

HAYWOOD COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

REGULAR MEETING – December 21, 2015

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Mark S. Swanger convened the regular meeting of the Haywood County Board of Commissioners at 5:30 p.m. in the Historic Courtroom at the Haywood County Historic Courthouse, Waynesville, North Carolina, with Chairman Mark S. Swanger, Vice-Chairman J.W. “Kirk” Kirkpatrick III, Commissioners L. Kevin Ensley, Michael T. Sorrells and Bill L. Upton present. Staff members present were County Manager Ira Dove, HCHSA Director/Asst. County Manager Stoney Blevins, Finance Director Julie Davis and Deputy Clerk Candace Way.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Chairman Swanger led the Pledge of Allegiance.

INVOCATION

Commissioner Ensley offered the invocation.

PUBLIC HEARING

Chairman Swanger opened the Public Hearing concerning the approval of the execution and delivery of the installment financing contract, in a principal amount not to exceed \$2,100,000 and the County’s construction of the Emergency Services Base.

Chairman Swanger recognized Finance Director, Julie Davis and Emergency Management Director, Greg Shuping.

Ms. Davis explained that after the public hearing she will be sending the application to the Local Government Commission in January for approval at their February meeting. She stated that there should be a mid-February closing of the loan. She noted that the notice was in the paper on December 11th.

Mr. Shuping thanked the Board for their support this year with the many projects occurring in the county and Haywood Community College. He thanked the Board, Mr. Burris and Mr. Dove for their commitment with this particular project. He said that this is putting a public safety complex on one footprint, which will enable them to operate better as a team. He said that this will be the first building completely planned with Emergency Management and Emergency Medical Services in mind. He commented that several members of a team have collaborated on this project, and pledged to implement plans to improve the services for the citizens of the county.

Chairman Swanger opened the floor for public comment.

No one addressed the Board.

Chairman Swanger remarked that this project has been thoroughly vetted and the County can be proud of what it has become.

Chairman Swanger closed the public hearing at 5:35 p.m.

PUBLIC COMMENT SESSION

Chairman Swanger opened the public comment session. Comments are generally limited to three minutes per individual, unless the speaker is representing a group for which the comment period may be extended to five minutes.

No one addressed the Board.

CONSTITUENT CONCERNS

Commissioner Sorrells thanked everyone who have made an effort to provide gifts, clothing and food to people that would be doing without this time of year.

Commissioner Upton urged people to get out and volunteer, such as delivering baskets or ringing a bell this year. He stressed that one way to feel good about yourself is to help someone in need.

ADMINISTRATIVE/AGENCY REPORTS

Chairman Swanger recognized Tourism Development Authority (TDA) Executive Director, Lynn Collins.

Ms. Collins presented a Power Point on the Year End and First Quarter Occupancy Tax Report. She highlighted the following:

- The 2014-2015 3% Occupancy Tax exceeds projections based on a 3% increase over the previous year. This was over \$1 million in collections.
- 2014-2015 1% Net Occupancy Tax – Canton – collects 8% of the money; Clyde – 1%; Lake Junaluska – 4%; Maggie Valley – 57%; Waynesville – 30%. She noted that 3% goes back to the TDA and 1% goes back to the zip code where it is collected.
- Economic Fact Sheet statistics provided by Western Carolina University show how much is generated in tax revenue. Each household this year will pay \$549 less in state and local tax because of tourism in Haywood County due to the Tourism Tax Relief.
- 2015-2016 projections have a 6% increase over 2013-2014 actual collections. This is well above the projections currently.
- 2015-2016 1% (Zip Code) Net Occupancy Tax – Canton – 13% ahead of last year; Clyde – 20%; Lake Junaluska – 43%; Maggie Valley – 7%; Waynesville – 16%.

Ms. Collins said that now that the Terrace Hotel at Lake Junaluska has completed its renovations, their numbers have increased. She stated that the TDA has identified a growth area in group sales, and have hired someone to work with this area. There has been much success in that area. Anyone with over 12 people are considered groups such as motor coaches, military reunions, weddings. Group leaders from different countries have been here to look at the County and were very impressed with the area.

Commissioner Sorrells thanked Ms. Collins and the TDA for what they do. He remarked that the County is very blessed in having the increases that we have seen which has a lot to do with marketing and projects that they have taken on last year.

Chairman Swanger remarked that he had received an email today from a TDA board member praising Ms. Davis and the work that she also does for the TDA.

DISCUSSION / ADJUSTMENT TO AGENDA

There were no adjustments to the agenda.

CONSENT AGENDA

Commissioner Ensley made a motion to approve the consent agenda with the change in the December 7, 2015 regular meeting minutes.

Commissioner Upton seconded, the motion carried unanimously.

1. Approval of December 7, 2015 regular meeting minutes.
Commissioner Sorrells asked that the minutes be corrected to show Commissioner Upton making the statement in the Constituent Concerns.
2. Approval of November 2015 Refunds, Release, Amendments and Discoveries – David Francis, Tax and Solid Waste Administrator
Mr. Francis reported that there was nothing unusual to report this month other than it was little smaller than in months past.
3. Approval of November 2015 Tax Collections update – Mike Matthews, Tax Collector
Chairman Swanger noted that Mr. Matthews was listed as the presenter but is not present. He asked Mr. Dove who was to present tonight, and Mr. Dove responded that the Deputy Tax Collector was ill and could not attend, and had been reported that Mr. Matthews had a family engagement and did not show for this meeting. Chairman Swanger remarked that according to the report in the attachment, there appears to be about a \$4 million dollar discrepancy in the amount of taxes collected and asked how or why that occurred. Mr. Dove responded that he had done some research, the lending institutions receive a notice from the tax office normally in November concerning escrow and are able to work out payment schedules to pay the taxes. This was not done. He noted that it was worked out and paid in December rather than November so hopefully it will be caught up. He said that he did not know why the notices were not sent out.

Mr. Dove stated that there had been many meetings on processes and Mr. Matthew did not attend them. He did not know the reasons why he did not attend. He commented that the Tax Office staff is working hard.

Chairman Swanger asked how often the tax collector is working. Mr. Dove responded that it appears less than 50% this month, and possibly as little as a third. He noted that he will have to review the tapes. He stated that he is basing that on what people have told him and reviewing the building card accesses. He said that he has received reports from people and have talked to people that work in the tax office.

Chairman Swanger confirmed that Mr. Matthews is still getting paid full time salary regardless of what he works.

Commissioner Upton asked what the County will do if we are still in the same shape in June, and Chairman Swanger confirmed with Mr. Dove that the escrows paid in December should catch up what is missing.

Chairman Swanger recalled that there was a new software project that started a year ago to make sure the information was updated between August and November of each year, and is not sure what has happened with that.

Commissioner Sorrells confirmed that the tax bills were sent out a little later this year. Mr. Dove commented that he saw Ms. Ezell here many times working late alone to get them out.

Chairman Swanger asked why they were sent out late, and Mr. Dove responded that he did not have a full explanation other than Ms. Ezell was working late herself trying to get them done.

Commissioner Sorrells commented that it sounds like someone may not be doing their job.

Commissioner Ensley noted that the staff of the Tax Office is working very hard. He said that he has had comments from the public that Mr. Matthews is not there very often. He stated that he has received a lot of complaints about that.

Chairman Swanger remarked that Mr. Matthews is an elected official, therefore there is not a lot that the Board can do. He stated that the County has to fund the tax collection efforts or there would not be any collections. He requested that after the holidays, Mr. Dove schedule a meeting with Mr. Matthews to reach a better understanding of what the Boards expectations are of that office and more importantly, what the taxpayers expectations are.

4. Budget Amendments – Julie Davis, Finance Director

General Fund – Emergency Management - \$15,330 – Federal grant revenue -

Ms. Davis explained that this is federal money that is moving through the State Department of Public Safety for funding for Emergency Management training in Haywood County.

HAYWOOD COUNTY
BUDGET ORDINANCE AMENDMENT
FISCAL YEAR 2015-2016

FIS#: _____
JNL: _____

BEFORE ORDAINED by the Board of Commissioners of Haywood County that the following amendments be made to the budget ordinance for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2016.

Section 1. To amend the General Fund, the expenditures are to be changed as follows:

Department	Account Number	Current Budget	Increase (Decrease)	Amended Budget
Emergency Management				
Professional Services	11 6170 210000 10700		5,000	5,000
Special Program Materials	11 6170 620100 10100		4,800	4,800
Office Supplies	11 6170 620100 10100		5,530	5,530
which will result in a net increase of \$		15,330		

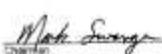
which will result in a net increase of \$ 15,330 in the expenditures of the General Fund.

To provide the additional revenue for the above, the following revenues will be increased as the money has been received:

Revenue	Acct No.	Current Budget	Increase (Decrease)	Amended Budget
Emergency Management	11 6200 400700 10100		15,330	15,330

Section 2. Copies of this budget amendment shall be delivered to the Budget Officer and the Finance Officer for their direction.

Adopted this the 21 day of December


 Chairman
 Haywood County Board of Commissioners

ATTEST: 
 Clerk to the Board

Approved:
 To authorize the proposed Security Grant Funding for
 Emergency Management Training in Haywood County.

OLD BUSINESS

There was no Old Business.

NEW BUSINESS

Request appointments to the Tourism Development Authority Board (TDA) and 1% Zip Code Subcommittees

Chairman Swanger stated that there was one seat available with one application for accommodations with 20 units or more, Mr. Pratik Shah. Mr. Shah was interviewed. Mr. Lyndon Lowe is eligible for re-appointment for accommodations with 20 units or less, and has been previously interviewed.

Commissioner Upton motioned to approve the appointment of Mr. Pratik Shah and Mr. Lyndon Lowe to the respective TDA 20 units or more or 20 units or less by acclamation. Vice-Chairman Kirkpatrick seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Chairman Swanger stated that there is one seat available for the tourism related position. There were three applicants, Kevin Sandefur, Chris Bates and Steven Lloyd. After interviews with these highly qualified candidates, a vote was taken by ballot. Vice-Chairman Kirkpatrick, Commissioners Sorrells, Upton and Ensley voted for Chris Bates. Chairman Swanger voted for Kevin Sandefur. Chris Bates won the vote for the appointment.

Chairman Swanger explained that the Towns of Maggie Valley and Canton submitted their recommendations for their municipal seats on the TDA Board.

The Town of Maggie Valley recommended the re-appointment of Mike Eveland, and the Town of Canton recommended the appointment of Gail Mull.

Commissioner Sorrells made a motion to approve the re-appointment of Mike Eveland to the Town of Maggie Valley municipal seat and Gail Mull to the Town of Canton municipal seat by acclamation. Commissioner Ensley seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Chairman Swanger explained that the 1% Zip Code Subcommittees require Board appointments upon recommendations by the municipalities. They are as follows:
Town of Canton – Deborah Reed, Tracy O’Neil, Laura Simmons
Town of Clyde – Sara Q. Brown, Jewell Beall, Rhonda Smathers
Town of Maggie Valley – Myra Glover, Caroline Greene, Michael Patel, Louis Perrone, Sonja Michels
Town of Waynesville – John Keith, Katie Eason Hughes, Deb Isenberg, Mindy Wood, Julie Katt

Commissioner Sorrells made a motion to approve the 1% Zip Code Subcommittees as presented by acclamation and Commissioner Ensley seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

CLOSED SESSION

Commissioner Upton made a motion to enter into Closed Session for:
Economic Development G.S. §143-318.11(a)(4)

Vice-Chairman Kirkpatrick seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

The Board returned from Closed Session.

ADJOURNMENT

Chairman Swanger asked if there was any further business. Chairman Swanger and the rest of the Board wished everyone a happy Christmas and a healthy New Year.

With no further business, Vice-Chairman Kirkpatrick made a motion to adjourn the regular Board meeting. Commissioner Upton seconded; the motion carried unanimously.

The time of adjournment was 6:46 pm. The DVD is attached by reference to the minutes.

CLERK

CHAIRMAN