

**MINUTES
WILKES COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
February 4, 2020**

The Wilkes County Board of Commissioners met on Tuesday, February 4, 2020 at 6:00 P.M. with the following members present: Chairman Eddie Settle, Vice Chairman David Gambill, Commissioner Keith Elmore, Commissioner Gary D. Blevins, and Commissioner Brian S. Minton.

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.

INVOCATION – Vice Chairman David Gambill led the Invocation.

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

APPROVAL OF MINUTES - Motion was made by Vice Chairman David Gambill, seconded by Commissioner Keith Elmore and unanimously adopted to approve the Minutes of the Board Meeting held on January 21, 2020.

BUDGET AMENDMENTS/TRANSFERS – Motion was made by Commissioner Keith Elmore to approve Budget Amendment No. 24 (General Fund – Social Services – Requesting an additional allocation from DSS Administration of \$7,125 for Crisis Intervention Funds. No County funds required). The motion was seconded by Commissioner Brian S. Minton and unanimously approved.

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES UPDATE – Chairman Settle welcomed and recognized John Blevins, DSS Director. Mr. Blevins said first he would like to give an update that they have finished the Medicaid audit. They still have the MOU that the County was required to sign that looks at all the other programs. He stated as typical for the state they sent them an email that they had delayed the release to send the county data for quarters 1 and 2 because of identified errors in their numbers. They say this has been corrected, but it makes you wonder if the state had issues with their numbers how can they be held accountable.

Mr. Blevins stated the next update is about NCFAST funding and the impact to developmental funding and operations & maintenance programs as listed in the letter in their packets. He added the impact as mentioned at the bottom is with the help desk. It will be slowed down and delayed, they will have much less response from them when they have issues with NCFAST. Fewer updates will be releases to fix problems and they have a hiring freeze. Therefore, they are concerned the will lose staff at the state due to this. Mr. Blevins added they are dealing with child welfare and the P4 rollout is delayed and counties such as Wilkes that are already doing the intake and assessment they will continue to support it, but it will be a slower response time and

they will not be available after hours. He stated with children services this could be an impact as well. All other programs are frozen or delayed. Medicaid and food & nutrition also use NCFAST and could be impacted. In case the Board get complaints about delays they wanted them to know this is not within their control. Mr. Blevins said he will keep them updated. Commissioner Elmore asked if the I pads they use for intake and assessments in children's services have real time updates. Mr. Blevins replied yes if they are at a hot spot or as soon as they get to Wi-Fi, which is very beneficial and they like using it.

Mr. Blevins went over the monthly caseload report for December. Next he went through the Adoption Services financial report, Child Development and Subsidized Child Care financial reports for December. Mr. Blevins stated they are working the daycare waiting list as quickly as they can now that the state has allowed them to do so. They are meeting all the needs for CPS and Foster Care and the spending co-efficiency is at 92%. Commissioner Blevins stated he was informed that not all children in foster care receive child care subsidy and that was surprising as he thought they did. Mr. Blevins replied that can be a problem. The foster parents could have to pay, but this would only be when the states freeze this program, they would never do this if it was up to them. Commissioner Blevins asked what can they do about this. Mr. Blevins replied that would have to be addressed on the state level and their contacts would be the best place to start. He added all foster children are receiving subsidized day care at this time. The state is also looking at giving additional money as well, any county at 90% or below in spending co-efficient are at risk to have funds taken. They are not at risk at having funds taken, they should receive additional funds.

Mr. Blevins went through the CPS Foster Care monthly report for December. He added they are working on a more detailed report that will show exactly where the foster homes are in process. This will contain much more detail and the time line of where they are and when they will be completed. Mr. Blevins said so many times they have several families in the process, but they lose ones due to adoptions which are great, and for other reasons sometimes as well. Commissioner Blevins stated it is a revolving door. Vice Chairman Gambill asked how long does the process take to become a foster family from start to finish. Mr. Blevins replied it depends on how quickly they do it, there are six books they have to go through and they lose some during this process that change their mind. He added he will get an average on this and add to the report. Mr. Blevins briefly discussed the various ways they advertise the need for foster homes in Wilkes. Vice Chairman Gambill asked if they know why the kinship placement has reduced. Mr. Blevins replied he will ask for more information on this and get back to the Board. Commissioner Blevins said in some cases they are in the second or third generation of folks that are not responsible for their kids and they can't turn back to their parents because they were the same way. He added folks are having kids later and this is a big burden that an elder parent can't take on many times. Mr. Blevins agreed and added they try in all cases this is the first and best option for the child and many times they can't find a person that checks out.

The Board thanked Mr. Blevins for the update and information.

TAX DEPARTMENT:

1. TAX RELEASES – LISTING – Alex Hamilton, Tax Administrator asked the Board to approve tax releases for listing in the amount of \$6,648.16.

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

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

2. TAX RELEASES – COLLECTIONS – Alex Hamilton, Tax Administrator asked the Board to approve tax releases for collections in the amount of \$311.17.

Commissioner Gary D. Blevins made a motion to approve the tax releases for collections as presented. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Brian S. Minton and unanimously approved.

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

3. 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 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 currently for Real Estate they billed out \$35,409,348.26 of that \$3,676,287.57 have not been paid at this time. The collection rate as of now is 89.62% which is slightly below last year, but very typical.

Commissioner Gary D. Blevins made a motion to grant permission to the Tax Administration to advertise tax liens as requested. The motion was seconded by Vice Chairman David Gambill and unanimously approved.

Mr. Hamilton stated he regretted to inform the Board of the passing of a long time County Employee, Mrs. Cathy Jones who worked in the collections and listings departments for over 31 years. He added she passed away Sunday after battling cancer, she retired in May 2018. She was a great person, employee, and friend to him and everyone in the tax office. Mr. Hamilton said this is two they've lost in less than one year from the tax department to cancer. He asked everyone to please remember her family in their prayers. Mr. Triplett added she was a great friend and employee, he worked a lot with Cathy and she will be missed.

RESOLUTION – AUTHORIZING SALE OF COUNTY-OWNED PROPERTY – BEAVER CREEK TOWNSHIP – County Attorney Tony Triplett stated this is to finalize one of two sales of county properties that was authorized to be advertised. There was no upset bid during the advertisement period. He added Betty Hartley made a bid of \$1,000, the county bid it in for \$779.45 at the time of the foreclosure. She offered more than the county bid for it at foreclosure and it will get this back on the tax rolls. Mr. Triplett said this is before the Board and if they wish to proceed they simply need to approve the Resolution.

Commissioner Gary D. Blevins made a motion to adopt the Resolution Authorizing Sale of County-owned Property in Beaver Creek Township as presented at tonight’s meeting. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Brian S. Minton and unanimously approved.

*RESOLUTION
AUTHORIZING SALE
OF REAL PROPERTY*

WHEREAS, the Wilkes County Board of Commissioners (hereinafter the “Board of Commissioners”) by motion duly adopted at its regular meeting of January 7, 2020, authorized advertisement for sale of a tract of land owned by Wilkes County (hereinafter “the County”) located in Beaver Creek Township, Wilkes County, North Carolina, consisting of 0.20 acres on Gene Hartley Road, the same having been acquired by the County under Commissioner’s Deed dated June 27, 1996, as recorded at Book 761, Page 372, Wilkes County Registry, pursuant to a tax foreclosure sale in the action captioned “Wilkes County vs. Bertha Hayes Douglas,” File No. 91 CVD 417, Wilkes County Clerk of Superior Court’s Office, and being identified on the records of the Wilkes County Tax Mapping office as PIN #3816-83-7698, Parcel ID No. 02-00055;

AND WHEREAS, said sale is by negotiated offer, advertisement, and upset bid pursuant to G.S. §160A-269;

AND WHEREAS, the County has received an offer from Betty Hartley, 8535 West NC Hwy 268, Boomer, NC 28606, in the amount of \$1,000.00 plus the cost of publication for the required public notice in the Wilkes Journal-Patriot, Deed preparation, and recording costs;

AND WHEREAS, pursuant to the Board of Commissioners’ motion adopted at its January 7, 2020 meeting, said offer was advertised in the Wilkes Journal-Patriot on January 10, 2020, as required under G.S. §160A-269;

AND WHEREAS, no upset bids have been received, and the time has expired in which an additional upset bid may be submitted;

AND WHEREAS, the Board of Commissioners desires to accept Betty Hartley’s bid of \$1,000.00 plus the cost of publication for the required public notice in the Wilkes Journal-Patriot, Deed preparation, and recording costs, and desires to authorize sale of the property pursuant to said bid;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, pursuant to G.S. §160A-269, that the bid of \$1,000.00 plus the cost of publication for the required public notice in the Wilkes Journal-Patriot, Deed preparation, and recording costs, as received from Betty Hartley, is hereby approved, and upon payment of said purchase price a Special Warranty Deed shall be executed by the County and conveyed to Betty Hartley for the above referenced property.

This the 4th day of February, 2020.

WILKES COUNTY

ATTEST:

Sarah D. Call, Clerk

By: _____
*Eddie D. Settle, Chairman,
Wilkes County Board of Commissioners*

CLOSED SESSION – Vice Chairman David Gambill 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, under Section 143-318.11(a)(3) of the North Carolina General Statutes to consider and give instructions to the Board’s attorney as to one or more potential judicial or administrative actions, under Section 143-318.11(a)(4) of the North Carolina General Statutes to discuss the location or expansion of business in Wilkes County, and under Section 143-318.11(a)(5) of the North Carolina General Statutes to establish or instruct the staff concerning the price or other material terms of a contract or proposed contract for the acquisition of real property by the County. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Brian S. Minton and unanimously approved.

Motion was made by Vice Chairman David Gambill, seconded by Commissioner Brian S. Minton 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 Brain S. Minton, seconded by Vice Chairman David Gambill and by unanimous vote adopted to adjourn the meeting of the Wilkes County Board of Commissioners at 7:31 P.M.

Sarah D. Call, Clerk

Eddie Settle, Chairman

WILKES COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

Approved: February 18, 2020