

MINUTES
WILKES COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
April 3, 2018

The Wilkes County Board of Commissioners met on Tuesday, April 3, 2018 at 10:04 A.M. with the following members present: Chairman Gary D. Blevins, Vice Chairman Eddie Settle, Commissioner Keith Elmore, Commissioner David Gambill, and Commissioner Greg Minton.

Also present for the meeting were Tony Triplett, County Attorney; John Yates, County Manager; and Sarah Call, Clerk to the Board.

Chairman Gary D. Blevins welcomed everyone and called the meeting to order.

INVOCATION – Commissioner David Gambill led the Invocation.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE – Chairman Gary D. Blevins led the Pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES – Motion was made by Vice Chairman Eddie Settle, seconded by Commissioner Keith Elmore and unanimously adopted to approve the Minutes of the Board meeting held on March 9, 2018.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES – Motion was made by Commissioner Greg Minton, seconded by Commissioner David Gambill and unanimously adopted to approve the Minutes of the Board Meeting held on March 20, 2018.

RESOLUTION – HIGH COUNTRY REGIONAL HAZARD MITIGATION PLAN – Chairman Blevins welcomed and recognized Nathan Slaughter, Hazard Mitigation Department Manager ESP Associates and Suzanne Hamby, Emergency Coordinator. Mr. Slaughter thanked the Board and said the Regional Hazard Mitigation Plan is a requirement of FEMA. This allows Wilkes County and the municipalities in Wilkes to remain eligible for certain types of disaster funding, which are state and federal funds. He added this was put together over one year with participation from Allegheny, Wilkes, Watauga, and Ashe Counties. Mr. Slaughter stated all the other counties and municipalities have adopted the plan. Once adopted this plan is good for 5 years and insures all are eligible for FEMA disaster recovery money, he added.

Commissioner Elmore stated it is his understanding the director of FEMA is from Granite Falls. Mr. Slaughter replied yes, Brock Long, and he is a good guy. Chairman Blevins added he spoke at the National Conference recently. Commissioner Elmore added yes and did a very good job. Mr. Slaughter stated Mr. Long is very supportive of the Hazard Mitigation funding and has helped to increase what is available. Vice Chairman Settle asked if he was newly appointed. Mr. Slaughter replied he came in just before the flooding in Texas, he was the State Emergency Director for Alabama for 18 months then did consulting work, now he is the FEMA Director. Chairman Blevins stated there were several disasters soon after he was appointed and he did a

good job and is well qualified. Mr. Slaughter agreed and added he had many things in his first year and did well with all of them.

Mr. Slaughter said they are requesting approval of the Resolution that states Wilkes has adopted the plan and it will be sent to FEMA and assures the county will remain eligible for recovery money. Chairman Blevins stated the three towns have all passed the plan. Mr. Slaughter replied yes. Mr. Triplett stated Mr. Slaughter and Mrs. Hamby have both put in a lot of work to get it to this point and all the other counties and municipalities have already approved it. He said they wanted to wait until all three municipalities in Wilkes had passed it before it was brought to the Board for approval and they have. Mr. Slaughter said they met with Mr. Triplett and addressed his concerns and questions in the plan and made the changes requested.

Chairman Blevins asked if the current plan had expired and this is a renewal. Mr. Slaughter replied the previous version of the plan will expire May 2018. Chairman Blevins added the county has had their share of natural disasters including the recent tornado, which was an eye opener. Mr. Slaughter said that event didn't qualify for a Presidential disaster it was a State disaster and this plan is tied to that as well. If this plan had not been in place they would have been scrambling to do so. He added this plan ensured the two Towns received funds.

Commissioner Keith Elmore made a motion to adopt the Resolution for the High Country Regional Hazard Mitigation Plan, as presented. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Greg Minton and unanimously approved.

*RESOLUTION TO ADOPT THE
HIGH COUNTRY REGIONAL HAZARD MITIGATION PLAN*

WHEREAS, Wilkes County is vulnerable to an array of natural hazards that can cause loss of life and damages to public and private property; and

WHEREAS, Wilkes County desires to seek ways to mitigate situations that may aggravate such circumstances; and

WHEREAS, the development and implementation of a hazard mitigation plan can result in actions that reduce the long-term risk to life and property from natural hazards; and

WHEREAS, it is the intent of the Wilkes County Board of Commissioners to protect its citizens and property from the effects of natural hazards by preparing and maintaining a local hazard mitigation plan; and

WHEREAS, it is also the intent of the Wilkes County Board of Commissioners to fulfill its obligation under North Carolina General Statutes, Chapter 166A: North Carolina Emergency Management Act and Section 322: Mitigation Planning, of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act to remain eligible to receive state and federal assistance in the event of a declared disaster affecting the Wilkes County; and

WHEREAS, Wilkes County, in coordination with Alleghany County, Sparta, Ashe County, Lansing, Jefferson, West Jefferson, Watauga County, Beech Mountain, Blowing Rock, Boone, Seven Devils, North

Wilkesboro, Ronda and Wilkesboro has prepared a multi-jurisdictional hazard mitigation plan with input from the appropriate local and state officials;

WHEREAS, the North Carolina Division of Emergency Management and the Federal Emergency Management Agency have reviewed the High Country Regional Hazard Mitigation Plan for legislative compliance and have approved the plan pending the completion of local adoption procedures;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Board of Commissioners of Wilkes County hereby:

- 1. Adopts the High Country Regional Hazard Mitigation Plan; and*
- 2. Agrees to take such other official action as may be reasonably necessary to carry out the proposed actions of the Plan.*

Adopted on April 3, 2018.

WILKES COUNTY:

BY: _____

Gary D. Blevins, Chairman

Wilkes County Board of Commissioners

ATTEST:

Sarah Call, Clerk

APPALACHIAN REGIONAL LIBRARY – PRESENTATION – Chairman Blevins recognized and welcomed Jane Blackburn, Directory of Libraries and Julia Turpin, Wilkes County Librarian. Ms. Blackburn thanked the Board and stated they are here to ask for money, as they already know. At this time she presented a power point presentation to the Board.



•Ashe, Watauga, and Wilkes Counties signed an **Interlocal Agreement** in 1962 to form the Appalachian Regional Library. (Happy 56th birthday to us!)

•Title 7 of the NC Administrative Code, Chapter 2, Subchapter 1, sections 0301-0308, address regional libraries.

•The Interlocal Agreement stipulates that the budgets for each county "will include an agreed upon amount paid by each member county for the materials, salaries, and operating expenses."

The Value of a Regional Library System

In North Carolina, 12 library regions provide library services to 42 counties. The other 58 counties operate their own libraries.

A regional library benefits counties by **reducing the cost** of public library service for their citizens through:

• *Economies of Scale, Shared Costs, and Resource Sharing*

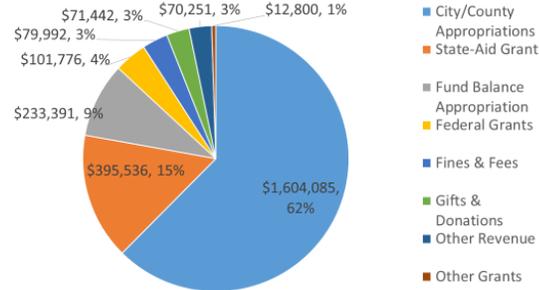
• *Administrative Services*

- Management
- Finances
- Personnel
- Information Technology

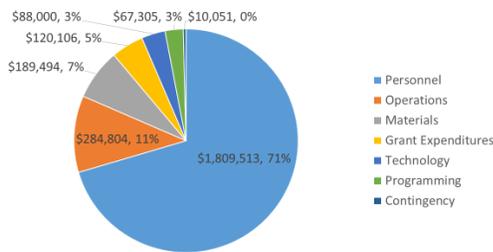


ARL's Value to its Community in Numbers
 (population of region 150,732 in 2016-2017)

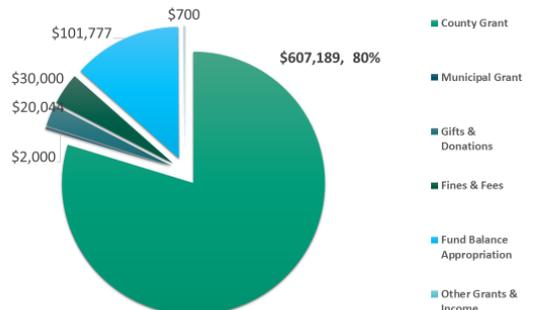
- 742,000 items checked out or viewed (nearly 5 per capita)
- 32,850 Program Attendees at 1,633 Programs
- 98,900 Computer and Wi-Fi Users
- 423,300 Bodies through the doors (nearly 3 visits per capita)



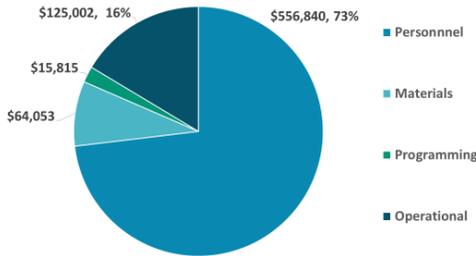
ARL's value to our communities



ARL's Current Revenues \$2,569,273



ARL's Current Expenses



Wilkes County Public Library's Current Revenues \$761,710

Why did ARL do a Compensation Study?
 Pre-Study ARL SWOT Analysis

- | | |
|---|---|
| <p>Main Strengths of ARL</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff Creativity Staff Work Ethic | <p>Main Weaknesses of ARL</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Low Salaries High Turnover Rate |
| <p>Major Opportunity for ARL</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bring Salaries Up to a Fair & Competitive Level | <p>Major Threat for ARL</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Decreasing Ability to Give Good Customer Service |

Wilkes County Public Library's Current Expenses \$761,710

Classification and Compensation Study

What did we hope to achieve with this study?

- Support for the Library's efforts to *attract and retain quality employees* by
 - Ensuring *internal equity and consistency* among similar positions regardless of location
 - Creating a salary plan that is *externally competitive* with comparable employers

The study's methodology

- Step 1. Project Initiation/Historical Review
- Step 2. Data Collection Step
- Step 3. Develop Classification System (internal equity)
- Step 4. Pay Plan Development (external competitiveness)
- Step 5. IMPLEMENTATION

The Study's Findings

- The Library's *salary levels are significantly lower* than the average salary rates paid in comparable regional library systems (benchmark organizations)
- The Library's *turnover rate is high* which is costly in service and cash.

Classification and Compensation Study

Classification and Compensation Study

Classification and Compensation Study

Survey Results

Band	Position	Minimum Salary		Maximum Salary		Appalachian Regional Library Information		Appalachian Regional Library Information	
		Min	Max	Min	Max	Min	Max	Diff	%
1	Library Page	\$2,010	\$2,250	\$2,250	\$3,000	\$2,010	\$2,250	\$2,010	100%
2	Library Aide	\$2,400	\$2,650	\$2,650	\$3,400	\$2,400	\$2,650	\$2,400	100%
3	Library Assistant	\$2,800	\$3,050	\$3,050	\$3,800	\$2,800	\$3,050	\$2,800	100%
4	Adult Services Assistant	\$3,200	\$3,450	\$3,450	\$4,200	\$3,200	\$3,450	\$3,200	100%
5	Collection Assistant	\$3,600	\$3,850	\$3,850	\$4,600	\$3,600	\$3,850	\$3,600	100%
6	Child Services Assistant	\$4,000	\$4,250	\$4,250	\$5,000	\$4,000	\$4,250	\$4,000	100%
7	Adult Services Specialist	\$4,400	\$4,650	\$4,650	\$5,400	\$4,400	\$4,650	\$4,400	100%
8	Assistant Collection Manager	\$4,800	\$5,050	\$5,050	\$5,800	\$4,800	\$5,050	\$4,800	100%
9	Child Services Specialist	\$5,200	\$5,450	\$5,450	\$6,200	\$5,200	\$5,450	\$5,200	100%
10	Reference Specialist	\$5,600	\$5,850	\$5,850	\$6,600	\$5,600	\$5,850	\$5,600	100%
11	Technical Services Specialist	\$6,000	\$6,250	\$6,250	\$7,000	\$6,000	\$6,250	\$6,000	100%
12	Child Services Specialist	\$6,400	\$6,650	\$6,650	\$7,400	\$6,400	\$6,650	\$6,400	100%
13	Library Manager	\$6,800	\$7,050	\$7,050	\$7,800	\$6,800	\$7,050	\$6,800	100%
14	Collection Manager	\$7,200	\$7,450	\$7,450	\$8,200	\$7,200	\$7,450	\$7,200	100%
15	Technical Services Manager	\$7,600	\$7,850	\$7,850	\$8,600	\$7,600	\$7,850	\$7,600	100%
16	Adult Services Librarian	\$8,000	\$8,250	\$8,250	\$9,000	\$8,000	\$8,250	\$8,000	100%
17	Reference Librarian	\$8,400	\$8,650	\$8,650	\$9,400	\$8,400	\$8,650	\$8,400	100%
18	Child Services Librarian	\$8,800	\$9,050	\$9,050	\$9,800	\$8,800	\$9,050	\$8,800	100%
19	Library Director	\$9,200	\$9,450	\$9,450	\$10,200	\$9,200	\$9,450	\$9,200	100%
20	Regional Director	\$9,600	\$9,850	\$9,850	\$10,600	\$9,600	\$9,850	\$9,600	100%
21	County Librarian	\$10,000	\$10,250	\$10,250	\$11,000	\$10,000	\$10,250	\$10,000	100%
22	Regional Director of Libraries	\$10,400	\$10,650	\$10,650	\$11,400	\$10,400	\$10,650	\$10,400	100%
Averages						\$8,841	\$9,181	\$8,841	100%
*Reflects communities who responded to the survey									

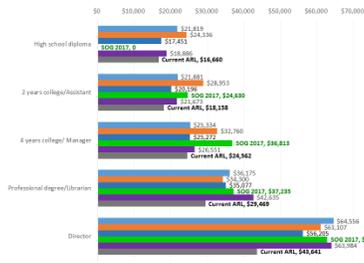
Salary Survey Benchmark Libraries and Systems

- Neuse Regional Library (Lenoir, Greene, Jones Counties)*
- Sandhill Regional Library System (Anson, Hoke, Montgomery, Moore, Richmond Counties)
- Northwest Regional Library (Allegheny, Stokes, Surry, Yadkin Counties)*
- Onslow County Public Library
- East Albemarle Regional Library (Cameron, Currituck, Dare, Pasquotank Counties)*
- Sheppard Memorial Library (Pitt County)*
- Randolph County Public Library*
- Alamance County Public Libraries*

Classification and Compensation Study

Classification and Compensation Study

State Library
Counties
Municipalities
Regions
VS.
School of Government
VS.
Springsted
VS.
ARL Pay Scale



Classification and Compensation Study

Current ARL Pay Scale

Salary Range			
Grade	Min	Mid	Max
1	\$15,392	\$20,030	\$24,668
2	\$16,660	\$22,422	\$28,184
3	\$18,761	\$26,064	\$33,967
4	\$24,656	\$35,326	\$45,996
5	\$27,050	\$38,835	\$50,621
6	\$29,469	\$42,347	\$55,225
7	\$34,412	\$50,412	\$64,412
8	\$43,641	\$60,582	\$77,523

Proposed ARL Pay Scale

Salary Range			
Grade	Min	Mid	Max
1	17,692.31	23,000.00	28,307.69
2	18,930.77	24,610.00	30,289.23
3	20,255.92	26,332.70	32,409.48
4	21,673.84	28,175.99	34,678.14
5	23,191.01	30,148.31	37,105.61
6	24,814.38	32,258.69	39,703.00
7	26,551.38	34,516.80	42,483.21
8	28,409.98	36,932.97	45,455.97
9	30,398.68	39,518.28	48,637.89
10	32,526.59	42,284.56	52,042.54
11	34,803.45	45,244.48	55,685.52
12	37,239.69	48,411.59	59,583.50
13	39,846.47	51,800.41	63,754.35
14	42,635.72	55,426.44	68,217.15
15	45,620.22	59,306.29	72,992.35
16	48,813.63	63,457.73	78,101.82
17	52,230.59	67,899.77	83,568.94
18	55,886.73	72,652.75	89,418.77
19	59,798.80	77,738.44	95,678.08
20	63,984.72	83,180.13	102,375.56

Classification and Compensation Study

Three Suggested Options for Funding a New Pay Scale

- Option 1 brings all those below grade to the minimum of the new recommended grade and provides nothing for those within or above grade.
- Option 2 brings all those under grade to the minimum of their new recommended grade and provides all those whose current salaries fall within grade a 2% increase (if any are below grade by less than 2%, they get a full 2% raise).
- Option 3 is Springsted's and the Regional Governing Board's recommended option. It brings employees into the new scale using a 'Years of Service' adjustment based on time with the library as benchmark for service length.

Classification and Compensation Study

Implementation Costs - Combined

Option 1 - Move to Min					
	# of Staff	Current Salary	Proposed Salary	Difference	% Increase
Totals	63	\$ 1,310,374.70	\$ 1,586,907.50	\$ 276,432.81	21.10%
Employee Below Min	54	\$ 936,862.84	\$ 1,213,295.65	\$ 276,432.81	29.51%
Employee Within Range	9	\$ 373,511.86	\$ 373,511.86	\$ -	-
Employee Above Max	0	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	-

Option 2 - Min or 2% increase					
	# of Staff	Current Salary	Proposed Salary	Difference	% Increase
Totals	63	\$ 1,310,374.70	\$ 1,493,981.98	\$ 183,607.28	14.01%
Employee Below Min	54	\$ 936,862.84	\$ 1,213,297.66	\$ 276,434.82	29.51%
Employee Within Range	9	\$ 373,511.86	\$ 380,684.32	\$ 7,172.46	1.92%
Employee Above Max	0	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	-

Option 3 - Min + .5% per YOS					
	# of Staff	Current Salary	Proposed Salary	Difference	% Increase
Totals	63	\$ 1,310,374.70	\$ 1,639,762.07	\$ 329,387.37	25.14%
Employee Below Min	54	\$ 936,862.84	\$ 1,252,469.31	\$ 315,606.47	33.69%
Employee Within Range	9	\$ 373,511.86	\$ 387,292.76	\$ 13,780.90	3.69%
Employee Above Max	0	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	-

Classification and Compensation Study

Implementation Costs - Wilkes

Option 1 - Move to Minimum					
	# of Staff	Current Salary	Proposed Salary	Difference	% Increase
Totals	22	\$ 407,999.63	\$ 479,810.33	\$ 71,810.90	17.60%
Employees Below Minimum	19	\$ 303,242.16	\$ 375,053.06	\$ 71,810.90	23.68%
Employees Within Minimum	3	\$ 104,757.47	\$ 104,757.47	\$ -	0.00%
Employees Above Minimum	0	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	-

Option 2 - Minimum or 2%					
	# of Staff	Current Salary	Proposed Salary	Difference	% Increase
Totals	22	\$ 407,999.63	\$ 481,905.68	\$ 73,906.05	18.11%
Employees Below Minimum	19	\$ 303,242.16	\$ 375,053.06	\$ 71,810.90	23.68%
Employees Within Minimum	3	\$ 104,757.47	\$ 106,852.62	\$ 2,095.15	2.00%
Employees Above Minimum	0	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	-

Minimum plus 0.5% per year of service					
	# of Staff	Current Salary	Proposed Salary	Difference	% Increase
Totals	22	\$ 407,999.63	\$ 492,460.91	\$ 84,461.28	20.70%
Employees Below Minimum	19	\$ 303,242.16	\$ 385,219.30	\$ 82,097.34	27.21%
Employees Within Minimum	3	\$ 104,757.47	\$ 106,221.41	\$ 1,463.94	1.48%
Employees Above Minimum	0	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	-

Classification and Compensation Study

The Big Ask

Notes on the Big Ask

- The Interlocal Agreement stipulates that the budgets for each county "will include an agreed upon amount paid by each member county for the materials, salaries, and operating expenses."
- Wilkes County fully funds our total personnel costs – salaries plus FICA, Health Insurance, Retirement, Unemployment, Worker's Comp, and Dental Insurance. (Thank you!)
- No county appropriation covers all personnel and all operating costs.
- No county appropriations pay for any library materials.

The Big Ask

More Notes on the Big Ask

- ARL does not expect our counties to pay for all the materials we purchase every year, or for all our operational expenses – that's where our fines and fees, State Aid, and our Friends and Endowments come in.
- We fully recognize – and appreciate – and thank our commissioners that our counties either absorb the full cost of building maintenance and/or provide in our appropriation the money to take care of our buildings.
- This year we are asking all our counties to fund a better pay scale for our employees, and to provide funding for the full personnel budgets, including all related personnel costs such as FICA, retirement, and health insurance for full time employees.

The Big Ask

Chairman Blevins thanked them for the good presentation. Vice Chairman Settle asked if the building maintenance and utilities are paid by the county. Ms. Blackburn replied no, the county gives them funds to pay for cleaning, maintenance, and repairs and the county has helped the

past few years with HVAC repairs as well. Vice Chairman Settle stated 80% of their revenue comes from the county. Ms. Blackburn replied yes. Vice Chairman Settle stated they get about \$155K from fines/fees, state aid, grants, gifts/donations and some of this they would get even if it was not a regional library. Ms. Blackburn replied yes, some of the regional money goes into operational expenses that the county funds do not cover. Vice Chairman Settle asked why they are better served by being a Regional Library if only \$100K is received. Julia Turpin replied the slides only show the fund balance appropriation it does not show the state aid, that is a separate budget. State aid money is used for collection, copy machines/equipment maintenance, books, DVDs, subscriptions, postage, etc.

Vice Chairman Settle asked if state aid would still be received if they were not regional. Ms. Turpin replied yes, but not the same amount, they received more for being regional. Vice Chairman Settle asked the amount. Ms. Blackburn replied the region received \$395K, which is each county's state aid appropriation plus a block grant of \$75K to \$90K. She added she cannot tell them the exact amount the state aid would be if it did not go into the regional budget, but they do receive extra. Vice Chairman Settle said by being in a region they get more money from the state than if they were just a county library. Ms. Blackburn replied yes, they will still get state aid, but would not get the extra grant the region receives to take care of regional administration cost. Vice Chairman Settle asked if they would need the additional if they were not a region, they would not have regional administration cost. Ms. Blackburn replied no, but the county would take on personnel, finance, IT, and materials cost. Vice Chairman Settle said he is only asking to see what the Wilkes County citizens gain from being a regional library, and he understands they are pro-regional. Ms. Turpin replied for the average daily user at the library the biggest benefit is the courier service that runs 3 days per week between the counties. If they place a book on hold in Ashe or Watauga earlier enough in the day the courier can get that book and bring back same day, she said this helps teachers that may need something in a hurry and is a great service. She added also the pooling of resources to buy the more expensive products is very beneficial as well.

Vice Chairman Settle said they do a great job, especially with the summer program to feed the kids, Wilkes has a great Library. He added he understands why regional was important many years ago, but is unsure of the advantages today, with all the electronics and technology folks have. Ms. Blackburn replied they can give them a breakdown of the state aid budget and show what they get from this in addition to the courier. She added the internet access for the regional of \$70K is covered by state aid. Chairman Blevins asked if they have a regional office. Ms. Blackburn replied she and the finance officer both have an office in the Ashe County Library, the IT person floats around. Chairman Blevins asked which if the counties have the largest budget. Ms. Blackburn replied probable Watauga, it is in Boone which is a college town and very busy.

Chairman Blevins asked if they have a state retirement plan. Ms. Blackburn replied yes and they also are part of the state health plan which is wonderful as well. Chairman Blevins stated this would change if they became a county library. Mr. Yates added they would roll into the county system. Chairman Blevins said they must also look at the benefits offered when they look at compensation and salaries. In fairness they can't only compare public sector employees to other public sector employees, they have to also look at the general economy and individuals

employed in the private sector. He added Wilkes is not a rich county and it is important to look at the benefits supplied to public sector workers that private sector do not get. Chairman Blevins said there is more to it than to look at one number and say it's not fair. Ms. Blackburn agreed. Chairman Blevins added they have hundreds of employees that work for the county and there are serious deficiencies in other areas such as Child Protective Services.

Chairman Blevins stated they understand they want good quality employees, and to pay them fairly, but there are some other things they need other than what they saw today in order to make a determination. Ms. Blackburn replied they understand, she needs the three counties working together, she does not want to pay Ashe county employees more for doing the same job than they pay in Wilkes. Chairman Blevins added a few years ago when the recession was tougher, Wilkes increased the library budget and the other two could not do this. Ms. Blackburn replied they are never level, but over the years it levels out. They are asking for a big step up and it needs to be done across the region or they can't do it.

Chairman Blevins asked who owns the library building. Ms. Blackburn replied in all cases it is the counties. Chairman Blevins asked about the contributions from the two Towns. Ms. Blackburn replied North Wilkesboro gives \$2K and Wilkesboro does not give anything. Chairman Blevins added Town residents pay county taxes in addition to Town taxes so as tax payers they do contribute just as much to the library as the county residents. Ms. Turpin stated Wilkesboro did donate fishing poles. She added she recently saw a large hiring sign that listed starting pay at \$12.01 per hour, their starting pay is \$8.01. Chairman Blevins stated this is a national issue, there is hiring pressure at every level in every sector of the economy and it is tough. Vice Chairman Settle asked how long it has been \$8.01. Ms. Blackburn replied the last adjustment was 2008. Vice Chairman Settle asked if they set their own pay scale. Ms. Blackburn replied yes, the Regional Governing Board sets this, they run the region and sets the pay. Commissioner Minton added nationally McDonalds pays \$10.00 per hour.

Ms. Blackburn said they appreciate the fact the Board has a limited amount of money and many people asking for funding. She added they thought it was important enough to put money into this study and are talking with all three counties. They would appreciate serious consideration.

Commissioner Elmore asked for clarification, this increase is over three or five years and what the percentage is. Ms. Blackburn replied it is over 3-years, but that is negotiable. The total salary increase at the end of three years is \$86K and the benefits need to be covered also, which adds another 30%. Vice Chairman Settle stated Wilkes is the only county that fully covers salaries and benefits for the staff. Ms. Blackburn replied yes, the appropriations from Ashe and Watauga cover salary but not all the benefits, this is covered from their fines and fees. Vice Chairman Settle said if Wilkes is covering this, looks like their folks would make more. Chairman Blevins added maybe they could supplement their internal revenue with a user fee. Ms. Turpin said folks say they pay taxes for the library and when they try to do things like this folks do not want to pay a user fee and taxes and get upset about it.

The Board thanked Ms. Blackburn and Ms. Turpin for the presentation, their time and service.

RESOLUTION – REQUESTING THAT N.C. HIGHWAY 16 NORTH FROM INTERSECTION WITH U.S. HIGHWAY 421 TO THE INTERSECTION WITH BOONE TRAIL IN WILKES COUNTY, NORTH CAROLINA BE NAMED IN HONOR OF CHARLIE O. LOVETTE – Chairman Blevins recognized County Manager John Yates. Mr. Yates said they received this request and Commissioner Keith Elmore is going to read the Resolution. Commissioner Elmore read the resolution at this time. He added he has had the fortune of knowing and working with the children of the C.O. Lovette family and the Bumgarner family and they have had a huge impact in Wilkes. Commissioner Elmore stated they did great things in and for Wilkes County. Vice Chairman Settle added Wilkes has many entrepreneurs and most everything they have started and grown from within. He added the Economic Development team is hard at work at this time and focusing on growing from within as well. Commissioner Gambill said the Lovette’s were also instrumental in growing the ham business that later became Hobe’s Hams. They all worked together and helped each other become successful. Vice Chairman Settle added Bumgarner trucking still has a very successful business today.

Commissioner Keith Elmore made a motion to adopt the Resolution Requesting that N.C. Highway 16 North from Intersection with U.S. Highway 421 to the Intersection with Boone Trail in Wilkes County, North Carolina be named in Honor of Charlie O. Lovette, as presented. The motion was seconded by Vice Chairman Eddie Settle and unanimously approved.

*RESOLUTION
REQUESTING THAT N.C. HIGHWAY 16 NORTH FROM INTERSECTION WITH US
HIGHWAY 421 TO THE INTERSECTION WITH BOONE TRAIL
IN WILKES COUNTY, NORTH CAROLINA,
BE NAMED IN HONOR OF CHARLIE O. LOVETTE*

WHEREAS, Charlie O. Lovette was born on July 20, 1900 the ninth of thirteen children to James Nelson and Lillie Riggs Lovette in Wilkes County, North Carolina, and was a citizen and resident of Wilkes County for his entire life; and

WHEREAS, Charlie O. Lovette learned to grow crops from an early age, and from the ages of 14 to 18 he spent his summers farming and worked as a teamster during winter. He also worked for R.J. Reynolds and in the coal mines in West Virginia from 1918 to 1923 during the winters and returned to farming in Wilkes in the growing season; and

WHEREAS, Charlie O. Lovette married Ruth Bumgarner and bought his first truck in 1924 to go into the produce business for himself. He traveled throughout the foothills and mountains of Wilkes buying chickens, eggs, hams and other farm products to sell at markets in Winston-Salem and Charlotte. He and Ruth raised seven children, all of whom worked on their farm located on Pleasant Home Church Road and in the business. His produce business provided a market for local farmers to sell and trade their produce to supplement family farm income. From the early 1930’s through World War II chicken production progressed from barnyard chickens to hot house chickens providing Lovette and farmers in western Wilkes more chickens to sell; and

WHEREAS, Charlie O. Lovette's trucks delivered live chickens from Wilkes to processing plants in the major cities along the East Coast. At the same time, he continued with his egg and produce business. In 1946 he sold the live chicken business to his oldest son, C. Fred Lovette. He continued to run his smaller farm-raised food produce and trucking businesses, in which he partnered with J.C. Bumgarner to form Lovette Egg Company. Fred Lovette with his father's help and support grew his business into what became Holly Farms Poultry Industries, the largest chicken company in the Mid-Atlantic States. The other six Lovette children followed their oldest brother and all worked in the commercial chicken business; and

WHEREAS, Charlie O. Lovette was instrumental in laying the foundation that grew and integrated poultry farming in Wilkes County through Holly Farms into the largest company in the world during the 1970's with operations in North Carolina, Maryland, and Texas. This brand became the first nationally distributed chicken in the United States. In 1989 Holly Farms was acquired by Tyson Foods and today this chicken business generates more than \$300 million in gross annual revenue, employs 3,300 people, and supports 200 family farms in Wilkes County; and

WHEREAS, Charlie O. Lovette was a leader in the Millers Creek area and helped secure new Highway 16 which links Boone Trail to US Highway 421; and

WHEREAS, the Wilkes County Board of Commissioners desires to honor the life and achievements of Charlie O. Lovette and express the appreciation of this County and its citizens for the service he has rendered his community, state, and nation, by officially requesting that N.C. Highway 16 North from the intersection with US Highway 421 to the intersection with Boone Trail in Wilkes County, North Carolina, be named the "C.O. Lovette Highway" in his honor;

NOW, THEREFORE, on behalf of Wilkes County, the Wilkes County Board of Commissioners does hereby adopt this Resolution in honor of Charlie O. Lovette and in support of its official request that N.C. Highway 16 North from the intersection with US Highway 421 to the intersection with Boone Trail in Wilkes County, North Carolina, be named the "C.O. Lovette Highway" in his honor;

ADOPTED by the Wilkes County Board of Commissioners in regular session assembled, this the 3rd day of April, 2018.

WILKES COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

By: _____
Gary D. Blevins, Chairman

ATTEST:

Sarah D. Call, Clerk to the Board

TAX DEPARTMENT:

1. TAX RELEASES – LISTINGS – Chairman Blevins welcomed and recognized Alex Hamilton, Tax Administrator. Mr. Hamilton asked the Board to approve tax releases for listings in the amount of \$2,780.44.

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

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

2. 2018 APPOINTMENTS TO THE WILKES COUNTY BOARD OF EQUALIZATION AND REVIEW – Tax Administration, Alex Hamilton stated the Board of Commissioners passed a resolution in 2001 that established a special Board of Equalization and Review as allowed in North Carolina General Statute §105-322. He stated it is time to appoint members to the Board for the 2018 tax year. The members are: Chairman Gary D. Blevins, Steve Crysel, Carmen James, Andrew Casey, and Janie Cheek. They have agreed to serve this year if that is the Board's desire and have all met the requirements and filed their No Change Forms with the Clerk.

Chairman Blevins asked if they anticipate many E&R meetings this year. Mr. Hamilton replied they have received just a few so far. He added they will meet on Thursday April 19, 2018 and adjourn the first of May. Commissioner Elmore asked if this is a two year appointment. Chairman Blevins replied they are one year appointments and they have made changes over the years to this Board. Mr. Hamilton agreed. Commissioner Elmore stated the revaluation will be year after next. Mr. Hamilton replied yes, and that will most likely require more than one meeting of the Board of E&R but last re-evaluation was not too bad. Chairman Blevins stated to Mr. Hamilton's credit they do a lot of work ahead of time to have things ready that include numbers, comparisons, and the meetings go smoothly. Mr. Hamilton added he has good folks that work with him. Chairman Blevins said folks get emotional about taxes. Mr. Hamilton replied yes and their office does make mistakes as well.

Commissioner David Gambill made a motion to appoint Gary D. Blevins, Steve Crysel, Carmen James, Andrew Casey, and Janie Cheek to the Wilkes County Board of Equalization and Review for tax year 2018, as presented. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Greg Minton and unanimously approved.

BLUE RIDGE OPPORTUNITY COMMISSION (BROC) – ANNUAL APPOINTMENTS OF WILKES AGING ADVISORY COMMITTEE – Chairman Blevins welcomed and recognized Jennifer Cooper, Director, BROC Elderly Nutrition Program. He asked what this committee does. Mr. Cooper replied they meet one time per year and review the service needs and gaps in the county and most importantly approve the allocations for the Home and Community Care Block grant for the three aging agencies. Chairman Blevins asked if other agencies other than these three have asked for funds. Ms. Cooper replied before her time it was only Senior Nutrition and The Senior Center and then after Ruby Pardue Blackburn was formed

they requested funding. She has never heard anyone else request funds from this grant. Chairman Blevins stated Commissioner Elmore is on the Committee. Ms. Cooper replied yes and apologized for the late addition. She said she started on this in Janaury and had a couple members that had served prior and at the last minute had issues come up and could no-longer serve. She did scramble at the end to get folks to serve and attend the meeting. Chairman Blevins asked when the meeting is. Ms. Cooper replied Friday, April 6, 2018. She added they are trying to bring in younger folks from the community, home health folks, and nursing facility folks, which is important. Chairman Blevins stated there are many great names on the list and all the folks have submitted the required forms needed for appointment to the Aging Advising Committee

Below is the list of the FY 2018-2019 Wilkes County Aging Advisory Committee Members presented to the Commissioners for consideration:

Mr. Jennifer Cooper, Lead Agency Director
Ms. Julie Wiggins, Director Area Agency on Aging, HCCOG
Ms. Suzanne Hanlin, Director, Wilkes Senior Resources
Ms. Jennifer Snider, Director, RPB Adult Day Care Center
Ms. Michelle Smithey, Community Social Services Technician
Mr. Kenneth Foster, Wilkes Senior Tar Heel Legislature Delegate
Mr. Ormond Loomis, Wilkes Senior Tar Heel Legislature Alternate
Ms. Karen Hallman, Community Alternative Program
Ms. Mary Severt, Social Worker, Westwood Hills Nursing Center
Mr. Keith Elmore, Wilkes County Board of Commissioners
Mr. Dave Snyder, Volunteer, Meals on Wheels of Wilkes
Mr. Mary Edna Faw
Ms. Gayle Benton
Ms. Mariah Phillips, Director of Community Relations, Avante of Wilkesboro
Ms. Tina Nuger, Community Service Representative, Home Instead Senior Care
Ms. Allison T. Brown, Mountain Valley Hospice & Palliative Care
Mr. Matthey Reece, Executive Director, Rose Glen Village
Ms. Erin Cashwell, Dietitian, Wilkes County Health Department

Commissioner Keith Elmore made a motion to approve the Annual Appointments of the Wilkes Aging Advisory Committee for FY 2018-2019, as presented. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Greg Minton and unanimously approved.

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES: Chairman Blevins welcomed and recognized John Blevins, DSS Director. He added he would like to thank Mr. Blevins for accompanying him and Mr. Yates last week to the task force conference on children's welfare in Greensboro and was glad to have both there. Mr. John Blevins said it was a good conference and well done. He added Chairman Blevins was an instrumental part of getting this started across the state and they thank him for his time and service.

1. BUDGET AMENDMENTS/TRANSFERS – Motion was made by Commissioner Keith Elmore to approve Budget Amendment No. 11 (General Fund – Social Services – Wilkes County DSS received an additional allocation for the State Adult Dare Care Fund. This amount was not originally included in the budget estimates for FY 2017-2018. The \$1,469.00 includes a local match of \$184.00 from Ruby Pardue Blackburn Adult Day Health Care Center. No County money involved.) The motion was seconded by Commissioner David Gambill and unanimously approved.

2. UPDATE – Mr. Blevins stated he has a few updates before they go through the reports. He had another employee to resign late last week, they now have 3 openings for Social Workers, 2 left due to stress of the job the other went to work for Catawba County for financial reasons. They will have a 4th opening due to retirement of a supervisor and they have internal applications and will fill this from within. Commissioner Elmore asked where the employee lived that went to Catawba. Mr. Blevins replied she lives in Wilkes currently and will commute until her lease is up and then plans to move to Catawba. Chairman Blevins said there is a fairly significant issue with pay from Wilkes to Catawba being a several thousand dollars difference. Mr. Blevins replied yes.

Mr. Blevins said the Social Services working group that Commissioner Minton is very familiar with is divided into two stages. The group consist of a DSS Director, Attorney, and County Commissioners and they are studying different aspects of Social Services. He added their first report will be sent to the legislature on April 10th and it is mainly looking at improvements in the state supervised county administered system. They are looking at how the N.C. Department of Human Services can better support counties through administration of regional offices. Mr. Blevins said they want to provide better oversight to them. The April 10th report will look at what is Central or Raleigh's responsibilities, what are the regional responsibilities for the regional offices, and what are local responsibilities. They are reviewing the following: best practices, counties talking with each other about what they are doing that is working well, compliance monitoring, physical monitoring, intergraded data systems, interagency coordination, policy guidance, technical assistance, quality improvement, staffing standards and support, and follow up to make sure counties are properly staffed and trained. Mr. Blevins said lots of this will be helpful and this is what they will be reviewing in the first draft. He added the second part will start in May and will be reviewing: information sharing across counties, conflict of interest, interagency agreements, and also develop a vision for transitioning the state from a county administered system to a regional administrated system, but they will not make a recommendations on this. This is where counties can voluntarily work together, he said.

Commissioner Elmore asked if regionalization will help to eliminate losing folks to other counties and have a regional pay scale. Mr. Blevins said this first regionalization will not, it is more monitoring, reviewing, and support it will not help to get counties on a level playing field for pay. Chairman Blevins asked if they know which counties will be in our region. Mr. Blevins replied at this time they have two maps. Commissioner Minton added it is extensive and covers most areas. He and others feel it will pull resources away from areas that are already strained and move to other areas. There are pros and cons to both and mostly cons. He added the DSS Directors are still adamant they do not want it. Commissioner Minton said the Directors feel

they are the best ones to decide where the resources in their counties need to be placed. The counties embracing this are the larger ones, because they can then pull resources from other counties that may be overfunded or overmanned. He added this issue was brought up at the last DSS Director Association meeting. Vice Chairman Settle stated there is one Senator from Raleigh that wants this regionalized and once they get this started it will grow. Commissioner Minton said it was designed with great intentions to standardize CPS services state wide, however it has grown and currently is in pilot programs and could shortly become an unfunded mandate.

Chairman Blevins asked if they have hired a company to oversee the regionalization. Mr. Blevins replied they hired a consulting group. He said there are a few different things going on, first is the working group just explained. In addition the 2017 legislation had a system reform plan and they have hired a vendor, The Center for the Support of Families, and they will review all the Social Services programs and are currently gathering information to develop a dash board. It is supposed to help citizens, commissioners, and others to see what the agencies are doing in a very transparent and accountable way. In addition there will be written agreements that has to be signed in 2018-2019 to focus on performance and administrative responsibilities with a corrective action segment to begin March 2020. Mr. Blevins said if a DSS agency does not meet the written requirements in the agreement it will go into a corrective action plan and if they fail that, DHHS can assume control over the agency in that area. Chairman Blevins said they will send that county a bill. Mr. Blevins agreed and said in March 2019 counties can also voluntary join together as a region if they chose to do so. This is a lot of changes to legislature for DSS agencies coming in the next few years. He added there will be much more oversight, and some of this will be good like standardization in CPS across the state. There are many changes coming and they already have workers leaving due to stress and this will add more. Mr. Blevins said he will keep the Board informed and updated and Commissioner Minton is in the work group along with 17 other members and counties are well represented.

Mr. Blevins briefly went over the monthly caseload report for February. 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 February. The last item he has is the Silent March for Pinwheels. April is Child Abuse Prevention Month and on Sunday, April, 8th from 2 PM to 3 PM there is a March starting at the Carolina West Community Commons and ending at Our House on Main Street Wilkesboro. They hope everyone can come out and plant a pinwheel, this month is very important as many children are suffering abuse and they want to bring awareness at this time.

The Board thanked Mr. Blevins for his update and for the great job he and all his staff does with the DSS budget and for Wilkes County. Mr. Blevins thanked the Board for all their support of the agency and also to Commissioner Greg Minton for being involved with things at the state level and his knowledge which helps them a lot.

CLOSED SESSION – Motion was made by Commissioner Keith Elmore to go into Closed Session 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. The motion was seconded by Commissioner David Gambill and unanimously approved.

Motion was made by Commissioner Keith Elmore, seconded by Vice Chairman 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 Commissioner Greg Minton, seconded by Commissioner Keith Elmore and by unanimous vote adopted to adjourn the meeting of the Wilkes County Board of Commissioners at 12:20 P. M.

Sarah D. Call, Clerk

Gary D. Blevins, Chairman

WILKES COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

Approved: