

**MINUTES**  
**WILKES COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**  
**February 21, 2017**

**PUBLIC CONCERNS** – None

The Wilkes County Board of Commissioners met on Tuesday, February 21, 2017 at 7:02 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 said he wanted to thank Wilkes Extension – NC State Extension for hosting the meeting and Report to the People earlier at the Wilkes Agricultural Center. He added it was extremely informative and the Wilkes Ag Extension Center is a feather in the cap for Wilkes County. Chairman Minton added he would like to thank Bill Hanlin and the staff for hosting the Board tonight. At this time he called the meeting to order.

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

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE** – Chairman Greg Minton recognized Benjamin Flora from Troop 399, Millers Creek and said he will be leading the Pledge of Allegiance. He stated Benjamin Flora is in the 8<sup>th</sup> Grade at Miller Creek Middle School and will be observing the meeting tonight to complete one of the requirements for the Communications merit badge, which is the final badge he needs to be eligible for the rank of Eagle Scout. He is joined by his grandfather, Larry Baker. Benjamin Flora let the Pledge of Allegiance at this time.

**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 February 7, 2017.

**BUDGET AMENDMENTS/TRANSFERS** – Chairman Minton recognized Ann Absher, Health Director. Mrs. Absher summarized the grant funds received for Budget Amendment No. 16.

Motion was made by Vice Chairman Gary D. Blevins to approve Budget Amendment No. 16 (Health Programs – Health – Women’s Circle Grant - Diabetes – The Health Department received funds from The Health Foundation to provide mammograms to 10 uninsured women, as well as to pay for the reading of the mammograms. No County money involved. The Health Department received funds from The Health Foundation to provide cooking classes and advertising for the classes to Diabetes patients. No County money involved. WIC received funds from the State to enhance its ability to continue to provide supplemental nutritious food,

education, and referrals to health care for low-income persons during critical growth and development. No County money involved.) The motion was seconded by Commissioner Keith Elmore and unanimously approved.

**WILKES COUNTY ANIMAL SHELTER – DRUG PROTOCOL** – Chairman Greg Minton welcomed Junior Simmons, Animal Shelter Director. Mr. Simmons said first he would like to make a presentation to Dr. Steve Jackson who is out in the hallway at this time due to back spasms and not able to make it into the meeting room. Chairman Minton stated they will go to him and make the presentation. Mr. Simmons stated Dr. Steve Jackson is being presented a Civic Leadership Award from Wilkes County Animal Services for all he has done for the Animal Shelter, Animal Control, Humane Society, and all the many Boards and Committees he has served on for the past 20+ years. He thanked the Board and said it was a great pleasure and honor to work with Dr. Jackson. The Board thanked Dr. Jackson for his time and service to Wilkes County.

Mr. Simmons stated the Drug Protocol was set up with Dr. Jackson originally and now that he is retired they need a Veterinarian to sign off on the drug protocols, cleaning at the shelter, someone to go to with questions that has experience with diseases or parvo problems, to be a liaison, and discuss problems, and/or what they need to do. Mr. Simmons added the protocol is before the Board for consideration. He said Dr. Lillian Royal, who is in attendance tonight, has agreed to be the liaison and work with them for the Drug Protocol and he is thankful to have her. Mr. Simmons added she was not hesitate at all when asked to help in this role. She is in and out of the shelter a few times each week, fosters for the Humane Society and others at her expense, she does great work already. Mr. Simmons stated they are asking for the Boards approval of the protocol.

Commissioner Gambill said as a member of the Animal Control Board he would like to say thank you to Dr. Royal, she is doing the County a huge favor and they very much appreciate her stepping up and taking this role.

Commissioner Elmore stated at one time the shelter was putting down around 100 animals per week. He asked what is the numbers at the shelter at this time or is it basically a no kill facility. Mr. Simmons said for the adoptable animals Wilkes could be considered a non-kill by some standards, but they get in a lot of animals that are feral and never been handled by hand or have disease and are sick. He added these cannot be in the adoption pool; however of the adoptable animals they are at 80% - 85% adoption rate, which is what is required to be considered a no kill shelter. Mr. Simmons said he does not consider Wilkes a no kill, it is a little misleading to people, and they want everyone to know the facts. The adoptions are great and have increased, they deal with many rescues up north and as far as New York, he added. Mr. Simmons said they have rescues from Georgia, Florida, and up and down the East Coast as well. They come in and take the animals to non-profit shelters and in lots of cases have people waiting in line to adopt them. Commissioner Elmore said it's getting hard to get an animal at the shelter and there is a shortage sometimes. Mr. Simmons stated they have animals, but what happens is when the rescue comes through today they take all the puppies and some of the medium size dogs, and the next day there are only 2 adoptable dogs at the shelter. He added then the next day they have 15

and then the shelter is full again, it runs a vicious cycle. The rescues come through regularly and pick them up by the van loads, it is working very well, he noted.

Commissioner David Gambill made a motion to approve the Wilkes County Animal Shelter Drug Protocol, as presented. Motion was seconded by Commissioner Eddie Settle and unanimously approved.

The Board thanked Mr. Simmons.

**SET BUDGET RETREAT** – County Manager John Yates asked the Board if they would like to set a Budget Retreat on the proposed 2017-2018 Wilkes County Budget for Thursday, March 16, 2017 at 6:30 P.M., with dinner at 5:30 PM at the Wilkes County Agricultural Center located at 416 Executive Drive, Wilkesboro, NC 28697. After discussion the Board decided to move the Budget Retreat to Tuesday, March 14, 2017 due to a conflict.

Commissioner David Gambill made a motion to set a Budget Retreat for Tuesday, March 14, 2017 at 6:30 P.M., with dinner at 5:30 P.M. at the Wilkes County Agricultural Center located at 416 Executive Drive, Wilkesboro, NC 28697. The motion was seconded by Vice Chairman Gary D. Blevins and unanimously approved.

**WILKES COUNTY LANDFILL – FARM LAND LEASE** – Chairman Minton recognized Tony Triplett, County Attorney. Mr. Triplett stated this matter comes up every 3-years and it is to lease the 33 acres near the Landfill. He stated this is basically buffer land it is part of the landfill that is across highway 268 on the south side of 268 between 268 and the Yadkin River. He stated the lease expired January 31<sup>st</sup> of this year and typically a notice is run for solicitations of bids for lease of cropland and the highest bid is taken. Mr. Triplett said if the Board wants to move forward all the Board is doing tonight is the authorize to advertise for bids; it is the same notice they put in the paper last time; the bids go to John Yates; at the end of the bid period the highest bid comes back to Board at the next meeting. The Board can accept it at that time or do something different, he added.

Commissioner Settle asked if he had talked with the farmers and if they are good with 3-years or would 1-year be more competitive. Mr. Triplett replied they have had request before for a 3-year term and a renewal built in. He stated the Board has never done that, they wanted it to come back every 3-years. Mr. Triplett said the Board can do a longer or shorter term if that is the desire. Mr. Kent Brandon, Landfill Director said no-one has asked him for a longer or shorter term. Commissioner Settle stated the price of corn is going to change year to year, at this time it is down. Commissioner Gambill said the lease changed hands last time it was renewed. Mr. Triplett said no one has wanted to lock in for longer than 3-years, but have asked for a renewal, the Board has never approved this. Commissioner Settle noted 3-years is a good lease for corn.

Commissioner Elmore added 3-years seems reasonable, if they prep the land and invest in fertilizer this seems reasonable for their investment. Vice Chairman Blevins said the condition of this property does not require a lot of prep at this time. He asked the annual amount of the lease currently. Mr. Triplett replied the current lease is \$4,199.91. Commissioner Settle asked

the number or acres. Vice Chairman Blevins replied 33 acres, which is more than \$100 per acre and may be tough to get this again. Commissioner Elmore added this is the fair way to do it.

Commissioner Keith Elmore made a motion to publish notice of solicitation of bids for a lease of approximately 33 acres of cropland owned by the County, between Highway 268 East and the Yadkin River across from the landfill in Roaring River, with a lease term of three years to commence March 1, 2017, and to run through February 29, 2020, as presented at tonight's meeting. Motion was seconded by Vice Chairman Gary D. Blevins and unanimously adopted.

**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 Statute to consult with the Board's attorney to protect the attorney-client privilege, to consult with and give instructions to the Board's attorney with respect to one or more potential judicial or administrative actions; and 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 consider the qualifications, competence, performance, character, fitness, conditions of appointment, or conditions of initial employment of an individual public officer or employee or prospective public officer or employee, known as the personnel exception. The motion was seconded by Commissioner David Gambill and unanimously approved.

Motion was made by Vice Chairman Gary D. Blevins, seconded by Commissioner David Gambill 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 Gary D. Blevins, seconded by Commissioner David Gambill and by unanimous vote adopted to adjourn the meeting of the Wilkes County Board of Commissioners at 9:45 P. M.

Sarah D. Call, Clerk

Gregory A. Minton, Chairman

WILKES COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

Approved: