

December 5, 2011

The Washington County Board of Commissioners met in a regular session on Monday, December 5, 2011 at 6:00 PM in the County Commissioners room, 116 Adams Street, Plymouth, NC. Commissioners Alexander, Johnson, McCray, and Manning were present. Also present were County Manager David Peoples, Clerk to the Board Julie J. Bennett, Finance Officer Frank Milazi, and Assistant County Manager/County Attorney Cheryl Young. Commissioner Collins was absent.

Chair Johnson asked for a motion to adjourn the November 7, 2011 Board of Commissioners meeting. Commissioner Manning made a motion adjourn the November 7, 2011 Board of Commissioners meeting. Commissioner Alexander seconded, motion passed unanimously.

County Manager, David Peoples called the meeting to order.

ELECTION OF CHAIR: County Manager David Peoples called for nominations for Chair of the Washington County Commissioners. Commissioner Johnson nominated Buster Manning for Chair for December 2011 - 2012. There were no other nominations. Commissioner McCray made a motion to close the nominations; Commissioner Johnson seconded. Commissioner Johnson made a motion to elect Commissioner Manning as Chair. Commissioner Alexander seconded, motion carried unanimously.

Chair Manning assumed presiding over the meeting.

ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIR: Chair Manning called for nominations for Vice-Chair of the Washington County Commissioners for December 2011 - 2012. Commissioner Johnson nominated Commissioner McCray as Vice-Chair. There were no other nominations Chair Manning called for the vote. All Commissioners voted aye.

Chair Manning gave the invocation; Commissioner Alexander led the pledge of allegiance.

ADDITIONS / DELETIONS: Mr. Peoples asked Chair Manning to remove the Closed Session for NCGS 143-381.11(a)(4). The topic originally scheduled for Closed Session will be discussed in the County Manager's report. Ms. Young asked Chair Manning to add the Resolution to Approve the Mutual Aid Agreement between the Washington County Sheriff's Office and the Town of Plymouth to the Consent Agenda.

CONSENT AGENDA: Commissioner Johnson made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda with the addition mentioned above:

Consent Agenda

- a) Approval of Minutes
- b) 2012 County Commissioners' Meeting Schedule
- c) 2012 County Holiday Schedule
- d) Closing of County Offices

- e) Tax Refunds & Releases and Insolvent Accounts
- f) NC Education Lottery Public School Building Capital Fund—Free Standing Sign w/Mascot—Creswell High School—\$6,709.24
- g) Resolution --Mutual Aid Agreement between the Washington County Sheriff's Office and the Town of Plymouth

Commissioner McCray seconded, motion carried unanimously.

PUBLIC FORUM: Larry Jones, 312 Golf Road, Plymouth, NC stated he has spoken to Commissioner Johnson regarding "convenience sites". Convenience sites are places where citizens can take their garbage when they have accumulated garbage after their weekly garbage pickup. Mr. Jones stated that other counties have them, why doesn't Washington County? Commissioner Alexander stated Washington County had convenience sites years ago. Mr. Jones stated that citizens can't take garbage to the landfill. Mr. Jones asked can the County check into having convenience sites. Mr. Peoples stated that it would increase costs substantially to have pickup at households and to have convenience sites. Mr. Peoples noted that the County doesn't provide trash pickup in the town city limits. (Mr. Jones lives in the town city limits.) Chair Manning suggested that Mr. Jones take his issue before the Plymouth Town Council.

PROPERTY TAX EXEMPTION OR EXCLUSION: Chip Main, Tax Collector spoke to the Board regarding a Property Tax Exemption for Mackey's Marina and Ship Store application that he received November 18, 2011. When applications are received this late in the year, Mr. Main stated that he can't approve the application, therefore he is bringing it to the Commissioners for approval. Mr. Main explained that that a new tax law went into effect in 2009 regarding a working waterfront. Mr. Main said Mackey's Marina and Ship Store meets the criteria, and if it would have been presented in a timely manner he would have approved it subject to meeting with Mr. Yates and examining his property.

Commissioner Alexander made a motion to approve the Property Tax Exemption for Mackey's Marina and Ship Store. Commissioner Johnson seconded, motion passed unanimously.

WASHINGTON COUNTY HOSPITAL UPDATE (WCH): Mr. Harley Smith, CEO of WCH spoke to the Board and noted that WCH currently has fifteen (15) in-patients and three (3) surgeries planned. WCH has a new C-arm for the Operating Room machine that helps the surgeon see where to put the implements during surgery. WCH has purchased a new harmonic scalpel and Operating Room table. Mr. Smith stated that WCH is in the process of hiring new nurses and CNA's. Mr. Smith noted that WCH is interested in hiring local nurses. Mr. Smith also told the Board that WCH is adding five (5) more rooms to the medical surgery area. WCH currently has 18 rooms with beds and tables and they will have 25 before the end of this fiscal year. WCH also has a swing bed program which allows patients to stay for up to 100 days; most patients average about 24-25 days. WCH has 8 swing beds. Mr. Smith said that WCH just signed contract with Hospice and Respite Care.

Gordon Docking, COO, HMC/CAH told the Board that they are continuing to make progress through the legal process. WCH is still doing extremely well. Through the first 7 weeks of Chapter 11, WCH is paying their bills and intends to keep going forward.

DRAINAGE DISCUSSION: Rufus Croom and Wayne Howell, Soil and Water Conservation spoke the Board regarding the cleanup of the Scuppernong River after Hurricane Irene. Mr. Croom stated that Washington County did not receive the grant which was applied for the cleanup. There was also a Watershed Program but Washington County is not eligible for that either. Mr. Croom has put out an invitation to bid for Hurricane Irene storm debris removal from Phelps Bridge to the county line. Mr. Croom stated that there is some money in the drainage district account but not enough to cover this project. Mr. Croom will be showing potential bidders the areas that need the most cleanup on Friday. The bid opening will be December 16 at 10:00 am. Mr. Croom asked the Board if it was possible to have another Commissioners meeting this month to see how the County wants to handle the bid process and if we don't have enough money to cover the bids, it will need to be decided where will the money will come from. Chair Manning thinks Washington County needs to be working with Tyrrell County on this. Mr. Croom is trying to get cleanup work started by the first of January 2012 because cleanup must be done by February 15 and cannot resume until the end of Sept/first of Oct due to the fish spawning. Commissioner Alexander recommends that the County move along with this cleanup. Chair Manning asked about setting up a drainage district. Mr. Croom said he has talked to Ms. Young and about the legalities of this. Mr. Croom is looking at setting up a steering committee to look at rivers and canals from Eddie Smith to the county line and including Lake Phelps. Mr. Lloyd Jones asked if Washington County goes up to the Tyrrell County line what is Tyrrell County going to do? Chair Manning suggested Mr. Peoples talk to Tyrrell County's Manager to start a dialogue. Mr. Peoples offered to do this and will get back to the Board.

BOARD & COMMITTEE APPOINTMENTS:

a) **Southern Albemarle Association (SAA)**

Ms. Jennifer Arnold, Washington County Vice President of the SAA, has requested the following representatives serve on the 2012 Executive Committee of the SAA and would like the Board's approval.

Jennifer Arnold- Roads and Bridges  
J.D. Melton- Roads and Bridges  
Denise Moulden- Rules  
Cheryl Young- Rules  
Ruffin Gill- Finance  
Julie Bennett- Publicity  
Mayor Bill White- Roadsides and Parks  
Knapp Brabble- Airports  
Elaine Vann- History  
Charles Sharpe- Waterways and Ferries

b) **Voluntary Agricultural District Board (VADB)**

Ms. Rebecca Liverman, County Extension Director has requested the following representatives serve on the Voluntary Agricultural District Board and would like the Board's approval.

Scuppernong - Steve Barnes & Doug Maxwell  
Roper/Lees Mill - Tim Griffin

Plymouth - Eddie McNair & Gerald Allen

Skinnerville - Dwight Davenport

Bill Sexton—Plymouth

(4 years staggered terms—and Rebecca Liverman will get back with the Board on the terms)

c) **The Albemarle Commission**

The Albemarle Commission has made three requests:

The Albemarle Commission would like to reappoint Ms. Frances Lucas and Ms. Faye Phelps to the Washington County Joint Community Advisory Committee. Their terms are scheduled to expire December 31, 2011.

It is time to appoint a representative from Washington County to serve on the Albemarle Commission Board from January 1, 2012 to January 1, 2013. The Board of Commissioners has the option to reappoint Tracey Johnson or appoint another Board member.

Ms. Johnson has agreed to serve if reappointed.

Also, the Board of Commissioners can appoint another delegate to serve on the Albemarle Commission Board. The delegate will serve a two year appointment beginning April 1, 2012. This delegate may not be an elected official.

Commissioner Johnson has a nominee but needs to contact the person and will discuss it at the next meeting.

d) **Commissioner Collins' Committee Assignments**

Mr. Peoples would like to discuss re-assigning Commissioner Collins' committee assignments until further notice.

Commissioner Collins is a member of the following committees:

Safety Committee (local, Ann Keyes' office) meets every other month starting in January  
Commissioner Alexander will attend these meetings.

Local Emergency Planning Committee (local, Ann Keyes' office) meets every quarter, usually on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Monday of the month at 10:00 am  
Commissioner Alexander will attend these meetings.

Resource Conservation and Development (RC&D) (Edenton) The full Council meets every August, December, February & May on the 1st Tuesday at 6:30 pm. The Annual Awards Banquet begins at 6:00 pm (December mtg)

Mr. Peoples will attend these meetings.

SmartStart Board (local, through Tyrrell-Washington Partnership office) meets every month, usually on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday

Ms. Young attends these meetings.

Commissioner Manning asked if whoever attends these meetings to please e-mail an update on the committees that you serve to the Commissioners.

Commissioner Alexander made a motion to approve all of the Board/Committee appointments. Commissioner Johnson seconded, motion carried unanimously.

FINANCE OFFICER'S REPORT:

Mr. Milazi discussed the following Budget Appropriation Amendment/Adjustment:

- 12090— Single Family Rehabilitation 2011 (+\$160,000.00)

Chair Manning stated he thought that the insurance check would be a bigger check. Mr. Milazi explained that all of the claims have not been processed.

Chair Manning also asked Mr. Milazi why do we renew CD's every 6 months rather than once a year? Mr. Milazi explained that until the economy changes we receive the best rates for 6 months.

Commissioner Johnson made a motion to approve Budget Amendment 12090 as presented. Commissioner Alexander seconded, motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Milazi asked the Board about keeping the former chair's name on the finance documents until the change can be made to grant signature authority to new Chair.

Commissioner Alexander made a motion to keep the former chair's name on the finance documents until the change can be made to grant signature authority to new Chair. Commissioner McCray seconded, motion carried unanimously.

OTHER ITEMS BY CHAIRPERSON, COMMISSIONERS, COUNTY MANAGER, CLERK, OR ATTORNEY: Mr. Peoples spoke to the Board regarding the Northeast Regional School of Biotechnology/Agriscience (NERSBA). Legislation was passed approving the location of this school to be at the Vernon James Center in Washington County. Mr. Peoples attended a meeting last week where a Board of Directors was installed to oversee the management and creation of that high school and an election was held and David Peele (of Avoca Farms) was elected as Chair and Benji Forrest of NCSU was elected as Vice Chair. Mr. Peoples noted that there is a lot of work to be done to hire a new principal. Mr. Peoples will be attending another meeting this Thursday for discussing the plan for recruiting the principal. The Board wants to hire the principal by March 1, 2012. The curriculum has to be set and staff hired. The NERSBA is scheduled to open in 2012 and the Board is working in an aggressive manner to make that happen.

Mr. Peoples also spoke to the Board regarding two economic development projects announced at the Plymouth Town Council meeting this morning. There will be a solar farm on Ward Road. The company, SunEnergy1 is headquartered in Mooresville, NC. They plan to have 2 megawatts of solar power by 12/31/11. They can increase that up to 8 megawatts power generation. SunEnergy1 is in talks to acquire additional land since they eventually want to

increase the power to 20 megawatts. This is a \$61M investment. SunEnergy1 will be trying to hire Washington County people to help with the construction. \$3M will be expended in labor during construction. SunEnergy1 will be having people in local hotels and the County should see an increase of revenue in the local restaurants as well.

Mr. Peoples noted that there will be a 2<sup>nd</sup> solar farm operating on the Wilson Street Extension. Lightway Panels of America is expected to start construction in the 1<sup>st</sup> qtr/2<sup>nd</sup> qtr of 2012. They are applying for permits and checking zoning. Once built, it will be the 3<sup>rd</sup> largest solar farm in the US. Mr. Peoples noted that more electricity will be generated east of Mississippi with these two projects.

Mr. Peoples also noted that some annexation issues may come before the Board of Commissioners and/or the Plymouth Town Council in the future as a result of these projects.

Commissioner Alexander made a motion to go into Closed Session pursuant to G.S. 143-381.11(a)(3). Commissioner McCray seconded, motion carried unanimously.

Commissioner McCray made a motion to recess the meeting until Monday, December 19, 2011 at 6:00 pm. Commissioner Alexander seconded, motion carried unanimously.

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Buster Manning  
Chair

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Julie J. Bennett  
Clerk to the Board