

MINUTES
WILKES COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
March 21, 2017

PUBLIC CONCERNS – None

The Wilkes County Board of Commissioners met on Tuesday, March 21, 2017 at 7:00 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 Minton welcomed everyone and called the meeting to order.

INVOCATION – Commissioner David Gambill led the Invocation.

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

Chairman Minton stated item F. will be removed from the Agenda with the consent from the Board, which was given.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES – Motion was made by Commissioner Keith Elmore, seconded by Vice Chairman Gary D. Blevins and unanimously adopted to approve the Minutes of the Board meeting held on March 7, 2017.

WAKE FOREST BAPTIST HEALTH – WILKES REGIONAL MEDICAL CENTER – TRANSITION – UPDATE – Chairman Minton recognized and thanked Mr. J. Gene Faile, President/CEO Wilkes Regional Medical Center. Mr. Faile stated as everyone knows they are transitioning to Wake Forest Baptist and there is a lot of excitement about this. He added tonight he wants to provide a quick update on the last 10-years, where they have come from and go through some accomplishments during this time. Mr. Faile said at the end there will be an update on where they are with the transition to Wake Forest Baptist. At this time he went over the accomplishments since 2008: First is many new physicians one of which Dr. Steven Anderson who is the busiest Orthopedic Surgeon in the state, with more on the way. Next he went through the new and expanded services since 2008: Wilkes Regional Surgical Services, opened 2008; Wilkes Regional Family Medicine started 2008; Orthopedic Specialist of Wilkes opened 2009; Wilkes Regional Gastroenterology opened 2010; Urgent Care of West Park opened 2010; Wilkes Family Health Center joined Wilkes Regional in 2010; Heart Center of Wilkes opened 2012; Wilkes Regional Medical Center opened a new and expanded Emergency Department in 2013; Inpatient Dialysis Program started 2013; Wound Healing Center of Wilkes opened 2013; West Wilkes Family Medicine opened 2014; Rock Creek Family Medicine opened 2015; and Wilkes Regional ENT opened 2016.

Mr. Faile next went over their service excellence improvement program, which has been a top priority for Wilkes Regional. He also quickly went over some of the Awards they have won since 2008. The last slide was the growth and financial improvement FY 2008- FY 2016 and shown below:

**Yesterday vs. Today: FY2008 - FY2016
 Growth and Financial Improvement**

	FY2008	FY2016	Amount Change	% Change
Total Admissions/Deliveries	5,123	6,300	1,177	22.9% ↑
Total ED Visits	31,516	34,355	2,839	9% ↑
Total OR Cases	3,726	4,074	348	9.3% ↑
Days Cash on Hand	38	88.4	50.4	132% ↑
Total Cash	\$7,505,786	\$21,242,332	\$13,736,546	183% ↑
WPN Providers	3	28	25	↑
Net Operating Revenue	\$65,578,060	\$94,509,412	\$28,931,352	44.1% ↑
Operating Cash Flow Margin	(\$1,749,356)	\$7,880,151	\$9,629,507	550% ↑
Urgent Care Visits	0	6,049		↑
Employee Commitment Score (Percentile Ranking)	13 %tile	88 %tile		576% ↑

Mr. Faile stated the transition is scheduled for July 1, 2017 and everything is a go. He added one of the biggest challengers is the new EPIC system which is a medical records system from Baptist. This means if anyone comes to Wilkes Regional or one of their doctors and then goes to Baptist they can press a button and the medical record will be at Baptist for the patient. Mr. Faile said they have to train their 700+ employees to use this system by July. He added there may be a name change and this will be shared with everyone soon. Mr. Faile said there will be a picnic for the community in mid-July, the date and information will be sent to the Board. He added the transition is going very well with employees and they are right on target. Mr. Faile said Wilkes Regional has come a long way and in his opinion they have the best community hospital in the state. He added partnering with Baptist will allow them to bring doctors and services to Wilkes that others can't bring in their community. Mr. Faile thanked the Board for their time and asked if there were any questions.

Commissioner Elmore asked if the EPIC system would work with the EMS system to check patients' history and information. Mr. Faile said he is not sure, but will get back on this it is a good question. Vice Chairman Blevins asked what year Mr. Faile came on board as CEO. Mr. Faile replied 2008. Vice Chairman Blevins added they have a great staff, but the progress Mr. Faile has made, the fine job, and his leadership has been outstanding. They are glad he will be here with the Baptist transition and the entire County is very proud of this partnership. Mr. Faile stated a few weekends ago his wife had a reaction to medication and he had to call 911 for the first time. He said there are no better responders or EMS than in Wilkes County. Mr. Faile

thanked the Board for this as he was very worried, but they did a great job, she was transported to the Hospital and all ended well. As a family or a patient calling EMS you see things differently after that and he is very appreciative of them. Commissioner Settle said he appreciates the face Mr. Faile puts on through the hospital and his personal life both, people are always watching someone in his position, he is in the spotlight and does a great job.

The Board thanked Mr. Faile.

TOWN OF RONDA – JOINT RESOLUTION – EXTENSION OF THE RONDA FIRE TAX DISTRICT – County Attorney Tony Triplett stated in the packet is a letter received from the Town of Ronda officially asking the Board to agree to incorporate the municipal limits of Ronda into the Ronda Fire Tax District. He added this can be done, currently the Ronda Fire Tax does not apply within the municipal limits because they are not technically in the fire district. Mr. Triplett said if both the Town and County agree by Resolution to do this it can happen. He added this is the request, the Town of Ronda approved the Resolution at their meeting on March 14, 2017 and he has received two executed originals. He said if approved the Resolution will be effective July 1, 2017 and all property within the municipal limits of Ronda will be brought into the Ronda Fire Tax District. The current Ronda Fire Tax District Rate of 10¢ will begin for these folks as of this date, he added.

Commissioner Settle asked if there has been any indication from Ronda that they are going to cut their tax rate from 40¢ to 30¢. Mr. Triplett and Mr. Yates both responded they have not heard this from Ronda. Commissioner Settle said this will be a tax increase for the citizens within the Town and they will now have to pay fire tax that they didn't have to pay before, plus the 40¢ Town of Ronda tax. Mr. Triplett replied yes unless they reduce their tax rate. Vice Chairman Blevins said it was his understanding Ronda is cutting their tax rate. Commissioner Settle asked if they were cutting their tax 10¢. Chairman Minton replied the number was not mentioned, only that they would cut their rate, and this is his greatest concern about approving this Resolution. He stated they will be absorbing a 10¢ tax increase which he conveyed to the Ronda Mayor. The Mayor assured him the Ronda tax rate would go down, but the Mayor would not convey how much it would go down, he added. Commissioner Settle stated these folks have to have fire protection. Chairman Minton agreed. Commissioner Settle added the Board does not have a choice.

Commissioner Elmore said it is his understanding that the Ronda Fire Department is in favor of this and essentially they will be doing the same as with all the other Voluntary Fire Departments throughout the county. Chairman Minton agreed. Commissioner Elmore added this is a Ronda issue if they drop the tax rate or do not drop the tax. Commissioner Settle agreed it is a Ronda issue, but it will look like a county issue when these folks get their tax bill. Vice Chairman Blevins added it will be made clear that it is not a county tax increase. He added he thinks that was the understanding and this is for the benefit of the Fire Department and the folks who live in Ronda. Vice Chairman Blevins said if the Ronda Board does not reduce the taxes the folks in Ronda can change the governing body in their election. He added this Board has to do what is best for the Fire Department and citizens of Ronda and also the administrative burden on such a

small Town. Commissioner Settle stated he wants the world to know the Wilkes County Board of Commissioners did not increase their taxes.

Vice Chairman Gary D. Blevins made a motion to approve the Joint Resolution for the Extension of the Ronda Fire Tax District, as presented. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Keith Elmore. Voting on the motion:

Ayes: Chairman Greg Minton
Vice Chairman Gary D. Blevins
Commissioner Keith Elmore
Commissioner Eddie Settle

Nays: Commissioner David Gambill

Chairman Minton stated the motion carries. Commissioners Gambill said he is opposed and does not believe they will lower their tax rate.

*JOINT RESOLUTION
BY AND BETWEEN THE COUNTY OF WILKES
AND THE TOWN OF RONDA FOR EXTENSION
OF THE RONDA FIRE TAX DISTRICT*

WHEREAS, the Ronda Fire Tax District is a lawfully established rural fire protection district under the provisions of Chapter 69 of the North Carolina General Statutes, with its most recent description being set forth and approved by action of the Wilkes County Board of Commissioners at its regular meeting of April 17, 2007; and

WHEREAS, the Ronda Fire Tax District, as established and described as hereinabove noted, adjoins but does not currently include any portion of the territory lying within the corporate limits of the Town of Ronda; and

WHEREAS, none of the territory lying within the corporate limits of the Town of Ronda is currently within a rural fire protection district; and

WHEREAS, the Town of Ronda through its Mayor and Board of Commissioners has requested, and the County of Wilkes through its Board of Commissioners has agreed, to extend the boundaries of the Ronda Fire Tax District to include all territory lying within the corporate limits of the Town of Ronda; and

WHEREAS, N.C.G.S. §69-25.11(5) permits the area of any fire protection district to be increased by including within the boundaries of the district any adjoining territory lying within the corporate limits of a town if the territory is not already included within a fire protection district, provided both the town's governing body and the county commissioners of the county in which the fire protection district is located all agree by resolution to such inclusion; and

WHEREAS, the Town of Ronda, through its Mayor and Board of Commissioners, and the County of Wilkes, through its Board of Commissioners, desire to adopt this Resolution pursuant to the requirements of N.C.G.S. §69-25.11(5) in order to extend the boundaries of the Ronda Fire Tax District to include all territory lying within the corporate limits of the Town of Ronda;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, BY THE TOWN OF RONDA AND THE COUNTY OF WILKES, pursuant to the requirements of N.C.G.S. §69-25.11(5), that the boundaries of the Ronda Fire Tax District are hereby extended to include all territory lying within the corporate limits of the Town of Ronda; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that this Resolution shall take effect as of July 1, 2017, the same being the first day of the 2017-2018 fiscal year for the Town of Ronda and the County of Wilkes; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Mayor of the Town of Ronda is hereby authorized to execute this Resolution on behalf of the Town of Ronda, and the Chairman of the Wilkes County Board of Commissioners is authorized to execute this Resolution on behalf of the County of Wilkes.

ADOPTED by the Town of Ronda this the _____ day of March, 2017.

TOWN OF RONDA:

By: _____
Victor Varela, Mayor
Town of Ronda

ATTEST:

Talesa Carter, Clerk

ADOPTED by the County of Wilkes this the _____ day of March, 2017.

WILKES COUNTY

By: _____
G. A. Minton, Chairman
Wilkes County Board of Commissioners

ATTEST:

Sarah Call, Clerk

TOWN OF WILKESBORO:

1. SALE OF CJPP BUILDING – County Attorney Tony Triplett stated this has been on the agenda before and has been discussed for some time. He said if the Board wishes to proceed there is a memo included in the packets with the background. Mr. Triplett said the proposal is for the county to sale its $\frac{3}{4}$ undivided interest in the CJPP Building to the Town of

Wilkesboro. He added it was surveyed last year and also went through the Towns' subdivision regulations approval process and was approved. Mr. Triplett said this property was divided in two tracts, No. 1 is the parking lot across the street, and No. 2 is the CJPP Building and alley behind it. The proposal is to sell tract 2 and the Town already owns a ¼ interest. Mr. Triplett said the proposed purchase price is \$45K based on a total value of \$60K with the ¾ value being \$45K. The Board is authorized to do this if they wish with no Public Hearing and no advertisement required, the statutes allow for this. Mr. Triplett said he would like to recognize the officials at the meeting from the Town of Wilkesboro: Mayor Mike Inscore, Councilman Russ Ferree, and Town Manager, Ken Noland and they are glad to have them here tonight.

Commissioner Elmore stated he hoped by doing this they can get some goodwill and possible get the Town to take the streets over which would be much appreciated. Mayor Inscore said he hopes there has always been goodwill between the two governmental entities, he sure thinks there has. He added as he looks at the Board he can certainly say they have lots of confidants in this Board now and will have in the future. Mayor Inscore said they always give everyone the benefit of the doubt and share their plans, as they have with this Board on the plans for both sites. He stated they think it will add to their tax value and the county's tax value, and also add sales tax. Mayor Inscore said they are in the process of spending \$2 million downtown in a 2 block area and this is the first of three phases. The more vacant buildings they can put their hands on, the greater the diversification of businesses they can bring into Wilkesboro, with the goal being not just diversifications of business. He added the ultimate goal is to repopulate the Town with residence and a variety of diversification and economic income. Mayor Inscore said this will benefit everyone and wanted to remind the Board on the foreseeable horizon they also have Samaritan's Purse that will be breaking ground off Edgewood Road. He added this is another opportunity for everyone to benefit throughout Wilkes, and good things are ahead. Mayor Inscore said he congratulated the Board on this action and speaking with one voice and thanked the Board on behalf of the Town of Wilkesboro.

Vice Chairman Gary D. Blevins made a motion to sell the County's three-fourths undivided interest in the CJPP building in Wilkesboro, shown as Tract 2 on that plat prepared by Micah Sidden in 2016 and recorded in Plat Book 11, Page 514, Wilkes County Registry, to the Town of Wilkesboro for the sum of \$45,000.00, pursuant to G.S. §160A-274, as presented. The motion was seconded by Commissioner David Gambill and unanimously approved.

2. CONVEYANCE OF OLD JAIL PROPERTY – Mr. Triplett said the next item is the conveyance of the old jail property. He added the proposal is to convey the old jail at no cost. He added it has been surveyed and all information is in the packets if the Board wishes to proceed. Vice Chairman Blevins stated the county is not in the property development business unless it's a county building and they knew the Town had a big project going on downtown from the beginning and wanted to expedite this, but had some legal issues with property lines. He added the Board wanted to make the transactions before the Town gets any further in to the project so if demolition work is to be done it can be completed before new pavement or finish work is completed. Vice Chairman Blevins said they hope this property can be placed back on the tax books with downtown development and the Town is more capable of doing this than the county. Mayor Inscore stated several years ago a team of MPA students' from UNC Chapel Hill

SOG presented an analysis of the Old Jail property and the highest and best use of this property. He said potentially it can be a mixed use, with the ground floor as retail and professional office parcels and the upper floors as condos. Mayor Inscore said there is a local developer that is very interested in taking this building and turning it into just this type of property. He added they expect this to become a reality. Once again he said he would like to thank the Board for their action. Commissioner Settle stated the Mayor used one important word, growth, and if they can expand the tax base their job is easy and this is one way to do it. He said he was at EDC last week and discussing there have been about 1,000 jobs created in Wilkes in the last 3+years. With Samaritan's Purse coming he has heard possible 550 to 850 more jobs and if they all work together they can grow the tax base for all. Mayor Inscore agreed and added this can help create a robust economy and they don't want these folks to live in Boone they want them to live in Wilkes and spend their money locally. He added he thinks their average income will be impressive and create a lot of opportunity. Chairman Minton thanked Mayor Inscore.

Commissioner David Gambill made a motion to convey the Old Jail property, consisting of 36,066 sq. ft. directly behind the Old Courthouse in Wilkesboro as surveyed by Micah Sidden in 2016, to the Town of Wilkesboro, at no charge, pursuant to G.S. §160A-274, as presented. The motion was seconded by Vice Chairman Gary D. Blevins and unanimously approved.

MORATORIUM UNDER HIGH IMPACT LAND USE ORDINANCE – SET PUBLIC HEARING – Mr. Triplett said there has been some discussion by the Board to possibly consider amendment to the High Impact Land Use Ordinance passed by the County in 2004. He added in anticipation of that, a proposal has been made to adopt a moratorium on any further issuance of High Impact Land Use permits while they work on amendments to the ordinance. Mr. Triplett said virtually no permits have been issued on this Ordinance since conception in 2004. He added there has been some recent interest and one way to temporally suspend issuance of permits is to adopt a moratorium. Mr. Triplett said any amendments have to go through the Planning Board and this gives time for that Board and this one to make their issues known. The Board of Commissioners ultimately decide what they want to do with the High Impact Land Use Ordinance. He added under the statues that governs moratoriums this Board can adopt one for up to 60-days on an action to set a Public Hearing with 7-days' notice. Mr. Triplett said that can be extended if needed. This has to be advertised for at least 7-days prior and at the next meeting they must offer the public time to comment. Then the Board can decide if they want to adopt the moratorium at that time. Vice Chairman Blevins suggested April 4, 2017 at 9:50 AM.

Chairman Minton said this is to allow the Panning Board to study, do more research and come back with a recommendation. Mr. Triplett replied that is correct this Board cannot amend the High Impact Land Use Ordinance until the received a recommendation from the Planning Board. He added this Board doesn't have to follow it, but must receive a recommendation from them. Vice Chairman Blevins said he hopes this is resolved within 60-days and no extension is needed so business interested in coming to Wilkes are not confused or have misconceptions about what they are doing. He added they urge the Planning Board to expedite any discussions and amendment and this gives them a chance to take a look at the Ordinance.

Commissioner Elmore asked if the Planning Board is asking for this. Mr. Triplett replied no. The recommendation for the moratorium is not coming from the Planning Board. He said the Planning Board did discuss at their December meeting possible amendments to the Ordinance. This is to offer an opportunity for the Board of Commissioners to work with the Planning Board on the amendments they wish to make or not make. Commissioner Settle stated they did ask for amendments to the Ordinance. Mr. Triplett replied yes they did and the Planning Board will meet on Monday, March 27, 2017. Commissioner Settle said 60-days would give them time for due-diligence. Mr. Triplett replied yes he thinks it will and it is on their agenda for that meeting.

Commissioner Eddie Settle made a motion to set a public hearing for Tuesday, April 4, 2017, at 9:50 a.m., in the Commissioners' Meeting Room at the County Office Building, pursuant to G.S. §153A-340(h), for comment on a proposed 60-day moratorium on issuance of permits under the Wilkes County High Impact Land Use Ordinance, as presented. Motion was seconded by Vice Chairman Gary D. Blevins and unanimously approved.

HIGH COUNTRY COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS – WILKES COUNTY ADULT CARE HOME COMMUNITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE – BOARD APPOINTMENT – County Manager John Yates stated he had received a letter from Stevie John, Regional Ombudsman, stating the appointment term for Jean Brown to the Wilkes County Adult Care Home Community Advisory Committee will expire February 4, 2017. He stated Ms. Brown has indicated her desire to be reappointed for an additional three-year term and a Board Application has been received. It is for the Board's consideration.

Vice Chairman Gary D. Blevins made a motion to reappoint Ms. Jean Brown to serve on the Wilkes County Adult Care Community Advisory Committee for additional three-year term as requested. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Eddie Settle and unanimously approved.

PURCHASING DEPARTMENT – SALE OF SURPLUS INVENTORY – County Manager John Yates stated the Wilkes County Purchasing Department is requesting approval from the Wilkes County Board of Commissioners to sale the following surplus inventory using electronic auction method:

Seven (7) used 12" Contractors Levels. Levels have been replaced with newer models. The levels are from the Health Department.

Vice Chairman Gary D. Blevins made a motion to approve the sale of surplus inventory using the electronic auction method govdeals.com as requested. The motion was seconded by Commissioner David Gambill and unanimously approved.

NEW BUSINESS:

Commissioner David Gambill said he would like to recognize another Elected Official in attendance, Wilkes County Register of Deeds, Misty Smithey. He added she has attended several meetings and is doing a good job. The Board welcomed and thanked Mrs. Smithey.

Commissioner Eddie Settle stated he appreciates what John Yates has done at the Courthouse. He added there has been a lot of time and work spent and he believes it is zipped up and dry. Commissioner Settle added Mr. Yates has bent over backwards to get this done and he appreciates him for a job well done. Mr. Yates thanked the Board and said they will continue to work with everyone at the Courthouse. Commissioner Settle said when he was Chairman they went over there and met with them and it was a tough meeting and Mr. Yates came back and has taken good care of things. He added he is very proud of the job he has done.

Vice Chairman Blevins said there was a meeting yesterday and they were talking about the process they went through when they moved the Federal employees from the old Federal Building to the Ag Center. He stated Mr. Yates showed tremendous patience and skill during that time as well, when some said they would have given up. Mr. Yates stated Keith Walsh was a lot of help in both of these matters as well.

CLOSED SESSION – Motion was made by Vice Chairman Gary D. Blevins to go into closed session 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; and 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. The motion was seconded by Commissioner David Gambill and unanimously approved.

Motion was made by Vice Chairman Gary D. Blevins, seconded by Commissioner Eddie Settle 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 Eddie Settle and by unanimous vote adopted to adjourn the meeting of the Wilkes County Board of Commissioners at 8:50 P. M.

Sarah D. Call, Clerk

Gregory A. Minton, Chairman

WILKES COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

Approved: