

**MINUTES
WILKES COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
February 2, 2016**

PUBLIC HEARING - ROAD NAME REQUEST – BASSET HOUND LANE, ROCK CREEK TOWNSHIP - Chairman Eddie Settle declared the Public Hearing open regarding the Road Name Request for Basset Hound Lane at 9:56 A.M. on Tuesday, February 2, 2016 with the following members present: Chairman Eddie Settle, Vice Chairman Greg Minton, Commissioner Keith Elmore, Commissioner Gary D. Blevins, and Commissioner David Gambill.

Also present were Tony Triplett, County Attorney; John Yates, County Manager; and Sarah Call, Clerk to the Board.

Chairman Settle asked if anyone would like to speak regarding the proposed Road Name Request. Hearing no comments on the proposed Road Name Request for Basset Hound Lane, Chairman Eddie Settle declared the Public Hearing closed at 9:57 A.M.

The Wilkes County Board of Commissioners met on Tuesday, February 2, 2016 at 10:00 A.M. with the following members present: Chairman Eddie Settle, Vice Chairman Greg Minton, Commissioner Keith Elmore, Commissioner Gary D. Blevins, and Commissioner David Gambill.

Also present for the meeting were Tony Triplett, County Attorney; John Yates, County Manager; and Sarah Call, Clerk to the Board.

Chairman Eddie Settle welcomed everyone to the meeting.

INVOCATION – Commissioner David Gambill led the Invocation.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE – Chairman Eddie Settle led the Pledge of Allegiance.

WILKES COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE TRANSPORTATION PLAN (CTP) – SOCIO-ECONOMIC DATA – APPROVAL – Chairman Settle welcomed David Graham, High Country RPO Coordinator. Mr. Graham thanked the Board. He said he is working with the North Carolina Department of Transportation and a local steering committee to develop a comprehensive transportation plan (CTP) for Wilkes County. The CTP process involves the analysis of existing and anticipated transportation system deficiencies with current and future travel patterns, he added. Mr. Graham said the Wilkes CTP travel demand will be projected for 2014 to 2040 using a travel demand computer model that replicates travel patterns on the existing transportation system as well as future travel patterns for 2040. He stated the Wilkes County CTP steering committee and NCDOT have worked to estimate the population and employment growth during the 2014 to 2040 period. Mr. Graham noted the population counts

and projections were taken from the 2014 Wilkes County Growth Management Plan and the Office of State Budget and Management. The Committee reached a consensus on a 2014 base population estimate of 69,890 and total projected population in 2040 of 85,000, he said. Mr. Graham stated the employment data from the Bureau of Economic Analysis was analyzed by the committee to establish a base of 30,000 for 2014. Future employment numbers were determined from the CTP steering committee's input and discussion and they concluded the projected employment in 2040 to be 42,500, he noted. Mr. Graham added there is also two maps included in the packets for the Board to see the time and hard work from the CTP steering committee members.

Mr. Graham said the NCDOT and the High Country RPO respectfully request the consideration and approval of the Social-Economic numbers in order to move forward and prepare the model for the CTP. He stated North Wilkesboro and Wilkesboro have both approved these numbers and he is trying to get on the agenda for Ronda.

Chairman Settle asked about four-laneing of Hwy. 268 from North Wilkesboro to Elkin because it is a very dangerous highway. Mr. Graham replied this is a project that is in NCDOT's database and when it comes time to do project prioritizing in the next few week, he will work with County Manager John Yates on this. He added at that time if this is a project that is to be included in the scoring and ranking he will help to do this. This is the process to get highway projects included on the State's plan, he noted. Chairman Settle said several folks have been killed on this highway. The Board has discussed having the roadway cleaned up due to excessive litter and it is just too dangerous for the Landfill workers to do this, particular between Roaring River and Ronda, he added. Mr. Graham stated he will look into this and follow up with the County Manager.

Commissioner Blevins asked if the same computer programs were used state wide. Mr. Graham replied yes, all CTP plans by NCDOT are done this same way. They want to get concurrence from all local Governments that these are the numbers they will use and input into the computer model to show what roads will be having issues in the future, he added. Commissioner Blevins noted making projections through 2040 is difficult to do, a large event could change things. Mr. Graham agreed.

Vice Chairman Minton said he was involved in this process and this is the same data that was used for prioritization by the High Country for Wilkes and there is 4 to 5 projects that tested extremely high and are being looked out. He added they are located around the Wilkesboro's due to the high traffic patterns.

Commissioner Gary D. Blevins made a motion to approve the Socio-Economic Data for the Wilkes County Comprehensive Transportation Plan as presented. The motion was seconded by Vice Chairman Greg Minton and unanimously approved.

PLANNING DEPARTMENT:

1. ROAD NAME REQUEST – BASSETT HOUND LANE – Chairman Eddie Settle recognized Planning Director Eddie Barnes. Mr. Barnes stated a Public Hearing was held earlier this morning to receive public input on a proposed Road Name Request for Bassett Hound Lane in Rock Creek Township, with no opposition. He stated this request meets the requirements of the Wilkes County Road Naming Ordinance and a ten-day notification period has been met. He stated the Planning Department has not received any comments opposing the Road Name Request.

Commissioner David Gambill made a motion to approve the Road Name Request for Bassett Hound Lane as presented. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Keith Elmore and unanimously approved.

2. ROAD NAME REQUEST – ELLER FARM DRIVE – REQUEST TO SET PUBLIC HEARING – Planning Director Eddie Barnes asked the Board of Commissioners to set a Public Hearing on a Road Name Request received by petition by the Planning Department. He stated the Road Name Request is for Eller Farm Drive, Moravian Falls Township; the request meets the requirements of the Wilkes County Road Naming Ordinance and as required by the Wilkes County Road Naming Ordinance a Public Hearing and a ten day (10) notification period is required.

Commissioner Gary D. Blevins made a motion to set a Public Hearing on Tuesday, March 1, 2016, at 9:50 A.M. regarding the Road Name Request as presented. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Keith Elmore and unanimously approved.

3. ROAD NAME REQUEST – LAMARR RIDGE LANE – REQUEST TO SET PUBLIC HEARING – Planning Director Eddie Barnes asked the Board of Commissioners to set a Public Hearing on a Road Name Request received by petition by the Planning Department. He stated the Road Name Request is for Lamarr Ridge Lane, Lewis Fork Township; the request meets the requirements of the Wilkes County Road Naming Ordinance and as required by the Wilkes County Road Naming Ordinance a Public Hearing and a ten day (10) notification period is required.

Commissioner Gary D. Blevins made a motion to set a Public Hearing on Tuesday, March 1, 2016, at 9:50 A.M. regarding the Road Name Request as presented. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Keith Elmore and unanimously approved.

4. ROAD NAME REQUEST – ARIYEL’S LANE – REQUEST TO SET PUBLIC HEARING – Planning Director Eddie Barnes asked the Board of Commissioners to set a Public Hearing on a Road Name Request received by petition by the Planning Department. He stated the Road Name Request is for Ariyel’s Lane, Edwards Township; the request meets the requirements of the Wilkes County Road Naming Ordinance and as required by the Wilkes County Road Naming Ordinance a Public Hearing and a ten day (10) notification period is required.

Commissioner Gary D. Blevins made a motion to set a Public Hearing on Tuesday, March 1, 2016, at 9:50 A.M. regarding the Road Name Request as presented. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Keith Elmore and unanimously approved.

PERMISSION TO ADVERTISE TAX LIENS - Tax Administrator Alex Hamilton stated pursuant to North Carolina General Statute 105-369, the Tax Collector shall report to the governing body the total amount of unpaid taxes for the current fiscal year that are liens on real property. He stated the governing body shall thereupon order the Tax Collector to advertise such liens and anyone who has not paid their taxes will receive a notice at least 30 days prior to the date of advertising, that taxes are owed and that they will be advertised if the taxes are not paid within that 30 day period.

Mr. Hamilton stated as of today \$33,807,041.02 has been billed and \$29,747,483.47 has been collected. He stated they have collected approximately 88% of the real estate taxes and this number will change significantly prior to the advertisement. Mr. Hamilton stated last year at this time 87% had been collected, they are a little ahead from this same time last year. He stated as per the Statute, he is requesting permission to advertise the tax liens.

Commissioner Blevins asked the final percentage collected last year for the 2014 taxes. Mr. Hamilton replied it was 96%.

Vice Chairman Greg Minton made a motion to grant permission to the Tax Administration to advertise tax liens as requested. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Keith Elmore and unanimously approved.

COMMISSIONERS MEETING SCHEDULED MARCH 15, 2016 – CHANGE MEETING DATE – Chairman Settle stated the regularly scheduled meeting for March 15, 2016 at 7:00 PM will need to be moved. He said the suggestion is to move this to March 22, 2016.

Motion was made by Vice Chairman Greg Minton to move the March 15, 2016 regular scheduled meeting of the Wilkes County Board of Commissioner to March 22, 2016 at 7:00 P.M. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Gary D. Blevins and unanimously approved.

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES UPDATE – Chairman Eddie Settle recognized Department of Social Services Director John Blevins. Mr. Blevins stated first he wanted to give an updated on the audit that has been discussed at prior meetings. He said two auditors from the State office came on January 6th to meet with him, and they will be reviewing their process from July 1, 2015 through June 30, 2016. There will be two phases of the audit and the first began January 6, 2016, he added. Mr. Blevins said the first thing they did was to walk through the office and looked at all the operations, then they sat in on interviews and applications. He added they started at the front window and went all the way through the process looking at both family and adult Medicaid. Mr. Blevins noted they are looking at how Wilkes operates and the problems with NC Fast to include interaction problems. He added last Friday NC Fast was down statewide all day and would not work at all and every County in the State had over-dues last

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week because of this. Mr. Blevins said they will give them an interim report about March 1, 2016 on this part of the audit. He stated phase two will be conducted by Vanguard Staffing which is a temporary agency that provides Medicaid workers to counties across the State and they will review their records. They will pull 250 cases in February, 125 applications and 125 re-certifications, he noted. Mr. Blevins said they will do this again in April and also in July/August. He stated if they find a lot of errors they will pull more files and could pull as many as 954 cases during this time period. Mr. Blevins requested that the reviews are performed at Wilkes DSS so they do not have to box up and send out all these files. He added the final report will be made on December 31, 2016. They will have the opportunity to review it before it is made final in case they need to challenge or dispute anything, they can do this, he noted.

Mr. Blevins provided the Commissioners handouts for December. He briefly went over the monthly caseload report, Foster Care financial report, Adoption Services financial report, Child Development and Subsidized Child Care financial report. He also went through the CPS Foster Care monthly reports for December.

Mr. Blevins stated the last handout in the packets is a multi-color coded 14 week recap (October through December 2015) of the Food and Nutrition Processing Overall Percent Timely. He took the report he received for all 100 Counties and consolidated it down to the surrounding Counties as well as the largest counties in the State, he noted. The green blocks represent the Counties that are at the 95% or above processing time average for the week, which is very hard to do, he added. Mr. Blevins said it is difficult to stay in the green as this chart represents, but Wilkes is there most of the time. He stated he has a new Supervisor and three new workers due to retirements and it's hard to replace 20+ years of experience with 1 year, but they are doing a good job.

Chairman Settle stated Wilkes is in the green most of the time and there are two local counties that are not doing well, one has not been in the green at any time and the other only has been there one time. Mr. Blevins agreed and added they work very hard in Wilkes to accomplish this. Commissioner Elmore asked for the time line in which the counties have to meet the 95% timely processing. Mr. Blevins replied through June 2016. Commissioner Elmore stated this is not going to happen. Mr. Blevins agreed and said his hope is the Federal Government will relent on this since the State is showing progress. He used the example of last Friday when the system was down and on Monday (yesterday) Mecklenburg County had 2,300 untimeliness and this one County could flunk the entire State. He added if they do not relent he does not think the State will step up and pay this and it will fall back to the counties.

Vice Chairman Minton said due to the reoccurring issues with NC Fast the State has called in IBM. Mr. Blevins replied yes they were trying to fix it, and it was messed up for two-days. Vice Chairman Minton added the entire state was down which affects all the counties. Commissioner Blevins said if you look at Guilford, Mecklenburg, and Wake which are the three largest counties in the State out of 39 boxes on the chart between the three of them only one is green. Mr. Blevins agreed. Vice Chairman Minton asked what the main issue was, would it be entering the data into NC Fast. Mr. Blevins replies yes a lot of the issue is NC Fast but also some of the counties, especially the large ones, have problems getting it done. He added the rules have also

changed in the number of days for processing, it is no longer 30 day but now 25 days, and the expedited cases is now 4 days. Vice Chairman Minton said it is obvious it is a universal issue and so there has to be some commonalities shared with the counties and the biggest common factor is NC Fast. Mr. Blevins agreed and said this was obvious when they finally called in IMB to help fix it.

Chairman Settle asked if Wilkes had more applicants for food and nutrition than the neighboring counties. Mr. Blevins replied in the case studies they did with the surrounding counties, for the case load per worker, Wilkes was the highest. Chairman Settle replied the folks in Wilkes do a very good job. Reviewing Ashe who pays quite a bit higher and has a much lower caseload per worker they did not have near the same number of weeks in green that Wilkes did, he noted. Mr. Blevins agreed and said in looking at Medicaid, Food and Nutrition Wilkes cases per worker is much higher than all the surrounding counties, they work hard and do a great job.

Commissioner Blevins asked if the program mentioned before about the able bodied workers has started. Vice Chairman Minton added they have to either work, volunteer, or attend job training 80-hours per month. Mr. Blevins replied it has started in 23 Counties, but Wilkes does not begin until July. Commissioner Blevins asked if the case load would increase at DSS. Mr. Blevins replied yes it will be about 500 individuals. He said it is a good thing, a good program, and they can handle this addition.

The Board thanked Mr. Blevins for his report and update.

ADJOURN – Motion was made by Commissioner Keith Elmore, seconded by Vice Chairman Greg Minton and by unanimous vote adopted to adjourn the meeting of the Wilkes County Board of Commissioners at 10:35 A. M.

Sarah D. Call, Clerk

Eddie Settle, Chairman

WILKES COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

Approved: