafted. Mr. Rhodes told the Board of his conversation with Senator Smith-Ingram regarding the Special Election bill. She didn't think it would go far. She also has the Red Wolf resolution to push through.

Commissioner Manning mentioned to Rep. Tine about funds needed for fixing our schools. Rep. Tine said he has to do more research on that issue.

Commissioner Johnson asked about reimbursement for county EMS from Medicaid. Rep. Tine said he has not been specifically involved in that process. Rep. Tine said the eastern part of the state is turning into a desert of healthcare. Commissioner Johnson asked Rep. Tine to please support anything that he sees regarding helping EMS.

Commissioner Phelps asked about the broadband issue. Rep. Tine said the Governor has established a new position on how infrastructure is developed throughout the state. There is a piece of legislation that should be out shortly—modeled after what the Feds have done. There isn't a state plan that says how to do this. There is another bill that says the County will let in whoever can provide the services needed for broadband, since CenturyLink is not expanding their services.

Mr. Rhodes said the Governor is proposing a bond referendum for transportation. Mr. Rhodes asked Rep. Tine his thoughts on this. Rep. Tine said the Governor is trying to have a matrix to make sure that DOT is using tax dollars efficiently. Gas consumption is expected to decline which would mean DOT would lose money for projects. Rep. Tine said there are several different proposals being talked about. It takes about \$90M a year to pay off a bond. The Governor will need to figure out how the bond will be paid for and if the projects are viable.

Commissioner Phelps asked about the timeline for bringing BCCC into Washington County. Rep. Tine said if he can get it through quickly, BCCC can be ready in August. If it takes longer to get through legislation, then it might be January. Rep. Tine said he is optimistic that he can get it pushed through. Ms. Bennett asked if she should send a copy of the resolution to the NCCCS office. Rep. Tine said that it would be appropriate to send one to the NCCCS office. Ms. Kim Cotton-West asked if this has to go to Committee. Rep. Tine said he will have to see where it goes once it's introduced. It will probably go to the Education and Community College Committee. Their next meeting is next week--on Tuesday at 11:00 am on March 17th.

Commissioner Johnson mentioned that a lot of the NCACC goals are repeats from last year and are self-explanatory and are still important to Washington County and that she and others have talked to Rep. Tine in the last couple of months.

Commissioner Johnson said the Department of Commerce need to keep their phone numbers updated so the Commissioners can get in touch with them to make sure that Washington County gets their name in the hat for some economic development projects. Rep. Tine said he would like to get the Department of Commerce to his office and let them meet with Commissioner Johnson next Wednesday.

Rep. Tine mentioned a few items. He said that Sentara is under the same umbrella like Vidant is. They have taken over the hospital in Elizabeth City. Sentara is putting money in it. Sentara is putting money in the Outer Banks Hospital. They are making investments. Rep. Tine has met with their leadership on rural health care and about Washington County Hospital.

Rep. Tine said he is still working on the DMV issue because Washington County still has no DMV services. He is asking DMV for a plan. He said it is still a point of contention with him. Commissioner Johnson reminded Rep. Tine to send any information he receives on this issue to Mayor Roth.

The Board took a 2-minute recess.

Vice-Chair Phelps called the meeting back to order.

E911 GRANT DISCUSSION: Mr. Rhodes said that it has been previously discussed about counties having a back-up 911 center by 2016. The Sheriff's office has been working on a grant for this. Part of the discussion has been do the Commissioners want the 911 Center to use a current building or build a new one and move the current center to a new building and use the existing location as the backup (which has to be 5 miles apart).

Mr. Richard Taylor, NC 911 Board Director spoke to the Board. There is not a requirement to build a new facility and noted that it should be at least 1 mile apart from the back-up center. Further away is better, in case whatever takes down your original system will take down the backup.

Commissioner Johnson told Mr. Taylor that the first time the Commissioners met was when the Commissioners were considering a joint venture with Martin County. Commissioner Johnson asked Mr. Taylor if he felt that Washington County doing this by ourselves puts us at an advantage. Mr. Taylor said it could work both ways—the 911 Board knows that Washington County is not a wealthy County; however, whenever a County can consolidate, it has a cost benefit. The control aspect is a benefit for Washington County doing it by ourselves. The County has to make the decision. What is it worth to the County?

Commissioner Phelps asked about the grant process. Mr. Taylor said that the Sheriff's Office is starting that process. There is an enhancement grant available—eligible expenses that are on the books right now. The County did receive a grant in 2010—updated phones and CAD equipment in 911 center—hardware and software.

Mr. Taylor said there is also a consolidation grant available—regional enhancement—like what the County was discussing with Martin County—anything that facilitates the consolidation is an allowable expense—brick, mortar, towers, etc.

Mr. Taylor also mentioned a relocation grant—expenses of the relocation of the 911 Center become eligible.

Commissioner Phelps asked Mr. Taylor's advice. Mr. Taylor asked what does the County want to do. Sheriff Barnes asked what if the County wants to move 911 to an existing facility. Mr. Taylor said the County would be asking for less money which means the County stands a better chance of getting the money. The 911 Board likes to see a 911 center that has money already in the game. (These grants are NOT a match.) Mr. Taylor said one advantage Washington County has is that we are a Tier 1 County.

Commissioner Manning asked what building the Sheriff is talking about using if the 911 wants to use an existing building. Mr. Rhodes said originally talk was about the Washington County Roper Annex Building, but with the business that took place earlier in today's meeting, that building is off the table.

Mr. Rhodes said when he talked to Chair Sexton yesterday he mentioned checking on a piece of property that has water/sewer available to build a new 911 facility on. Mr. Rhodes said

there is building on Hwy 32 that is currently leased but the County owns it. However, Mr. Rhodes doesn't believe it is a mile away. The County owns property in Creswell next to the Creswell Clinic also.

Commissioner Phelps said the state prison would be interested in deeding it to the County and we own land in Pea Ridge at the Y (that is under-utilized as a recreation park). Commissioner Phelps also said that the Mid-County Fire Department would be interested as well.

Ms. Delisa Johnson, Washington County's 911 Director, said it would be nice to have a new bigger space and use the existing office as the back-up. Mr. Taylor said the back-up facility would only be staffed during an emergency. Mr. Taylor encourages 911 staff to use the back-up facility once a month just to keep familiar with the area. He encourages maintenance to be done on one system and use the other during that time.

Commissioner Johnson said that she would like the Sheriff's office to look into building a new facility at the east end of the County and using the current office as the back-up.

Mr. Taylor said having available land is the 'skin in the game'—mention all these things in the grant application to show the County's investment. Mr. Taylor mentioned to the Sheriff and Ms. Johnson that they can go on NC 911 website and see previous scoring on previous applications. The NC 911 Board wants to fund the needy not the greedy. Make sure to give lots of documentation.

Mr. Rhodes asked about the deadline. Mr. Taylor said that April 10 is the deadline.

Sheriff Barnes said he would need a comparison to know how to write the grant. Mr. Taylor noted that the Sheriff could look for the grant written by Henderson County. They added onto an existing building and might be similar to what Washington County would need, or even Swain County.

Ms. Fikes said the current 911 center is 427 square feet. Mr. Taylor said the County needs to have its best estimate in the grant.

Mr. Taylor also suggested that Washington County could be a back-up for another county. (Could still be Martin County's back-up.)

Commissioner Johnson made a motion for the Sheriff's Office to write the grant with the intent of building a new building for the 911 Center. Commissioner Walker seconded, motion carried unanimously.

OTHER ITEMS: Ms. Bennett mentioned the trip that is being planned by the WCS Board of Education to Hoke County to visit their 'green' school on Monday, March 30. Ms. Bennett asked how many of the Commissioners will be going. All Commissioners present stated that they intended to attend.

Sheriff Barnes said yesterday an inmate was put in jail, had a seizure, fell and hit his head and is now in ICU in Greenville. The Sheriff was giving the Board a heads up that the County will be receiving a bill for this.

At 11:45 am, the meeting moved to the Cooperative Extension Conference room for the Commissioners to be debriefed by Ms. Rebecca Liverman (facilitator) on the previous Strategic Planning meeting during a working lunch and then continue on with the next Strategic Planning Meeting.

At 3:00 PM, with no further business to discuss, Commissioner Johnson made a motion to recess the meeting until March 30. Commissioner Walker seconded, motion carried unanimously.

D. Cole Phelps
Vice- Chair

Julie J. Bennett, CMC, NCCCC
Clerk to the Board