

**MINUTES  
WILKES COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS  
February 2, 2021**

The Wilkes County Board of Commissioners met on Tuesday, February 2, 2021 at 6:07 P.M. at the Wilkes County Agricultural Center located 416 Executive Drive, Wilkesboro, NC 28697 with the following members present: Chairman Eddie Settle, Vice Chairman Brian S. Minton, Commissioner Keith Elmore, and Commissioner Casey Joe Johnson. Commissioner David Gambill attended the meeting remotely audio and video through WebEx.

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 and called the meeting to order. He asked everyone to remember Commissioner Gambill who is attending by WebEx and is under the weather and also Mrs. Alene Faw who was the Clerk to the Board for 20 years and provided many years of service to Wilkes County.

**INVOCATION** – Chairman Settle led the Invocation.

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

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES** – Motion was made by Vice Chairman Brian S. Minton, seconded by Commissioner Casey Joe Johnson and unanimously adopted to approve the Minutes of the Work Session held on January 14, 2021.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES** – Motion was made by Commissioner Keith Elmore, seconded by Vice Chairman Brian S. Minton and unanimously adopted to approve the Minutes of the Board Meeting held on January 19, 2021.

**BUDGET AMENDMENTS/TRANSFERS** – Motion was made by Commissioner Keith Elmore to approve Budget Amendment No. 23 (General – Fire – This Wilkes County Fire Marshall’s Office has received \$300 from the Firefighters Charitable Foundation to be used on fire related expenses. No match required). The motion was seconded by Vice Chairman Brian S. Minton and unanimously approved.

**TAX DEPARTMENT:**

**1. TAX RELEASES – LISTINGS** – Alex Hamilton, Tax Administrator asked the Board to approve tax releases for listings in the amount of \$345.77.

Commissioner Keith Elmore made a motion to approve the tax releases for listings as presented. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Casey Joe Johnson and unanimously approved.

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

**2. 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 Board of Commissioners the total amount of unpaid taxes for the current fiscal year that are liens on real property. Mr. Hamilton stated currently for Real Estate as of today there is \$3,392,941.50 owed that are liens on Real Property of the \$35,674,794.57 that was billed. The collection rate at this time is 90.5% which is above this same time last year. He stated the governing body shall then order the Tax Collector to advertise such liens. 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 he is requesting permission to advertise these tax liens. Chairman Settle asked if these will be advertised now or after 30 days. Mr. Hamilton replied it will be after at least 30 days and around mid-March. They will send out letters next week and folks will have at least 30 days from that date to pay.

Commissioner Elmore asked if the 90.5% collection is higher than last year. Mr. Hamilton replied yes, at this time last year it was 89.66%. Commissioner Elmore stated this seems low, it is usually 94% or 95%. Mr. Hamilton said this is before advertising, they have until June 30<sup>th</sup> to collect taxes, this is early in the process, last year they ended up at 96.5%.

Commissioner Keith Elmore made a motion to grant permission to the Tax Administration to Advertise Tax Liens as requested. The motion was seconded by Vice Chairman Brian S. Minton and unanimously approved.

**DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES UPDATE** – Chairman Settle welcomed John Blevins, DSS Director. Mr. Blevins said he had a few updates before they go over the reports. North Carolina is going to start on the Medicaid managed care again. He added Wilkes is in Region 2, their Medicaid clients will have a list of approved provides in which to choose a health plan from. It will not be a lot of extra work for them other than phone calls. Mr. Blevins said they will have an enrollment broker that will help people sign up, they will not be in their office this time, it will be on line or over the phone. It is mandatory for most Medicaid recipients and open enrollment begins March 15<sup>th</sup> until May 14<sup>th</sup> with a toll free number available 24/7. If no plan is chosen the State will place them in the one they think fits best. Mr. Blevins stated they will still determine eligibility, as they do now, that does not change. Commissioner Elmore stated this also affects WTA, do they have to select a plan provider. Mr. Blevins stated yes they will have to select a provider, it will impact how they do Medicaid transportation at DSS and will also affect WTA. He added this goes live on July 1, 2021.

Chairman Settle said WTA has had issues getting in touch with DSS to book trips due to the county phone system being overwhelmed with COVID vaccine calls. Mr. Blevins replied he will have his folks to call WTA. Chairman Settle asked Greg Adams, IT Director about the phone system issues and why people can't get through to DSS. Mr. Adams replied they have many people calling in to the Health Department and do not have enough lines coming in to accept all the calls. They have made changes to re-route calls coming in so they can accept more. Mr.

Yates added they had 10,385 calls. Mr. Adams added this is from last Wednesday until today, 5 days on the one Covid line. Commissioner Elmore asked what is considered a call he called 5 times yesterday and received a quick busy, is this considered 5 calls. Mr. Adams replied no that was not a received call and is not included in the 10,385. When the system is full and can take no more calls they get the quick busy. He added the 10,000 were calls that got through. Mr. Yates stated IT and others have worked a lot on this issue to help with incoming calls. Mr. Adams stated they have also sent personnel from other departments to help the Health Department as well. Commissioner Elmore added this is no reflection on the employees at DSS or the Health Department they are all great people and working very hard. Chairman Settle agreed and said they are dealing with something they have never dealt with and thank them for the hard work and all they are doing.

Mr. Blevins went over the monthly caseload reports for December at this time. Next, he went through the Foster Care financial report, Adoption Services financial report, Child Development and Subsidized Child Care financial reports for December. Mr. Blevins went over the CPS Foster Care monthly report for December at this time.

Mr. Blevins stated staff quarantine due to Covid has decreased since his last update and hopefully this trend will continue. Chairman Settle stated the numbers are down across the state and hopefully with the vaccine it will continue to come down. Commissioner Elmore stated they have expanded the space at Curtis Bridge Road and asked if a lot of DSS employees are working virtually from home at this time. Mr. Blevins said once the building is complete it will alleviate some of the pressure. He added the Social Workers downstairs at DSS are on a rotation basis working from home and rotate in. They can remote in from laptops IT provided with Covid money and can work from home just like at the office. They had to do this so that all the workers in that area would not be out if a quarantine came up due to how closely they work. Mr. Blevins said the Income Maintenance and other employees upstairs are in the office full time, but they do not see clients in their offices. Folks come to the lobby and apply and they wait on them through the window in the lobby.

Commissioner Elmore stated he was at the Health Department and was uncomfortable being in that space and DSS is just as tight. He asked if these employees will work virtual after Covid, or will they all come back to work at the office. Mr. Blevins replied that would be their plan at this time, once this is over and safe they will come back. Commissioner Elmore stated all these buildings including the County Offices are old, nothing lasts forever. They need to talk with DSS, Health, and the County Manager and look at considering a new facility or at least think about this in the future.

Chairman Settle and the Board thanked Mr. Blevins for his update.

**LANDFILL UPDATE** – Chairman Settle welcomed Anderia Byrd, Landfill Director. Ms. Byrd said they have a traffic problem that has been ongoing and exacerbated by Covid, but existed before. She stated in the handouts on their desk they can see the history for the past 7 years including 2020, they have steadily increased activity at the Landfill and the convenience sites. This is not a tonnage increase, but a traffic increase. They think folks have realized how low the

price is to dispose of their own trash at the landfill instead of using a contract service to haul it. Ms. Byrd said they have traffic issues, when the scale house was designed in 1993 it was located extremely close to Hwy 268 and was not designed for the 2020 traffic. It can only fit 11 vehicles between the scales and Hwy 268 and they need help on this. Commissioner Elmore asked if they had estimated cost on the renovations she is requesting. Finance Officer Chris Huffman stated he has prepared a budget amendment for \$400,000 for improvements that would alleviate some of the traffic congestion. Ms. Byrd added this would be onsite modifications to add a hut and one employee to take bag trash and re-route that traffic and they would open two more bays across from the scales. Chairman Settle stated he and Commissioner Elmore saw these estimates and would like them to be provided to the Board.

Chairman Settle stated this is something they need to do to get the cars off Hwy 268. They are looking to build a hut and hiring one person and add scales. Ms. Byrd replied the scales would cost \$150,000 and building renovations will cost \$160,000. Commissioner Gambill stated he would like to see an option without the building, the scales are important, but this is a lot of money. Chairman Settle said they will lose an office to put in the scales and need to put one back and need an office at the scales they want to add. He added they would also open up two more bays for traffic and move some other things. Ms. Byrd said the building has two offices, two restrooms and storage area. Mr. Yates said a hut would also be added for folks with bag trash for an express lane. Chairman Settle added these folks will not cross the scales and it will get more traffic off the road and more bays will keep it moving. He added the Commercial trucks will go through the incoming scales go dump and go on the outgoing scales to keep them moving. He added they think they are losing money with folks leaving and not getting back in line. Mr. Yates said the best and fairest solution is scales coming in and out.

Commissioner Gambill stated maybe the building renovation is not something they can do now and just add the outbound scale and one small office for an operator to move the commercial trucks faster, they need to look at all options, this is a lot of money. Chairman Settle added the biggest issue is the non-commercial trucks, they have to go back and get in line and this is the back up and the head ache they need to solve. Ms. Byrd added the outbound scales would help eliminate that. Commissioner Johnson stated he likes the hut suggestion, the bag trash folks are the ones that don't want to wait and get back in line, this option would help that issue. Chairman Settle replied the Hut is included in the proposal, but they need the extra two bays to make that work as an express lane. He added they need to work on these issues at the Landfill. Commissioner Gambill stated it needs to be addressed he is ready to get the scales, but not the building renovations. Commissioner Elmore asked what it would cost to do the scales and hut. Chairman Settle replied \$240,000. Mr. Yates added this will not allow the operators of each scale to communicate. Ms. Byrd agreed and added all Landfills want the inbound scale operators to communicate with the outbound and vice versa, this make things more efficient, they need to communicate. She added they kept this in mind when asking for this renovation.

Chairman Settle stated for \$400K they can fix the Landfill. Mr. Yates stated it may not fix everything, but it will fix a lot of things and, get people off the road and in and out much quicker. Vice Chairman Minton stated he agrees to move forward, they have to get the traffic off of Hwy 268. Ms. Byrd added this location is a Landfill and convenience center combined into one

location which doubles everything. At the time this was designed it may have not been designed for both. That was in 1993 and could have only be meant for a Landfill and has not been modified since. Chairman Settle added this is a start, they also need a convenience center in the Millers Creek area as well to help get trash off the roads. Commissioner Elmore asked what is the transfer for. Mr. Huffman replied \$400,000 to cover capital improvements taken out of the fund balance and put in the Landfill fund. Commissioner Elmore said they can approve this to cover that and it may cover it or may not, they tend to overestimate to their credit.

Vice Chairman Minton asked how many estimates do they have. Ms. Byrd replied they have one quote each for the hut, electronics relocation, scales, and building. Vice Chairman Minton asked can they get more. Ms. Byrd replied absolutely, she has several for the out bound scales, but only one for the rest. Mr. Yates replied to move forward they are required to do this, they need three. Commissioner Gambill asked why do the Budget Amendment before they get bids. Mr. Yates replied this will be an informal bid process and they could move forward on getting a price. Chairman Settle added it may not take \$400K and thinks it can be done for less. Commissioner Gambill stated he would like to see them come back with bids on both options, but he is in support. Commissioner Elmore agreed if they have the estimates for each item broken down in front of them it would move faster, they do not have that in front of them tonight. Chairman Settle agreed. Commissioner Elmore asked if they can come back in two weeks with numbers and estimates and thinks they are all for this. Mr. Yates stated they are not sure they can get three quotes in two weeks for each item. Ms. Byrd added she is having a hard time getting folks in any type of construction business to give quotes, they all say they have work for at least 6 months out. Chairman Settle asked them to do their best and get as many estimates and they can, this will be an action item at that time.

Commissioner Johnson sated he was at the Landfill 2 weeks ago and cars were lined up to the road, Ms. Byrd was out there waiting on people in their cars and they all work hard. He wanted to brag on them and the hard work they do and help to get this fixed. Ms. Byrd added she has a great team and could not do this without them.

Chairman Settle and the Board thanked Ms. Byrd for the update.

**RECESS** – Chairman Settle declared the meeting of the Wilkes County Board of Commissioners recessed at 6:59 P.M. He stated the meeting will reconvene in a few minutes.

**RECONVENE** – Chairman Settle reconvened the meeting of the Wilkes County Board of Commissioners at 7:03 P.M. on Tuesday, February 2, 2021.

**FINANCE – UPDATE** – Chairman Settle recognized Chris Huffman, Finance Director. Mr. Huffman thanked the Board and stated he is here to present a December 31, 2020 Financial Report.

The Financial Report is shown on the next pages:

WLKES COUNTY  
 Cash and Investments  
 December 30, 2020

**CENTRAL DEPOSITORY**

Checking Account.....	\$ 472,868.58
Investments.....	<u>56,093,099.58</u>
TOTAL	\$ <u>56,565,968.16</u>

**CENTRAL DEPSITORY EQUITY BY FUNDS**

General Fund.....	\$ 50,118,081.77
Emergency Telephone E-911 System.....	136,148.87
Law Enforcement Restricted Fund.....	8,653.59
Airport Enterprise Fund.....	-247,350.78
Landfill Enterprise Fund.....	866,062.93
Landfill Capital Reserve Fund.....	4,414,455.68
Tax Collections to be distributed to (4) Towns.....	327,331.65
Tax Collections to be distributed to (25) Fire Districts.....	<u>942,584.45</u>
TOTAL	\$ <u>56,565,968.16</u>

**CENTRAL DEPOSITORY EQUITY BY FINANCIAL INSTITUTION**

NC Capital Management Trust.....	\$ 29,023,513.09
First Citizens Bank.....	17,437,474.77
Truist.....	2,835,486.98
First National Bank.....	2,049,893.33
Horizon Bank.....	5,217,591.52
US Bank/LOBs.....	<u>2,008.47</u>
TOTAL	\$ <u>56,565,968.16</u>

WILKES COUNTY  
 TAX COLLECTIONS SUMMARY REPORT  
 GENERAL FUND

<u>MONTH</u>	<u>FISCAL YEAR</u> <u>2018-2019</u>	<u>FISCAL YEAR</u> <u>2019-2020</u>	<u>CURRENT</u> <u>FISCAL YEAR</u> <u>2020-2021</u>	<u>MORE/LESS</u> <u>THAN</u> <u>PRIOR YEAR</u>
JULY	\$ 231,929.79	\$ 246,530.69	\$ 264,583.62 *	\$ 18,052.93
AUGUST	14,901,260.79	15,977,816.58	<b>17,386,816.88</b>	1,409,000.30
SEPTEMBER	4,095,994.32	3,609,111.63	<b>3,806,637.08</b>	197,525.45
OCTOBER	1,630,270.08	1,544,400.72	<b>1,345,026.88</b>	(199,373.84)
NOVEMBER	1,784,048.39	1,755,770.69	<b>1,631,481.09</b>	(124,289.60)
DECEMBER	4,384,854.06	5,775,765.03	<b>4,745,426.29</b>	(1,030,338.74)
JANUARY	5,768,408.25	4,637,939.75		
FEBRUARY	1,191,160.25	1,340,136.60		
MARCH	1,534,383.25	1,409,355.39		
APRIL	810,941.57	786,745.39		
MAY	768,974.05	645,653.46		
JUNE	<u>595,579.27</u>	<u>636,030.76</u>		
<b>TOTAL</b>	<u>37,697,804.07</u>	<u>38,365,256.69</u>	<u><b>29,179,971.84</b></u>	<u>270,576.50</u>
<b>BUDGET</b>	<u>37,572,491.00</u>	<u>38,371,574.00</u>	<u><b>38,421,558.00</b></u>	
<b>OVER/UNDER</b>	125,313.07	(6,317.31)	<b>(9,241,586.16)</b>	

\* July Vehicle Taxes not collected from the State until August

The above figures represent the following monies collected by  
 Tax Collections (General Fund Only). Does not include Fire Districts and Towns.

- A. Current Year Tax Collections (Real, Personal and Vehicles)
- B. Prior Years (1<sup>st</sup> through 10<sup>th</sup>)
- C. Penalties, Interest and Advertising Costs on Past Due Taxes
- D. Less 1.5% Tax Discounts for Early Payments

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**WILKES COUNTY SALES TAX DISTRIBUTION CURRENT FISCAL YEAR COMPARISON TO LAST FISCAL YEAR**

ACTUAL:	COUNTY			Fiscal Year Comparison		Article 46
MONTH STATE	RECEIVED	FY: 2019-2020	FY: 2020-2021	Difference +/-	% More/Less	Additional ¼ cent
COLLECTED*	(15 <sup>TH</sup> of Month)					Effective 10/1/2010
July	September	1,487,340.47	<b>1,994,202.50</b>	506,862.03	34.08%	204,228.02
August	October	1,464,596.92	<b>1,632,763.03</b>	168,166.11	11.48%	151,795.21
September	November	1,528,511.55	<b>1,382,548.91</b>	(145,962.64)	-9.55%	117,980.44
October	December	1,412,900.15	<b>1,798,548.21</b>	385,648.06	27.29%	177,890.25
November	January	1,598,957.63				
December	February	1,615,765.74				
January	March	1,912,104.40				
February	April	1,412,023.42				
March	May	1,413,084.00				
April	June	1,721,422.14				
May	July	1,662,910.30				
June	August	<u>1,838,274.88</u>				
<b>Total Collected:</b>		<b>19,067,891.60</b>	<b>6,808,062.65</b>	<b>914,713.56</b>	<b>15.52%</b>	<b>651,893.92</b>

**BUDGET:**

<b>Total Budgeted:</b>	<u>17,628,578.00</u>	<b>13,269,409.00</b>	(4,359,169.00)	-24.73%
		<u>÷12</u>		
Monthly Budget		1,105,784.08		
		<u>X 4 month</u>		
		4,423,136.33		
Over/Short of Budget	1,439,313.60	<b>2,384,926.32</b>	<b>53.92%</b> Collections to Date More (Less) than Budget	

**NOTE:**

\*The month listed is when the NCDOR collects the revenue for sales generated the prior month. Therefore, July collections are for sales in the month of June, etc. and the funds are forwarded to us 2 months following their collections. We receive July collections in September, etc.

**Wilkes County General Fund  
 Other Miscellaneous  
 December 31, 2020**

To be on target with Budget the % used or collected should be: 50%

**Summary of other Revenue & Expense**

<u>Revenue</u>	<u>Revised Budget</u>	<u>Year to Date Actual</u>	<u>%</u>
Deed Stamp Excise Tax	180,000	172,620	95.9%
Reg of Deeds Recording Fees	185,000	116,843	63.2%
Building Inspection Fees	170,000	99,040	58.3%
Planning Permits & Fees	38,000	18,610	49.0%
Environmental Health Fees	115,750	89,715	77.5%
EMS Collections	2,800,000	1,431,811	51.1%
<u>Expense</u>	<u>Original</u>	<u>(Used) or Added</u>	<u>Available</u>
<b>Contingency Reserve</b>	\$ 25,000	\$	\$ 25,000
	<u>2020-2021 Revised Budget</u>	<u>2020-2021 Actual</u>	
<b>General Fund</b>			
<b>Total General Fund Revenues</b>	\$ 80,443,898	\$ 46,213,246	57.4%
<b>Total General Fund Expenses</b>	\$ 80,443,898	<u>36,770,899</u>	45.7%
	Revenues Over	9,442,347	
	(Under) Expense		

Chairman Settle and the Board thanked Mr. Huffman for the financial report and added they would like this presented monthly going forward.

**HIGH COUNTRY COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS – CHARTER AMENDMENT – RESOLUTION** – Chairman Settle stated this item will be tabled to give everyone time to review the Resolution and Charter amendment.

Commissioner Keith Elmore made a motion to table the Concurrent Resolution to Enact A Charter for the High Country Council of Governments until the next meeting. The motion was seconded by Vice Chairman Brian S. Minton and unanimously approved.

**JCPC BOARD MEMBER APPOINTMENT** – Chairman Settle said the Juvenile Crime Prevention Council is recommending Ashlyn Miller for the appointment of a 2-year term as a County Commissioner appointee on the board of the JCPC. Ashlyn Miller is a Juvenile Court Counselor in Wilkes County.

Vice Chairman Brian S. Minton made a motion to approve the appointment of Ms. Ashlyn Miller to the JCPC Board for a 2-year term as requested. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Casey Joe Johnson and unanimously approved.

**NEW BUSINESS** – Chairman Settle stated they would like to discuss Covid and the letter received from Ms. Fran Cantrell which listed some interesting and good points. He added Commissioner Johnson brought this to their attention and they have all received calls from around the county that would like to see the Elected Officials on the radio or other forms of media to promote getting the vaccine, ways to contact the Health Department. He added maybe a radio, newspaper campaign to promote and ask people to wear a mask, keep social distance, and please stay home if they are sick which will go a long way to stop the spread of this virus. Vice Chairman Minton added it is a great idea. Some of them could do radio, send something to the newspaper, Facebook and any social media to get it out. This is where the biggest presence is right now. Chairman Settle stated that is the case for a large age group, but it is not for the older folks. Vice Chairman Minton stated that is why they need every radio station and newspaper involved. Chairman Settle agreed and added they will need guidance from the Health Department.

Commissioner Johnson stated he spoke with a lady today and she looked on Forsyth County's website and they can make appointments online and with the phone issues maybe that could help. She was not able to get an appointment. There were no available vaccines at this time and said to please check back later. He added her suggestion was to look into an online format to sign up and get an appointment to get the vaccine. Chairman Settle stated he talked with the IT Director before the meeting and they would have to look into the purchase of a software program in order to do that. He added that is a great idea for some folks, but the older generation want to make a phone call. Online is better for some. Commissioner Johnson stated this may open up the phone lines if they had this as well. Commissioner Gambill said the Health Department is struggling and from being on the Board he knows the general public doesn't see the hours they put in and all the work they do. He added they know some staff has been reassigned, but they need to look into hiring additional staff or contracting it out. They are having to react to the situation as it comes up with no time for a plan because they are short staffed. Commissioner Gambill said they need to give funds for part time help. They can meet with the Health Director to see how many they need to hire temporarily for the next year. He agrees with getting this out to the general public as well, but some of the issues is not enough staff. Commissioner Elmore added Mr. Yates is helping with this, they have hired some folks Mr. Yates added they have hired two to input the required information that has to go to the state after the shot is received. He added Veterans, Recreation, EMS, Sheriff, Elections, IT, Animal Shelter, and DSS are all sending employees to help. This will give them time to hire and train employees to help. Today they came with another plan to send more employees everyday for one month which all departments have agreed to. This will help to give them time to hire more part time employees. Chairman Settle agreed they need help to get ahead of this so when more vaccine companies come out and a lot more people line up for shots they can be ready. Mr. Yates stated the complaints they have received from the older generation is they do not want to be on the internet. They want to call and talk to someone. He added they need to have both options. Chairman Settle asked what do they need to do, add more phone lines, hire more people so folks are not on

the phone for hours. Mr. Yates added the one phone line set up for Covid vaccines received 10,385 calls in 5 days. They know they are getting 600 this week and next week, this week's clinic is already booked. They will be talking appointments for next week. He added they do not know what they are getting after next week from the state and can't make appointments until they know what they will get. Chairman Settle added this is for 65 and older at this time.

Commissioner Elmore stated the letter from Ms. Cantrell suggested forming a team of people throughout Wilkes County. He likes that idea of having folks focused on Covid 19. There are very smart people including Ms. Cantrell that would like to get involved and would be good. Commissioner Elmore said they can be the face and talk, but they have to deal with so many other departments and things if they have a Covid 19 team that is focused solely on that it might be something they consider doing. Commissioner Gambill agreed, the Health Department is reacting and if they have a team to get out and educate, put out material on wait, wash, and all the rules and the vaccination information, it would help. He added they need to establish this quick. Chairman Settle asked how big of a team do they need. Commissioner Elmore said it needs to represent the entire county. Commissioner Gambill said at least 10 to 15 if they are looking at including internet, newspaper, radio. Chairman Settle asked how do they want to come up with these folks. Commissioner Gambill replied they have several serving on the Board of Health to include doctors, nurse, veterinarians and have a wide range there. Commissioner Elmore said they have a lot of Churches, Ruritans and folks involved in community service like fire departments to ask. Chairman Settle added if they could utilize the fire departments they could get the word out to the majority of the county. There are 330 churches in the county they could involve and a lot of those have phone trees. Commissioner Elmore asked if someone would like to head this up. Commissioner Johnson replied he is willing to do whatever is needed. He said among the schools and businesses the Covid language is different, for example the school system says be out two weeks, business say come back when you have a negative test. This is another item that needs to be included which is correct. Chairman Settle agreed schools say two weeks he had a doctor to tell him 5 days. Commissioner Gambill said school system is 24 days. Commissioner Johnson added this is determined by the number in the household some is 24 days, but a business in town could return with a negative test. He added there is a lot of confusion on this. Commissioner Elmore said Rachel Willard, Heath Director needs to be contacted and get her thoughts, they would be working closely with her. Chairman Settle added they need to move quickly on this, he has some time and can help. They need to get with the County Manager and Ms. Willard.

Chairman Settle asked the best way to put this committee together in a week. Mr. Triplett replied the Board needs to authorize one member, which is normally the Chairman to appoint a Committee. Chairman Settle asked can he get a consensus from the Board via email on the members. Mr. Triplett replied yes if that is included in the motion to delegate to the Chairman to do that and he would in turn consult by email for consensus from the Board.

Commissioner David Gambill made a motion to authorize the Chairman of the Wilkes County Board of Commissioners to appoint a Covid 19 Task Force and solicit input and consensus from the Board of Commissioners via email as to the members of the Task Force and authorize the Chairman to convene the Covid 19 Task Force Committee. The motion was seconded by Vice Chairman Brian S. Minton and unanimously approved.

**CLOSED SESSION** – Vice Chairman Brian S. Minton made a Motion to go into Closed Session under Section 143-318.11(a)(3) of the North Carolina General Statutes to consult with the Board’s attorney to preserve the attorney-client privilege. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Casey Joe Johnson and unanimously approved.

Motion was made by Vice Chairman Brian S. Minton, 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 Vice Chairman Brian S. Minton, seconded by Commissioner Keith Elmore and by unanimous vote adopted to adjourn the meeting of the Wilkes County Board of Commissioners at 8:06 P.M.

Sarah D. Call, Clerk

Eddie Settle, Chairman

WILKES COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

Approved: February 16, 2021