

MINUTES
WILKES COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
January 3, 2017

The Wilkes County Board of Commissioners met on Tuesday, January 3, 2017 at 10:02 A.M. with the following members present: Chairman Greg Minton, Vice Chairman Gary D. Blevins, Commissioner Keith Elmore, Commissioner David Gambill, and Commissioner Eddie Settle.

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

Chairman Greg Minton welcomed everyone to the meeting.

INVOCATION – Commissioner David Gambill led the Invocation.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE – Chairman Greg Minton led the Pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES – SPECIAL CALLED MEETING – Motion was made by Commissioner Keith Elmore, seconded by Vice Chairman Gary D. Blevins and unanimously adopted to approve the Minutes of the Special Called Meeting held on December 8, 2016.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES – Motion was made by Vice Chairman Gary D. Blevins, seconded by Commissioner Eddie Settle and unanimously adopted to approve the Minutes of the Board meeting held on December 20, 2016.

BUDGET AMENDMENTS/TRANSFERS – Motion was made by Commissioner David Gambill to approve Budget Amendment No. 13 (Health Programs – Health – Family Planning – The Health Department received funds from Women’s and Children’s Health Branch to assist the Local Health Department with the purchase of contraceptives and medical supplies in the Family Planning Clinic for Fiscal Year 2017. No County money involved.) The motion was seconded by Vice Chairman Gary D. Blevins and unanimously approved.

JCPC BOARD MEMBER APPOINTMENTS – Chairman Minton recognized Becky Craft, JCPC Administrative Assistant. Chairman Minton stated Amy Mastin, Robin Winkler, Bill Davis, Christyn Grant, Bryan R. McDevitt, Randy T. Rhodes, Andrew T. Warren, and Jane Casarez are up for reappointment for 2-year terms (2017-2019) for the JCPC Board.

Commissioner Keith Elmore made Motion to approve the Reappointment of Amy Mastin, Robin Winkler, Bill Davis, Christyn Grant, Bryan T. McDevitt, Randy T. Rhodes, Andrew T. Warren and Jane Casarez to the JCPC Board for 2-year terms, as presented. The motion was seconded by Vice Chairman Gary D. Blevins and unanimously approved.

TAX DEPARTMENT:

1. EXTENSION OF THE LISTING PERIOD - Tax Administrator Alex Hamilton stated North Carolina General Statute Section 105-307 is entitled the “Length of Listing Period; Extension; Preliminary Work”. He stated this Statute gives the Board of County Commissioners the authority to extend the listing period by thirty (30) days. He stated he is requesting that the Board extend the listing period until March 1, 2017. Mr. Hamilton stated the statute also allows the County Commissioners to grant “individual extensions of time for the listing of real and personal property upon written request and for good cause shown”; the statute allows the Commissioners to delegate this authority to the Tax Administrator. Mr. Hamilton stated the extensions granted under this paragraph shall not extend beyond April 15, 2017. He requested the Board delegate the authority to grant the individual extensions to him as Tax Administrator.

Vice Chairman Gary D. Blevins made a motion to approve the request to extend the listing period until March 1, 2016 and to delegate the authority to the Tax Administrator to grant individual extensions of time for the listing of real and personal property until April 15, 2016, as requested. The motion was seconded by Commissioner David Gambill and unanimously approved.

2. TAX RELEASES – COLLECTIONS – Alex Hamilton, Tax Administrator asked the Board to approve tax releases for collections in the amount of \$6,474.70. Mr. Hamilton said these folks are deceased and/or the taxes are uncollectable for some reason.

Commissioner Eddie Settle made a motion to approve the tax releases for collections as presented. The motion was seconded by Vice Chairman Gary D. Blevins and unanimously approved.

A detailed listing of tax releases is maintained in the Wilkes County Tax Administrator’s office.

3. TAX RELEASES – LISTING – Alex Hamilton, Tax Administrator asked the Board to approve tax releases for listing in the amount of \$4,073.73. He said the releases for listing are due to an error made in listing by his office or the tax payer has advised them of a change or mistake.

Commissioner Keith Elmore made a motion to approve the tax releases for listing as presented. The motion was seconded by Vice Chairman Gary D. Blevins and unanimously approved.

A detailed listing of tax releases is maintained in the Wilkes County Tax Administrator’s office.

WILKES VOLUNTARY AGRICULTURE DISTRICT:

1. WILKES VOLUNTARY AGRICULTURE DISTRICT BOARD REAPPOINTMENTS – Chairman Greg Minton recognized Claude Shew, Jr., Wilkes County Voluntary Ag. District Chairman and Michael Pardue, Director Wilkes Soil and Water

Conservation District. Mr. Shew stated on behalf of the Wilkes Volunteer Ag District they appreciate the Board for their time and all they do for them and the County. He said they have three nominees for reappointment to the Board for 3-year terms, which are Don Parker, James Motsinger, and Dennis McGrady.

Vice Chairman Gary D. Blevins made a motion to approve the Reappointment of Donald L. Parker, James Motsinger, and Dennis McGrady to the Wilkes Voluntary Agriculture District Board for 3-year terms as presented. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Eddie Settle and unanimously approved.

2. ANNUAL REPORT OF ACRES ENROLLED – Mr. Pardue gave the following agriculture totals and percentages:

Totals (all plans): thru October 18, 2016
Owners – 58 Groups
Parcels – 1154
Acres – 6,747.07

Percentage of Total:
Ag Land – 5,667.38 acres, 84%
Forestry Land – 1,034.29 acres, 15%
Horticulture Land – 45.4 acres, under 1%

Commissioner Settle asked if the farmers were encouraged to enroll in these programs. Mr. Pardue replied yes but, they do not go out and knock on doors. They have meetings and functions and are currently planning an event to bring folks in to learn the benefits of the program. Commissioner Settle said the poultry folks especially need to be aware of this program. Mr. Shew stated three years ago they sponsored a cattleman's meeting and they are getting ready to sponsor another one soon. Mr. Pardue added they are working on a soil health meeting now to bring in more land owners. Commissioner Settle asked if this includes the land that borders creeks. Mr. Pardue replied the individual would work with their department to see if they are eligible and to develop a conservation plan. The plan will address all the resources and concerns on their farm. He added if they are adjacent to a stream this is addressed as well and the plan also meets USDA specs and this is one of the eligibility requirements. Mr. Pardue said they do not have the man-power to police every farm and field, this is through USDA, but to be eligible they have to have a farm plan.

Commissioner Settle asked if this protects the farmer that has a farm on a creek. Mr. Shew replied yes and no. Mr. Pardue added if they are reported for violations and are following their conservation plan and through no fault of their own lead-way has been granted. He stated if they are not following their plan there could be issues. If they have no plan in place they will have more issues, he noted. Mr. Pardue said usually the process allows the individuals to fix what is needed and this is when his folks are called in. Commissioner Settle stated the purpose is to let the neighbors know this is an agricultural area and a farm. Mr. Pardue replied yes, it puts the public on notice. Mr. Shew added it is an awareness that if someone comes in to build a house

next to a farm they know it is a working farm and there will be smells, tractors running at night, and so on. Mr. Pardue said there is another level the Board is considering, it is another level of protection for the farmers, with no guarantees, but does serve as public notice for them. Mr. Shew added it is harder to get in and out of that plan. He stated the current plan is strictly voluntary if they enroll today they can get out at any time. If they go to the enhanced level plan there is paperwork and the farmers cannot get in and out as easily, he added.

The Board thanked Mr. Shew and Mr. Pardue.

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES – UPDATE – Chairman Minton recognized John Blevins, DSS Director. Mr. Blevins briefly went over the monthly caseload reports for November to include the Foster Care financial report, Adoption Services financial report, Child Development and Subsidized Child Care financial report. He also went over the CPS Foster Care Monthly Reports for November. Commissioner Gambill asked how they received the applications for the new Foster homes, and did they come from advertisements. Mr. Blevins replied they do hear from people that the billboards help and some come in this way as well as word of mouth.

Mr. Blevins stated the next page in the packets is a time line from the State for the proposed implementation schedule for NC Fast for release 1 that includes Intake and CPS, set for March 2018. He added release 2 is August 2018 and will be Foster Care and Adoption. This is the most definitive time line the state has provided, he noted. Mr. Blevins said the pilot will begin in July 2017. He stated the next page is the Project 4 Mobility update and the state is considering four vendors, one of which is Northwoods. Mr. Blevins added the state is considering purchasing the software from the vendor for NC Fast. Vice Chairman Blevins said it is about time the state looked at purchasing this. Commissioner Elmore asked if the state is purchasing this. Mr. Blevins replied they are considering it, the state is looking at the four vendors listed, all have made a proposal to the state, and one is Northwoods. He added the state is looking at purchasing the software and the county would have to purchase the hardware. Vice Chairman Blevins said if a large number of counties purchased Northwoods already as Wilkes looked to do at one time, it would be nice if this is who the state chose. Commissioner Settle added the current legislature is more for outsourcing to companies than keeping in-house. Mr. Blevins agreed and added this was prompted because the mobility portion of NC Fast wasn't going to be what they wanted it to be and one of these companies can come in and get it to work the way it needs to. Chairman Minton asked if they are looking at all-inclusive or cloud management. Mr. Blevins replied they are looking at hosting some of it. He added the counties could have to pay an additional cost for storage. They should know this month what vendor the state is going with and this will be sent to the Board upon receipt, he said.

Mr. Blevins stated the last item in the packet is in regards to foster care for ages 18 to 21. He added this will be a change and will help the 18 to 21 to transition into adulthood. Mr. Blevins said it will give them some responsibility and help them learn to be out in the world, but also provide a safety net. He stated this is not something they just get as in the current foster care system, there are restrictions. Mr. Blevins briefly went over the qualifications, requirements, and restrictions of the program. He added it is voluntary, they have to sign an agreement. This will

increase the number of kids in the foster care system in Wilkes if they chose to be a part of the program, he noted. Mr. Blevins said this is a 100% reimbursement program for the payments to these folks, but the staff time for the monitoring of this program will be an added cost to the county. He stated they do not know the cost until they see how many folks want to be in this program. They can get in and out of the program and then come back again so long as they meet the requirements, he added. Commissioner Gambill asked how much additional paperwork it will take for them to get in and out of this program. Mr. Blevins said the state likes paper and it will be quite a bit and will be more work for the Social Workers. Commissioner Gambill asked if a Judge can stop this if they keep violating the voluntary placement agreement. Mr. Blevins replied yes that is one way it can be terminated. He added they have to abide by the rules in the program. Vice Chairman Blevins asked if this was enacted by legislation. Mr. Blevins replied yes it is by Statute and this replaces the CARS program that was for foster children age 18 to 21. He said Wilkes has 3 on CARS agreements currently, this will end this year, but if they are in CARS now they can stay if they wish to until age 21.

The Board thanked Mr. Blevins for the update.

PURCHASING DEPARTMENT – SALE OF SURPLUS INVENTORY – County Manager John Yates stated the Wilkes County Purchasing Department is requesting approval from the Wilkes County Board of Commissioners to sell the following surplus inventory using electronic auction method:

<i>Year</i>	<i>Make</i>	<i>Model</i>	<i>Mileage</i>	<i>Department</i>
1990	Chevrolet	1500	71373	DSS

Rotary Light Track Lift – Garage

Tires 4-unused for Humm Vee – tires were removed due to age - Garage

Commissioner David Gambill made a motion to approve the sale of surplus inventory using the electronic auction method govdeals.com as requested. The motion was seconded by Vice Chairman Gary D. Blevins and unanimously approved.

CHAIRMAN/BOARD APPOINTMENTS:

1. CHAIRMAN APPOINTMENTS: Chairman Greg Minton reviewed the Chairman appointments with the Commissioners. Appointments for 2017 are listed below.

2. BOARD APPOINTMENTS: Chairman Greg Minton stated the only Board appointment that needs to change is the Library Board appointment. He stated Commissioner Eddie Settle has agreed to accept this appointment and serve on the Library Board.

Commissioner David Gambill made a motion to appoint Commissioner Eddie Settle to the Wilkes County Library Board effective immediately. The motion was seconded by Vice Chairman Gary D. Blevins and unanimously approved.

Below is a complete listing of Chairman and Board appointments for 2017:

Chairman Appointments

*GREG MINTON
(Chairman)*

*Region D Development Corporation
County Personnel Liaison*

GARY D. BLEVINS

*High Country Council of Governments
Recreation Board*

KEITH ELMORE

*Blue Ridge Opportunity Commission
Wilkes Community College – Liaison
Wilkes Senior Resources
Workforce Development Consortium*

DAVID GAMBILL

*Juvenile Crime Prevention Council (JCPC)
Fire Commission/Emergency Management
Local Emergency Planning Committee*

EDDIE SETTLE

*Board of Education – Liaison
Child Fatality Team*

Board Appointments

GREG MINTON

*High Country Rural Transportation
Advisory Committee (RTAC)*

GARY D. BLEVINS

*Airport Board
Board of Equalization & Review
Ordinance Committee
Vaya Health County Commissioner Advisory Board*

KEITH ELMORE

DAVID GAMBILL

*Animal Control Committee
Board of Health
Wilkes Transportation Authority (WTA)*

EDDIE SETTLE

*Economic Development Commission
Wilkes County Library Board*

WILKES COUNTY AIRPORT BOARD ORDINANCE AMENDMENT – STAGGARED ROTATION – County Attorney Tony Triplett stated as the memo explains the Airport Board needs to get back to a staggered rotation as the ordinance originally intended. He added it is a 9 member Board and needs to be on a 3-3-3 rotation for appointment. Mr. Triplett said the purpose of the amendment before the Board is to get back to this rotation. He added in-order to get back to this Vice Chairman Gary D. Blevins has agreed to a shortened term from now until September 30, 2017 and at that time he would come back the this Board for reappointment of a full 3-year term. Mr. Triplett stated the ordinance calls for the Commissioner Member to serve a full 3-year term and not at the pleasure of the Board. He added Ed Mullholland has also volunteered to shorten his 3-year term so he will be on the same rotation.

Commissioner Gambill said this will not apply to Vice Chairman Blevins, but asked if a Commissioner in the future went out of office during the 3-year term, would there not be a Commissioner appointment until their term expired. Mr. Triplett replied the ordinance is set up so that if a Commissioner is sitting on the Airport Board serving a 3-year term and they cease being a Commissioner for any reason, the Board of Commissioners will appoint another Commissioner to fill the rest of their term.

Commissioner Eddie Settle made a motion to approve the Amendment to the Airport Board Ordinance, as presented. The motion was seconded by Commissioner David Gambill and unanimously approved.

OLD BUSINESS – Commissioner Keith Elmore said the Board has discussed this issue and he was appointed to a committee in regards to the roadside trash issue. He stated he would like to have a Public Hearing on the next agenda as he understands there is an ordinance on the books that is not being enforced. Mr. Triplett said the ordinance is being enforced and they have had recent discussion about how to conduct this enforcement. Commissioner Elmore stated that a tarp should cover all loads per the ordinance and it is not being enforced. Mr. Triplett said this is in the ordinance. Mr. Yates added few citations are written for this. Commissioner Elmore replied it is not being enforced. He stated he would like to have a Public Hearing on this, currently there is a \$250 fine and they have discussed reducing this to something more reasonable. Commissioner Elmore said trash is lining Hwy. 268 and he would like to do something about it and set a Public Hearing at the next meeting. He added he would also like to take a vote to start enforcing the ordinance. Commissioner Settle stated he saw trash along Hwy. 268 and he has followed large Commercial Trash Trucks and they are losing lots of trash and bags from their trucks. The landfill has folks picking up trash near the landfill along Hwy. 268.

Commissioner Elmore stated the people at the landfill need to inspect the trucks as they enter and refuse to let them in if not covered. Mr. Yates stated they do not have statutory authority to stop these trucks out on the road, but can stop them once they come into the Landfill. Mr. Triplett agreed and added certified law enforcement officer is the only one that can pull a vehicle over for trash issues. Commissioner Elmore asked once the trucks enter the County property at the landfill can they be turned away. Mr. Triplett replied yes, and said it would be good to have Kent Brandon and Anderia Byrd from Wilkes County Solid Waste to attend the next meeting to discuss this issue. Commissioner Gambill stated another issue is folks pulling over before they

enter the landfill and covering the load with a tarp or closing the trap doors and this happens often as well. He added this will be hard to stop.

Commissioner Keith Elmore made a motion to set a Public Hearing on Tuesday, January 17, 2017 at 6:45 P.M. or immediately following the Public Concerns portion of said meeting in regards to Enforcement of Solid Waste Ordinance Provisions for Littering and Roadside Trash. The motion was seconded by Vice Chairman Gary D. Blevins and unanimously approved.

ADJOURN – Motion was made by Commissioner Keith Elmore, seconded by Vice Chairman Gary D. Blevins and by unanimous vote adopted to adjourn the meeting of the Wilkes County Board of Commissioners at 10:57 A. M.

Sarah D. Call, Clerk

Gregory A. Minton, Chairman

WILKES COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

Approved: