

November 5, 2012

The Washington County Board of Commissioners met in a regular session on Monday, November 5, 2012 at 6:00 PM in the Conference Room of the Strader Building, 128 East Water Street, Plymouth, NC. Commissioners Alexander, Johnson, Manning, McCray and Sexton were present. Also present were Interim County Manager/County Attorney Cheryl Young, Clerk to the Board Julie J. Bennett and Finance Officer Frank Milazi.

At 4:30 pm, the Board attended a "Report to the People" presentation by Cooperative Extension in the Strader Building followed by dinner.

Commissioner Sexton made a motion to adjourn the October 15, 2012 Board of Commissioners meeting. Commissioner McCray seconded, motion carried unanimously.

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

ADDITIONS / DELETIONS: Chair Manning added the re-appointment of Bill Peele to the CDC to the agenda.

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

- a) Approval of Minutes
- b) Tax Refunds & Releases and Insolvent Accounts
- c) Resolution—Opposing Another Insurance Rate Increase
- d) Resolution—Veterans Day, November 11, 2012

Commissioner McCray seconded, motion carried unanimously.

PUBLIC FORUM: None.

REFORESTATION OF THE AIRPORT PROPERTY: Mr. David Jennette of Timberlands Unlimited spoke to the Board regarding the reforestation of the Airport property. Mr. Jennette stated that he completed the harvest of 34.5 acres at the Plymouth Municipal Airport in July. Mr. Jennette distributed aerial photographs showing the 32 acres harvested on the airport road and the 2.5 acres for the taxiway turnaround. Mr. Jennette said he was here to answer the Board's questions about the reforestation. He stated that he only plants loblolly pine trees and those are planted in January and February followed by herbicide releases. Planting and spraying is a viable option based on the time of year that the trees were cut. The costs presented are for the 32 acres. Mr. Jennette stated that he would need to reserve the seedlings as soon as possible. Commissioner Sexton questioned why plant seedlings since volunteer seedlings will come up? Mr. Jennette asked how he knew that. Commissioner Sexton stated he learned that from experience on other parcels of land. Mr. Jennette explained that pine cones take 2 years to drop their seeds and that the County shouldn't rely on airborne seeds to germinate the airport

land. He also said that reforestation is the simplest and cheapest plan but it must be done now. He also informed the Commissioners that his herbicide is a mixture of two different chemicals that does not kill the pine trees. Mr. Jennette said that he must spray in September and that the chemicals are very safe, environmentally friendly and promulgates the reproduction of the pines. Mr. Jennette did mention that the grant money for tree planting (Cost Share Grant) is almost gone. The County has to make an application to the State and then the Forest Service approves it. If Washington County were to receive the grant money, a contract would have to be signed saying the County would keep the land for 10 years. Also, the contract would state that the County would be penalized if we cut down those trees for economic development.

Commissioner Johnson made a motion to approve the reforestation contract for the airport property without applying for the Cost Share Grant. Commissioner Alexander seconded, motion carried unanimously.

ESTABLISHMENT OF A PUBLIC DEFENDER'S OFFICE: Ms. Denise Moulden, Washington County Clerk of Court and Attorney Andy Womble of the Indigent Defense Services (IDS) office in District 1 (north of the Albemarle Sound) spoke to the Board regarding the establishment of a Public Defender's office in District 2 (Washington, Beaufort, Hyde, Martin and Tyrrell counties). Mr. Womble stated that court officials say having a Public Defender's Office in District 2 would allow for more efficient legal representation of indigent defendants charged with crimes. Mr. Womble is seeking to establish an office in Washington. Space can be rented for \$2,650 a month, and Mr. Womble proposed that the five counties pay a portion of that cost on a prorated basis established by population. Washington County's monthly share would be \$371. Mr. Womble handed out the Interlocal Agreement that he received this afternoon. Commissioner Sexton asked if having this new office will this speed up the process of the judicial system. Mr. Womble replied that it would save time and money. The office will be in Washington, NC (Beaufort County) and will have five lawyers in the office. Mr. McCray asked have the other counties agreed to these costs. Mr. Womble replied that they have informally agreed with this breakdown.

Ms. Moulden spoke to the Board and told them that there are five attorneys on the court appointed list and she basically uses the same three attorneys all the time and they are overworked. She sang the praises of Tommy Roughton, one of the public defenders from Mr. Womble's office who would still be available in the District 2 office. She is in support of a Public Defender's Office.

Mr. Womble told the Board that the plan is to have the District 2 office open January 1, 2013.

Commissioner Sexton made a motion to approve a Public Defender's Office in District 2 if all the other counties participate and authorized the chair to sign the Interlocal Agreement. Commissioner Alexander seconded, motion carried unanimously.

Commissioner Johnson recommended that the Clerk of Court's office pay the fee from their budget (Facility Fees) next year. Ms. Moulden will work with Mr. Milazi to see if this is possible.

STOTESBERRY'S PROPERTY: Mr. Rex Stotesberry spoke to the Board to ask them for an extension for moving from his property that was acquired by the County. He was not able to meet the original vacancy date of September 30 due to weather delays in having his new house put in place and would like to have an extension. Chair Manning said that Mr. Stotesberry had previously spoken to him and he had talked to Mr. Peoples (before he retired) and Mr. Peoples didn't see any problem with granting an extension. Mr. Stotesberry requested an extension until December 30, 2012. Ms. Young mentioned that the original agreement stated there was a \$50/day penalty for not vacating on time.

Commissioner Sexton made a motion to approve Mr. Stotesberry's extension of until December 30, 2012 and to waive the penalty. Commissioner Alexander seconded, motion carried unanimously.

PRESENTATION OF PLAQUE: CERTIFICATE OF ACHIEVEMENT IN EXCELLENCE IN FINANCIAL REPORTING: Chair Manning presented Mr. Milazi with a plaque for the Certificate of Achievement in Excellence in Financial Reporting. The Certificate of Achievement is the highest form of recognition in governmental accounting and financial reporting, and its attainment represents a significant accomplishment by a government and its management. This is the 16th year the Washington County Finance Office has received this award.

UPDATE ON HWY 32 CONNECTOR: Ms. Young spoke to the Board regarding the Hwy 32 Connector Road. A right-of-way agent from DOT came to see Ms. Young to say that Washington County owns land that DOT will need for this connector road. It will be 2 years before actual work is started. Surveying is being done and DOT will be seeking right-of-ways. DOT will have additional information to the County around the first of the year.

FINANCE OFFICER'S REPORT:

Mr. Milazi discussed the following Budget Appropriation Amendments/Adjustments:

- 13030—
 - a) Sheriff's Department—Weyerhaeuser Grant— +\$5,000.00
 - b) Board of Education—NC Education Lottery— +\$86,636.77
 - c) Department of Social Services—DSS Administration— -\$7,628.00

Chief Deputy Beth Floyd personally thanked Weyerhaeuser for their grant for the Explorer Post.

- 13040—Emergency Management Services—Weyerhaeuser Grant— +\$5,000.00

David Clary personally thanked Weyerhaeuser for their grant. It's the 3rd annual grant received.

- 13050—Airport Turnaround Project— +\$51,994.52
- 13060—Cooperative Extension—SHIP Grant— +\$1,450.00

Commissioner McCray asked Ms. Young to send a letter of thanks to Weyerhaeuser for the grants received.

Commissioner Sexton made a motion to approve Budget Amendments 13030, 13040, 13050 and 13060 as presented. Commissioner Alexander seconded, motion carried unanimously.

The Revenues Report, Expenditures Report and Enterprise Fund Summaries were also discussed.

OTHER ITEMS BY CHAIR, COMMISSIONERS, COUNTY MANAGER, CLERK, OR ATTORNEY: Ms. Bennett reminded the Board that the County offices will be closed Monday, November 12, 2012 in observance of Veteran's Day.

Commissioner Sexton mentioned that Senator Kay Hagan was in Plymouth at the end of October and none of the Commissioners were aware of her visit. Ms. Bennett will contact the current legislative offices and make sure they have our Commissioners contact information.

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

Commissioner Sexton made a motion to recess the meeting. Commissioner Alexander seconded, motion carried unanimously.

Chair

Julie J. Bennett, CMC
Clerk to the Board