

MINUTES
WILKES COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
February 7, 2017

PUBLIC HEARING – PROPOSED ECONOMIC INVESTMENT AGREEMENT BETWEEN WILKES COUNTY AND JENKINS MILLWORK, LLC – Chairman Greg Minton declared the Public Hearing open regarding the Proposed Economic Investment Agreement between Wilkes County and Jenkins Millwork, LLC at 9:55 A.M. on Tuesday, February 7, 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 Vannoy, Colvard, Triplett & Vannoy, County Attorney Law Firm represented by Daniel S. Johnson; John Yates, County Manager; Dan Little EDC, President; Robin Hamby, EDC, CFO; and Sarah Call, Clerk to the Board.

Chairman Minton asked if anyone would like to speak regarding the proposed Economic Investment Agreement between Wilkes County and Jenkins Millwork, LLC hearing no comments Chairman Greg Minton declared the Public Hearing closed at 9:56 A.M.

The Wilkes County Board of Commissioners met on Tuesday, February 7, 2017 at 9:57 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 Vannoy, Colvard, Triplett & Vannoy, County Attorney Law Firm represented by Daniel S. Johnson; 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.

Chairman Greg Minton said he wanted to thank Mr. Daniel Johnson from the Vannoy Law Firm for attending the meeting today for Mr. Triplett.

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 January 17, 2017.

MANAGEMENT AGREEMENT – WILKES COUNTY, YMCA OF NORTHWEST N.C., WILKES FAMILY YMCA, WILKES COMMUNITY COLLEGE, AND WILKES COMMUNITY COLLEGE ENDOWMENT CORP. – County Manager John Yates said there

is a memo from Mr. Triplett in the packet. The County entered a Management Agreement with Wilkes YMCA, Wilkes Community College, and Wilkes Community College Endowment Corp. last year to manage the County camp ground at Lowes Park Rivers Edge during Merle Fest, he stated. Mr. Yates said the contract was only for Merle Fest 2016 and was a pilot program for all parties to see how it worked. He added it worked well for everyone and they are asking for approval of a contract for Merle Fest 2017, 2018, 2019, and 2020.

Chairman Minton stated this is a 3-year contract. Mr. Yates replied yes, it is for 3-years, but covers 4 Merle Fests. Mr. Yates added Caroline Whitson, Executive Director of Wilkes YMCA is here to answer any questions. Commissioner Elmore asked if the contract is the same and the responsibilities of the County doesn't change in this contract. Mr. Yates replied the County will still work the YMCA and help them in a supporting role, the County will mark the spaces and take care of other things. Commissioner Elmore asked if only the length of the agreement is changing. Mr. Yates and Ms. Whitson both replied yes.

Commissioner Keith Elmore made a motion to approve the Management Agreement with Wilkes County, YMCA of Northwest N.C., Wilkes Family YMCA, Wilkes Community College, and Wilkes Community College Endowment Corp. as presented. The motion was seconded by Commissioner David Gambill and unanimously approved.

The Board thanked Ms. Whitson. Ms. Whitson thanked the Board.

JENKINS MILLWORK, LLC:

1. WILKES EDC REQUEST FOR WAIVER OF RESTRICTIVE COVENANTS – Chairman Minton welcomed and recognized Dan Little, EDC President, and Robin Hamby, CFO, EDC. Mr. Little stated they would like to ask for a waiver of the restrictive covenants for a particular piece of property that that EDC currently owns. He added it's located in the Wilkes Industrial Park, better known as the old Airport Property. The reason for the waiver is EDC will sale this property to Jenkins Millwork for a capital improvement project, he noted. Mr. Little said the restrictive covenants were recorded on 01/09/1992 and Jenkins Millwork has requested that the covenants be eliminated. The Board has the right to grant the waiver by Article 21 in the covenants and similar covenants have been waived in the past, he said. Mr. Little said the Board has expressed interest in the past of having the covenants terminated based on the fact that the property is now part of the municipal limits for the Town of Wilkesboro. He added therefore it is now subject to land use rules for the Town of Wilkesboro. Mr. Little stated EDC is asking for a waiver of the restrictive covenants in order to allow the sale to Jenkins. He added the County Attorney is proceeding in getting these terminated completely, but needs the signatures of all the owners in the Industrial Park.

Commissioner Eddie Settle made a motion to approve the request for waiver of restrictive covenants as presented. The motion was seconded by Vice Chairman Gary D. Blevins and unanimously approved.

2. ECONOMIC INVESTMENT AGREEMENT – Mr. Little said they are happy to bring an opportunity for an economic incentive for this project. He added Jenkins Millwork is a producer of millwork and building supplies and currently operates in the former Carolina Glove facility along Hwy. 421. It is their intent to purchase the 4.148 acre tract that the EDC currently owns at the intersection of Industrial and Stokes Drive, near the old Airport, he stated. Mr. Little said they plan to construct a new facility and move their operation from the current location to the new facility. They plan to invest up to \$4.2 million in equipment and capital improvements to the real estate, he noted. The incentive agreement is based on Jenkins reaching this total tax assessment, and also retaining 52 jobs, he added. Mr. Little said they have been in negotiations with Jenkins for over 2-years and were in competition with Iredell, Caldwell, and Forsyth Counties. He said they have settled on this location which they are happy with along with the employment base in Wilkes. They will maintain the current 52 employees and add 10 new jobs with a total aggregate average pay of all employees of \$34,000.00, he stated. Mr. Little said the incentive agreement will return to them 80% of the taxes paid up to \$4.2 million total tax valuation, which totals \$22,512 annually, provided they meet all benchmarks. The total taxes collected would be \$28,140, he added. Mr. Little said the agreement would begin as of tax year 2018 for a 5-year period, through 2022. The job additions would be 4 the first year, 2 the second and third years, 1 the fourth and fifth years for a total of 10 new jobs, he noted. Mr. Little stated the Town of Wilkesboro approved a similar agreement last evening at their meetings.

Commissioner Settle stated Wilkes was in competition with Forsyth County for Jenkins, it is a great thing that they found this property and the Wilkes EDC did a lot of work with these guys to make sure they stayed in Wilkes County in addition to the 10 new jobs. He added this was good work. Mr. Little said the retention of 52 jobs was also critical to the economic base in Wilkes. Commissioner Settle said losing jobs does not look good and they are more than pleased with this. Vice Chairman asked if Jenkins started in Wilkes. Mr. Little replied they brought this operation here and hired a number of employees when Jeld-Wen first came and then displaced a particular manufacturing product which they have since brought back. He said Mr. Allen picked up a majority of those employees and most of them remain with him today. They have a similar plant in Paducah, Kentucky, he added.

Vice Chairman Gary D. Blevins made a motion to adopt the Economic Investment Agreement between Wilkes County and Jenkins Millwork, LLC as presented at today's meeting pursuant to N.C.G.S. §158-7.1. The Motion was seconded by Commissioner Eddie Settle and unanimously approved.

The Board thanked Mr. Little and Mrs. Hamby.

PLANNING DEPARTMENT:

1. REQUEST TO SET PUBLIC HEARING – ROAD NAME REQUEST – ANTIQUA DRIVE – Chairman Minton recognized Eddie Barnes, Planning Director. Mr. Barnes asked the Board of Commissioners to set a Public Hearing on a Road Name Request received by petition to the Planning Department. He stated the Road Name Request is for Antiqua 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.

Vice Chairman Gary D. Blevins made a motion to set a Public Hearing on Tuesday, March 7, 2017 at 9:55 A.M. regarding the Road Name Request as presented. The motion was seconded by Commissioner David Gambill and unanimously approved.

2. RESOLUTION – APPOINTMENT OF REVIEW OFFICERS – Mr. Barnes said the N.C. General Statute requires that review officers be appointed by the County to review any plats that will be recorded at the Register of Deeds. This is an update to the current resolution in effect to add one more review officer, which is Mike Moretz from the mapping office. He stated the review officers for the County will be Mr. Eddie Barnes, Planning Director, Mr. Duncan Cavanaugh, Planner, Mr. Richard Brown, Senior Property Mapper, and Mr. Mike Moretz, GIS Administrator.

Vice Chairman Blevins stated the statute has not changed. Mr. Barnes replied that is correct. Vice Chairman Blevins asked when it became their responsibility as opposed to the Register of Deeds. Mr. Barnes said he has been nearly 20 years since that change was made.

Vice Chairman Gary D. Blevins made a motion to approve the Resolution to appointment of Mr. Edward Barnes, Planning Director, Mr. Duncan Cavanaugh, Planner, Mr. Richard Brown, Senior Property Mapper, and Mr. Mike Moretz, GIS Administrator Review Officers for Wilkes County as presented. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Keith Elmore and unanimously approved.

*RESOLUTION
APPOINTMENT OF REVIEW OFFICERS*

WHEREAS, S.L. 1997-309 (S875) made a number of significant changes in the procedures for recording maps and plats; and

WHEREAS, the main purpose of the law is to transfer the responsibility for reviewing plats to determine whether they meet recording requirements from the Register of Deeds Office to a Review Officer; and

WHEREAS, G.S. 47-30.2 (a) requires the Board of Commissioners in each County, by Resolution, to appoint a person(s) to serve as Review Officer(s) to review each plat before it is recorded and certify that it meets the statutory requirements for recording; and,

WHEREAS, it is the desire of the Wilkes County Board of Commissioners to insure an expeditious review of all maps and plats as required by G.S. 47-30.2 (a) before they are presented to the Register of Deeds for recording.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that all previous inconsistent resolutions are repealed, and that effective February 7, 2017, Mr. Edward Barnes, Director of Planning, Mr.

Duncan Cavanaugh, Planner, Mr. Richard Brown, Senior Property Mapper and Mr. Mike Moretz, GIS Administrator are hereby appointed to perform all responsibilities as required for Review Officer under the appropriate North Carolina General Statutes.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that a copy of this resolution designating the Review Officers be recorded in the Wilkes County Register of Deeds Office and indexed in the grantor index in the name of the review officers.

Adopted this the 7th day of February 2017.

*Chairman
Wilkes County Board of Commissioners*

*Sarah Call
Clerk to the Board*

TAX DEPARTMENT:

1. 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 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 \$33,249,452.75 has been billed and \$29,575,274.49 has been collected. They have collected 89% and 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.

Vice Chairman Blevins asked if the statute requires this to be advertised in the local paper. Mr. Hamilton replied yes, any lien on real property has to be advertised in the paper. Vice Chairman Blevins asked if it was expensive to advertise. Mr. Hamilton replied no because there is a fee associated with it, so the tax payer pays a \$5.00 fee that covers the cost. Chairman Blevins asked if once the notice is sent out that they are going to be advertised do a lot of folks come in and pay them. Mr. Hamilton replied yes and the last week before the advertisement is very busy.

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 Gary D. Blevins and unanimously approved.

2. TAX RELEASES – COLLECTIONS – Alex Hamilton, Tax Administrator asked the Board to approve tax releases for collections in the amount of \$92.66. Mr. Hamilton said this is due to bankruptcy.

Commissioner David Gambill 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 listings in the amount of \$2,575.91.

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

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

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES – UPDATE – Chairman Minton recognized John Blevins, DSS Director. Mr. Blevins briefly went over the monthly caseload report for December. He next went over the Foster Care financial report, Adoption Services financial report, Child Development and Subsidized Child Care financial reports. He also went over the CPS Foster Care monthly report for December.

Vice Chairman Blevins stated the Board has discussed many times that too many kids are being placed outside the County and talked about ways to help resolve it, but is there no answer on how to increase the number of kids that stay in the County. Mr. John Blevins said usually there are three locations kids end up. Kinship placement, and this is what they try to do first if they can find someone that is appropriate. The next is the regular family foster homes, or places like Ebenezer's. The last is facilities. He added it's a tough job to be a foster parent, it is a calling. Mr. Blevins said getting people willing and able to do this is difficult, but it can be truly rewarding to help a child. He said by keeping them here they can stay at the school they are used to, which helps and, the hope is always to reunite the child with their family.

Commissioner Settle ask per capita where does Wilkes stand in regards to foster homes. Mr. Blevins said they are low, it's are a fairly large county and there are 20 + homes and it has dropped, last year there were well over 30. Vice Chairman Blevins ask what other counties are doing that Wilkes is not. Mr. Blevins replied they have billboards as other counties, they go out and speak to groups, and it's hard to get people to want to do this. It is a hard job and all counties struggle with this, it not just a Wilkes problem, but the number has dropped this year. Mr. Blevins said the foster care numbers have increased statewide not just in Wilkes. He added they have a new supervisor in this unit and they hope she has some new ideas and she has been an adoption social worker so she has experience in this area as well.

Commissioner Gambill asked if the other counties pay more than Wilkes to the foster families. Mr. Blevins replied it's about the same. Commissioner Gambill replied there are many folks that want to do this, but can't afford to with the pay they get. Mr. Blevins said Wilkes pays \$50.00 more than most and is on the better end of the pay for foster families statewide. Vice Chairman Blevins asked if the kids placed outside the county are mostly in private homes. Mr. Blevins

replied no, mostly in facilities. Vice Chairman Blevins added the county may benefit by expanding current facilities in Wilkes or creating another one, due to travel time and other advantages. Commissioner Settle asked the pay for foster families per child. Mr. Blevins replied it is \$400+ for age 0 to 5, increases to about \$580 for the next age group, then goes to \$634 for age 13 and up, and the County pays \$50 on top of this. Mr. Blevins added they always look inside the county for placement first if kinship is not an option. Commissioner Gambill asked if Ebenezer Homes are compared to the therapeutic foster homes, would this qualify for the same placements or how much difference are the payment for this placement. Mr. Blevins said yes the child's condition makes a difference, for example, if they are leveled for mental health needs or special needs they normally have to be in a facility. In some cases they cannot be placed in the county due to their special needs and have to be placed outside the county and there are different reimbursement for this, such as Medicaid benefits.

Commissioner Elmore said it is very interesting that a foster home is paid \$450 per child, but a facility is paid about \$3,000 per month. Mr. Blevins agreed and added if the child requires the highest level of care at a facility the cost is over \$4,000. The Board discussed this is something they need to look into and address. Mr. Blevins said he has heard some counties run their own facilities. The Board asked for more information on this. Mr. Blevins replied he will get more information for them.

Mr. Blevins said the last item in the packet is the audit report. Chairman Minton thanked Mr. Blevins and added it was a great report. Mr. Blevins said he was very proud of these folks they worked hard and did a great job. He briefly went over the key findings and Wilkes was the best of all 10 counties for accuracy and timeliness. Mr. Blevins noted it was good to see they mentioned the training as there is not any formal training, this report said the State needed to provide more training and address staffing levels. He mentioned a footnote in the report that said they tested Wilkes twice since the error rate was lower than all others to make sure it was correct and the findings were the same the second time. Mr. Blevins said the feds want a 3% error rate or less and most counties were over, but Wilkes was 1.2% and well under what is required. Vice Chairman Blevins stated even those that met the criteria will be punished just like the ones that didn't. Mr. Blevins said that is correct, they all are in the same boat together. He said the report stated a lack of effective guidance from the state and there are inconsistencies across all 100 counties.

Mr. Blevins said the next page includes staffing levels and number of applications processed. He stated Wilkes is right in the middle at 5th which is a good place to be. Mr. Blevins said this tells him they are where they need to be, they don't have too little or too many. Vice Chairman Blevins added Mecklenburg has 10 times as many applications, but 15 times as many employees. Mr. Blevins agreed and noted their error rate is also very high. He said it seems to be that they are too large to manage. Mr. Blevins said they have received many calls asking how they did this. He said he told them there is no magic formula, they did this because of hard work and because the County Commissioners are supportive of their agency. The Board gave them workers when they needed them. This makes a difference. The staffing needs to be right and it is in Wilkes. Mr. Blevins said you don't want them to have nothing to do, but can't overwork them either. He said their size is also important, they are big enough to have people that have

time to do the quality assurance, which is not the case in the smaller counties. They are not so big like Mecklenburg, that you can't get your arms around it. Mr. Blevins stated in the end it is the people that work there. They are good quality people that want it right and do it right. He added he is thankful to work with them.

Commissioner Settle stated he was in Raleigh and a Wake County Commissioner asked if he had seen the News and Observer and that Wilkes was number one on this report. He said the Board is very proud and thanked Mr. Blevins and all the employees for their work. Mr. Yates stated Mr. Blevins and his staff has been asked to speak at the N.C. Association Meeting on Medicaid and serve on a panel and talk about what they have done, which is on March 2, 2017.

The Board thanked Mr. Blevins for his update and the great job he and all his workers do every day.

NEW BUSINESS Commissioner Settle said there is some interest in the county in solar farms. He added there are a lot of them in the eastern part of the state and there are a lot of problems with them. It is not as good as everyone thinks. Commissioner Settle added he is not sure the High Impact Ordinance is where it needs to be. He said these are an eye sore. Chairman Minton asked what are the feelings of the Boards in the counties that have them at this time. Commissioner Settle replied they are very upset and it comes up during the Agricultural meetings. In Green County they said when they leave they push the rods into the ground. This is not leaving it like they found it, which is what they claim they do. He said they were giving Wilkes a warning. Mr. Yates stated he has asked Eddie Barnes to review the ordinance as soon as Mr. Triplett gets back to make sure Wilkes is where it needs to be. Chairman Minton agreed and said the County needs to comply with best practices in any ordinance especially if there is advanced notification from folks and make sure it is up to date and compliant.

ADJOURN - Motion was made by Vice Chairman Gary D. Blevins, seconded by Commissioner Keith Elmore and by unanimous vote adopted to adjourn the meeting of the Wilkes County Board of Commissioners at 10:45 A.M.

Sarah D. Call, Clerk

Gregory A. Minton, Chairman

WILKES COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

Approved: