

**MINUTES  
WILKES COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS  
January 17, 2017**

**PUBLIC CONCERNS – KATIE BRINEGAR – CHASELYN ELLER – UNDERAGE DRINKING IN OUR COMMUNITY** – These two students were representing Project Lazarus and speaking about underage drinking in the community, and their photo voice project.

**CHASELYNN ELLER** – Thanked the Board and stated the purpose of the photo voice project was to increase knowledge and awareness of underage drinking in high schools and middle schools. She said when youth are knowledgeable about the effects and risks of substance abuse combined with the peer pressure to make the right decisions there is a decrease in youth substance abuse. Ms. Eller said she took her photo at a Panthers Football game with her father. She added this is meant to show how much exposure teenagers get to alcohol every day. She spoke briefly about her experience with Project Lazarus and how much it has changed her life and steered her in the right path.

**KATIE BRINEGAR** – Shared her picture and stated she took it to represent the invincibility that teens feel while drinking and driving. She stated she chose to use headlights shining through a jar of moonshine because historically this was prominent in Wilkes County.

**PUBLIC HEARING – ENFORCEMENT OF SOLID WASTE ORDINANCE FOR LITTERING AND ROADSIDE TRASH** – Chairman Greg Minton declared the Public Hearing open concerning the proposed enforcement of Solid Waste Ordinance for littering and roadside trash at 6:48 P.M. on Tuesday, January 17, 2017 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 were Tony Triplett, County Attorney; John Yates, County Manager; and Sarah Call, Clerk to the Board.

**MARK CHURCH** – was recognized and stated he resides in Woodfield and he picks up two 30-gallon bags of trash near his home every week at a minimum. He said there are two issues going on, first is the illegal litter and second is, it is illegal to drink and drive or have open containers in the car and 60% to 70% of the trash he picks up is alcohol related. Mr. Church stated he has called Wilkesboro Police many times about this issue and believes they do not cover his area as well as they should and this may be due to cost. He added he is not sure of a solution to this issue, but it is a huge problem. Mr. Church said the signs that folks are putting out to advertise businesses and such is also a terrible problem. He added in the past few years it has increased substantially and should be stopped, folks put them out and do not take them up. He provided a few examples. Mr. Church talked about how the trash affects the curbside appearance of Wilkes County to visitors and folks considering moving to this area for business or to buy a home. He added it is a real problem in town and throughout the county. There are issues with people throwing trash out and it blows out of the trucks too, he noted. Mr. Church said there should be

laws or penalties to business and others for trash and they should be held more responsible. He added getting law enforcement more involved with this issue may help. Mr. Church concluded by saying maybe it starts with education and letting folks and students know what a problem trash is in the county and there are multiple ways this has to be addressed. He said he hopes there is something the Board can come up with to help address this problem and help it come to an end. Mr. Church stated cameras on light poles in some neighborhoods could help.

Vice Chairman Blevins stated he was near the merger of Hwy. 16 and 18 and saw a new sign for a methadone clinic. He added not only is this a litter problem, now the small signs are getting out of control. Vice Chairman Blevins said he thinks there is a town ordinance regulating this and it is fine to have them on your own property, but folks cannot put signs out all over the county and not pick them up. He added there needs to be a limit on this. There is a problem with trash in society especially from fast food and folks throwing trash out the car window, he noted. Vice Chairman Blevins agreed with Mr. Church's comments that this is an educational issue and teaching folks better and possibly also adding depositories for cans. This would have to be approved at the State level because this Board can't add depositories for cans, he added.

Commissioner Settle said on Hwy. 268 trash is everywhere, the garbage dump is on this road but no one wants to fix the road where it is safe to pick up the trash. It is not wide enough to stop and pick up the trash without being run over, he added. Commissioner Settle said when folks fly into the Airport this is what they see, trash, it is terrible and the road needs to be fixed also. Vice Chairman Blevins added at one time the adopt a highway program worked well, but does not anymore.

Chairman Minton asked if anyone else wants to speak. He then said there being no further comments or persons signed up to speak regarding the proposed enforcement of Solid Waste Ordinance for littering and roadside trash declared the Public Hearing closed at 7:06 P.M.

The Wilkes County Board of Commissioners met on Tuesday, January 17, 2017 at 7:06 P.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 and called the meeting to order.

**INVOCATION** – Commissioner David Gambill led the Invocation.

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

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES** – Motion was made by Vice Chairman Gary D. Blevins, seconded by Commissioner Keith Elmore and unanimously adopted to approve the Minutes of the Board meeting held on January 3, 2017.

**BUDGET AMENDMENTS/TRANSFERS** – Motion was made by Commissioner Keith Elmore to approve Budget Amendment No. 14 (Health Programs – Health – MAT. Health & Misc. Income – The Health Department received funds from Women’s and Children’s Health Branch to assist the local Health Dept. with the purchase of educational materials for prenatal education for individuals and group formats, and/or expenses for additional staff to participate in staff development and training events for Fiscal Year 2017. No County money involved); and Budget Amendment No. 15 (General Fund – Register of Deeds – Budgeting funds to pay for the redaction and scanning of information that will be put online for the public review. This expense will be paid from the Automation/Preservation Fund that is set aside and restricted for this type of use only. Also budgeting for travel expenses to attend Register of Deeds educational workshops and conferences.) The motion was seconded by Vice Chairman Gary D. Blevins and unanimously approved.

Commissioner Settle asked if the monies for the automation were already in a fund. Misty Smithey, Wilkes Register of Deeds replied this is correct.

**BLUE RIDGE OPPORTUNITY COMMISSION (BROC) – COMMUNITY SERVICES BLOCK GRANT (CSBG) FOR FY 2017-2018** – Chairman Greg Minton welcomed Dare Stromer, Executive Director and Megan Wagoner, Community Services Block Grant Director. Ms. Wagoner thanked the Commissioners on behalf of their Board of Directors, Executive Director and all the BROC staff. She said she is presenting the Community Services Block Grant funding application for FY 17-18 and briefly went over the funding application for Emergency Assistance and Family Self Sufficiency.

Chairman Minton asked if they coordinated their activities with other sufficiency programs in the community. Ms. Wagoner replied yes there are a couple of agencies in Wilkes that have self-sufficiency programs. Chairman Minton asked if they are part of the United Way umbrella or separate. Ms. Wagoner replied they are separate, one is a church and the other is independent and all are different. She added their program offers ongoing help for up to 2 years and there is also a course they have to complete. Vice Chairman Blevins asked how they identify potential recipients. Ms. Wagoner replied sometimes by referral to their office and also when the case workers meet with them for the emergency assistance application and the questions they go through for that process they identify households that could benefit and would work the self-sufficiency program. She added they filter in lots of factors to see who would be a good fit for the program and then they go through an interview process. Commissioner Elmore asked if they get referrals from DSS. Ms. Wagoner replied yes in Wilkes a lot come from DSS. She noted if they are in one program they help them to get into all the programs to get them all the help needed. They get referrals from Churches and Schools as well, she said. Chairman Minton asked if they have a waiting list currently. Ms. Wagoner replied surprisingly no they do not at this time in Wilkes, but have in the past. She added the problem they have at this time is getting the right people in this program that will work the program, and put forth the effort to better themselves.

Ms. Wagoner said with the Boards approval they are ready to submit the application to the Department to Health and Human Services with a deadline of February 13, 2017. She added

they appreciate this Board and the support from the County, and their Board of Directors which include Commissioner Elmore, who has served for many years.

Commissioner Elmore stated he wanted to give all the folks at BROCC a pat on the back. He said he is amazed at how hard they work and they are constantly working many festivals and events to raise money and should be commended for this. Ms. Stromer replied they are here to serve the community. Vice Commissioner Blevins added it is often a part of the community that is forgotten. He stated the Board has been involved with many non-profits over the years and Ms. Stromer is one of the hardest working Executive Directors with the highest level of integrity for any non-profit. She has done a lot of good things and is a great person, he said. Commissioner Settle asked if they see the 23.4% poverty rate trending downward. Ms. Wagoner replied yes it's not a dramatic change, but getting better, which they are very happy to see.

Commissioner Keith Elmore made a motion to approve the Application for BROCC Community Services Block Grant for FY 2017-2018, as presented. Motion was seconded by Vice Chairman Gary D. Blevins and unanimously approved.

The Board thanked Mrs. Stromer and Ms. Wagner for their service.

**WILKESBORO – TYSON GREENWAY TRAILHEAD PLANS – APPROVAL OF DESIGN AND LAYOUT** – Chairman Minton recognized and welcomed Andrew Carlton, Planning and Community Development Director. Mr. Carlton said he came before the Board in December with details as to what was being designed for phase I of the revitalization program for historic downtown Wilkesboro. He said tonight he wants to talk about the Tyson Greenway Trailhead and the direction he has received from this Board and the Mathis family. They have a stake in the farmland by the river between North Wilkesboro and Wilkesboro.

At this time Mr. Carlton shared a brief power point about the project and what is being bid out which includes the Tyson Greenway Trailhead. He said there is a public right-of-way across the County's property where the old gas pumps used to be located down to the trailhead and the Mathis properties are adjacent to the River. Mr. Carlton stated the desire of this Board and the Mathis family was to leave enough room for the clearance of their farm equipment to this right-of-way. He added he met with the family and the largest piece of equipment they will be taking through this access point is a 14 foot wheel based combine, with a 16 to 18 foot clearance above ground. Mr. Carlton said the dumpster has been moved to the left side and the right-of-way is cleared of all impairments to meet their criteria for the farm equipment. The drive has been expanded to 15 feet and the above clearance is now 20 feet and will accommodate the wheel base and above ground clearance needed for the family. He said parking spaces, landscaping, and trees have been removed or relocated to meet the needs. Mr. Carlton said he believes this will meet the access needs and the family seems very supportive of the plans. He added anything they do at this trailhead can be removed at a future date if a full public road access needs to go back in at this location. Mr. Carlton said he would like to have a general consensus from the Board so they can send this out to the General Contractor to start the work.

County Attorney Tony Triplett said he would like for the Board and Mr. Carlton to review an aerial map he asked mapping to print. He has the map with him and wants to make sure everyone is on the same page. The aerial map was reviewed at this time.

Chairman Minton asked the completion date for phase I. Mr. Carlton replied they hope for a 6-month turn-around and to start construction in early February.

CONSENSUS – The Board is willing to support the Design and Layout Plans for the Tyson Greenway Trailhead, as presented so long as the Mathis family is happy with the design and plan.

**WILKES COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT:**

**1. RABIES COMPENDIUM CHANGES FOR POSTEXPOSURE MANAGEMENT OF DOGS AND CATS – UPDATE** – Chairman Minton welcomed Ann Absher, Health Director and Robbins Miller, DVM. Mrs. Absher thanked the Board and stated the Board of Health has a rare opportunity that they can adopt a rule that will save tax payers dollars. She said the changes to the postexposure management to dogs and cats exposed to rabies, which is new science, was adopted in March 2016. Mrs. Absher said this did not go to the General Assembly due to the short session. The Board of Health does not want to over-regulate in this area and cost folk's money by not adopting this compendium through a local Board of Health rule. She said the Board of Health wants to make sure the Commissioners didn't have any questions before proceeding. Mrs. Absher said the experts, Dr. Miller their veterinarian member, and all the Board supports this. More than 40 local Boards of Health as of November including almost all the Counties that touch Wilkes have adopted this. Yadkin County plans to do this in February and they will be the last boarding county to do so, she added. Mrs. Absher stated they will hold a Public Hearing at the next Board of Health meeting on February 13, 2017 and wanted this Board to be comfortable with it first.

Mrs. Absher said there is no action needed from the Commissioners, only from the Board of Health. Vice Chairman Blevins said this is the recommendation from the Board of Health and is not the Commissioners decision. Mrs. Asher replied this is correct, they only wanted this Board to be comfortable with what the Board of Heath does. Vice Chairman Blevins asked if Junior Simmons Animal Control Director is comfortable with this. Mr. Simmons replied yes. Vice Chairman Blevins added it saves tax dollars and the General Assembly could adopt this in the long session. Mrs. Absher and Dr. Miller both agreed and said they have been told they would do this, and they highly recommend adopting this now. Commissioner Gambill asked if this changes the quarantine process at the Animal Shelter and gives more owner observation. Mrs. Absher replied that is correct and this will prevent the animals from being euthanized because the owners can't afford the 6-month observation. Commissioner Gambill asked if Animal Control has steps in place for the 45-day process for the owners' observation. Mrs. Absher replied Mr. Simmons told her they will go out at certain times and monitor that the owner is doing what they are required to do. Commissioner Gambill asked about the paperwork process, date, and time stamp that is needed. Mr. Triplett and Mrs. Absher both replied Mr. Simmons has

already been working on this and they feel Animal Control are well prepared. Mr. Triplett added Animal Control will be the ones implementing the compendium.

The Board thanked Mrs. Absher and Dr. Miller for the update.

**2. BOARD OF HEALTH FQHC (WILKES COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTER) – UPDATED** – Chairman Minton welcomed Sandra Sheppard, RN, MHP, Chairman WCHC Board and Ann Absher, Health Director. Mrs. Absher said they were awarded the grant that she discussed in July 2016. She added this grant started January 1, 2017 and the first period is 15-months for \$797,331, after this it will be \$650,000 per year and will be ongoing annually. The first period was longer (15-months rather than 12-months) to get them on a specific cycle. Mrs. Absher stated this will give them an opportunity to serve more patients through the Health Department Community Health Center or FQHC. She provided copies of a short power point to the Board. They have 120 days to get all the federal requirements implemented and are already seeing patients, she added. Mrs. Absher said seeing patients is not difficult for them, the difficulty will be the training on the federal requirements to meet the guidelines. She stated they found out there are over 1,400 community health centers across the U.S. which serves over 24 million people, 1 in 10 children, and 1 in 13 people are served by these centers.

Commissioner Elmore asked if this is located at the Health Department. Mrs. Absher replied yes it is at this time. She added they hope to get grants to up-fit property at West Park in year 2 or after to move the clinic there, which is closer to most of the medical facilities in Wilkes. Mrs. Absher said they have achieved lots of steps already and they had great consultants to help them. She said there is one FQHC in Boone and another in Craven County and they both are a great help and she can learn from them. The management team is going for training very soon, she added. Vice Chairman Blevins asked if it will be \$650K after this first year. Mrs. Absher stated yes they have to re-apply annually, it will be \$650K for 12 months and unless the FQHC is not meeting the requirements it is refunded annually. They will visit the site annually and make recommendation as part of the requirements for funding, she added. Mrs. Absher stated they are working on formal MOU's with many agencies to make sure they will take their patients to include the hospital because it has to be a continuum of care for the patient.

The Board thanked Mrs. Absher and Mrs. Sheppard for the update.

**REQUEST FOR PUBLIC HEARING – JENKINS MILLWORK, LLC – ECONOMIC INVESTMENT AGREEMENT** – County Attorney, Tony Triplett said the next item is to set a public hearing for an Economic Investment Agreement and this does require a specific motion. He added a draft of the economic investment agreement will be sent out prior to the next meeting if the Board decides to set the Public Hearing.

Commissioner Keith Elmore made a motion to set a Public Hearing to consider and take comments for a potential Economic Investment Agreement for Jenkins Millwork, LLC pursuant to N.C.G.S. §158-7.1 on Tuesday, February 7, 2017, at 9:55 A.M. as presented. The motion was seconded by Vice Chairman Gary D. Blevins and unanimously approved.

**OLD BUSINESS** – Commissioner Gambill stated he would like to discuss the trash issue on the road sides and to direct the County Manager to place a fee on uncovered loads effective on a certain date. He added they would like to give these folks time and notice, but want this to move forward. Commissioner Elmore stated they have a \$250 fee currently, but it's not enforced. Vice Chairman Blevins asked if the \$250 is for both private and commercial folks. Mr. Triplett replied yes. Vice Chairman Blevins said the fee needs to be tiered. Chairman Minton stated the existing ordinance would have to be amended to do this. Mr. Triplett agreed and added there is a tier system now, which is \$250 first offence, \$500 for second and \$1,000 third applicable across the board for all individuals and commercial folks. Commissioner Elmore asked could they charge \$25, \$50, and \$100. Mr. Triplett said the \$25, \$50, and \$100 fine currently only applies to permitting and registration for commercial haulers. Mr. Triplett said the ordinance can be changed to set up separate fees for individual and commercial haulers as well as different tiers for each. Chairman Minton stated this is what needs to happen, the commercial haulers are more of an issue than individuals. He added a group needs to meet and work on this with the Solid Waste folks and others. Commissioner Gambill added this will not fix all the issues, but it is a start. Commissioner Gambill said he and Commissioner Elmore will be happy to work on this issue.

Commissioner Elmore stated there is also an issue with mud from the landfill all the way to Roaring River on Hwy 268 due to all the rain and snow. He said a wash pit may need to be considered that will cost the County some money, but needs to be fixed. Mr. Yates said more gravel is on order to help with this issue.

Vice Chairman Blevins stated the county needs to regulate the small signs everyone puts up everywhere. Folks can put signs on their property as they want but not on every road at every intersection and the county needs to regulate this. Mr. Triplett stated they can look into this. Chairman Minton asked if this would fall under the Solid Waste Ordinance. Mr. Triplett replied when they looked into this before it was a free-standing ordinance, but it was never taken as far as the adoption of a sign ordinance. Chairman Minton asked what was needed to set up an Adhoc Committee. Mr. Triplett said the Chairman can set this up, but no more than two can sit on the committee. Chairman Minton stated two have volunteered, they are Commissioner Elmore and Commissioner Gambill. Mr. Triplett said he would like to suggest that Kent Brandon, Anderia Byrd, and Eddie Barnes are also on this committee. Commissioner Gambill agreed and said to line up a meeting and they hope to have something to the Board by the next meeting.

**NEW BUSINESS** – Commissioner Gambill stated McGrady Fire Department signed off on the paperwork to move from light to medium rescue at the last Rescue Review Meeting. Chairman Minton asked how many have signed now. Commissioner Gambill replied two medium, one heavy, and one light rescue.

Vice Chairman Blevins stated he wanted to mention the article from Jule Hubbard about the audit DSS went through. He added there were 10 counties audited for 1 year and Wilkes DSS had the lowest error rate for any of the 10 counties in all categories. This shows the Staff and

Director do a great job and the diligence of their efforts and hard work, he said. Commissioner Settle stated at their meeting last week a Wake County Commissioner commented on the good job from Wilkes on this audit and it was in many papers. Vice Chairman Blevins stated Wilkes was at 1.2% error rate and Wake County has a 28% error rate and he appreciated the newspaper and Mr. Hubbard for this article and acknowledgement.

**CLOSED SESSION** – Motion was made by Vice Chairman Gary D. Blevins to go into Closed Session under Section 143-318.11(a)(3) of the North Carolina General Statutes to consult with the County Attorney in order to protect the attorney-client privilege; and under Section 143-318.11 (a)(4) of the North Carolina General Statutes to discuss the location or to consult with the County Attorney to discuss matters relating to the location or expansion of business in Wilkes County. The motion was seconded by Commissioner David Gambill and unanimously approved.

Motion was made by Commissioner Eddie Settle, seconded by Commissioner Keith Elmore and by unanimous vote adopted to adjourn back into regular session. No action was taken in the closed session.

**ADJOURN** – Motion was made by Commissioner Eddie Settle, seconded by Commissioner Keith Elmore and by unanimous vote adopted to adjourn the meeting of the Wilkes County Board of Commissioners at 9:20 P. M.

Sarah D. Call, Clerk

Gregory A. Minton, Chairman

WILKES COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

Approved: