

MINUTES
WILKES COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
August 1, 2017

The Wilkes County Board of Commissioners met on Tuesday, August 1, 2017 at 10:00 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 Tony Triplett, County Attorney; John Yates, County Manager; and Sarah Call, Clerk to the Board.

Chairman Greg Minton welcomed everyone and called the meeting to order.

INVOCATION – Commissioner David Gambill led the Invocation.

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

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 July 11, 2017.

BUDGET AMENDMENTS/TRANSFERS – Motion was made by Commissioner Keith Elmore to approve Budget Amendment No. 1 (General Fund – Juvenile Crime Prevention – When the County Budget was adopted, the final numbers from the JCPC Board had not been finalized. The state has awarded the JCPC Administration an additional \$1,401 that was not in the original budget request); and Budget Amendment No. 2 (Health Programs – Wilkes County Health Department applied for a Health Care Connection Grant for FY 18 in the amount of \$70,000. The Health Department was awarded an additional \$80,000 for the Health Care Connection grant for a total of \$150,000. No County money involved. Wilkes County Health Department received an additional \$3,810 from the state for FY 18 to pay for staff training and advertising for Health Promotions-Healthy Communities. No County money involved. Wilkes County Health Department received a \$5,000 grant for the Health Foundation for Market Bucks/Farmers Market Voucher Program. No County money involved. Wilkes County Health Department WIC-Breast Feeding Peer Counselor Program received additional funds of \$492 to continue the incidence and duration of breastfeeding among women enrolled in WIC. No County money involved.) The motion was seconded by Commissioner Eddie Settle and unanimously approved.

WILKES ADULT DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITY PROGRAM, INC. (WILKES A.D.A.P., INC.) – REQUEST – Chairman Greg Minton welcomed and recognized Robin Whittington Executive Director, Wilkes A.D.A.P. Ms. Whittington thanked the Board for their financial support over the years. She stated they have been there for over 40 years and have served over 150 adults in Wilkes with developmental disabilities. Ms. Whittington added they have mobile work crews and take jobs that no one else wants. Presently they have 42 workers, everyone has a

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job and earns a paycheck. She noted they take the workers out in Wilkes, pay taxes and vote in Wilkes. They also have staff longevity ranging from 38 years to 13 years and their workers are happy and treated with dignity, she added.

Ms. Whittington stated on June 9th she received an email from VAYA Health, who writes their contract for State funds for ADAP services. It stated on July 1, 2017 their funds would be cut \$42,537.10 and this decision cannot be appealed, she added. Ms. Whittington said she is here speaking for those that can't. The workers love to come to ADAP, they don't want anything handed to them, and they don't want to sit at home. She added the workers are dependable and respected in the community and this cut has left a big gap in their budget. Ms. Whittington stated their budget is very modest and every penny is accounted for, and the staff has not had raises in 4 years.

In closing Ms. Whittington said their services will be affected with this decrease, Wilkes ADAP provides quality work, and are a necessary service to Wilkes. She is requesting emergency funding in the amount of \$42,000 to aid this crisis. Ms. Whittington thanked the Board.

Chairman Minton thanked Ms. Whittington. Commissioner Elmore asked if their budget increased from last year to this year. She replied no. Commissioner Elmore stated the decrease is not appealable. Ms. Whittington replied it is not and she had to sign the contract with VAYA. Vice Chairman Blevins said he spoke with Brian Ingram, CEO with VAYA this morning and asked if there was a possibility of a smaller cut. He added Mr. Ingram said maybe they are pushing DMA to allow them to offer more services. Vice Chairman Blevins stated VAYA may be looking in their budget from some flexibility to allow them to use other funds in their budget for ADAP. Mr. Ingram said they will keep everyone informed, but otherwise their announcement to all counties was the result of the State budget and the legislatures, he added. Commissioner Settle stated they are making many cuts across the Board to education and several other programs.

Vice Commissioner Blevins said Wilkes was in the process of designing a Facility Bases Crisis Center for involuntary commitments which was a multi-million dollar project and VAYA has had to pull out completely due to these budget issues. He asked if most of their members are not Medicaid eligible. Ms. Whittington replied some are, but their funds are a strict amount for ADAP services. Chairman Minton asked if they bid on contracts out in the community for their workers. Ms. Whittington replied yes they do. Chairman Minton added ADAP has a great reputation and he has toured the center and saw the workers. He added he would like to compliment Ms. Whittington and all the staff for the great service they provide. It is obvious the workers look forward to coming to ADAP every day, he noted. Chairman Minton stated he wanted to thank Ms. Whittington and everyone for coming today and making the Board aware of their request and hopefully they will be back in touch. Ms. Whittington thanked the Board.

SAFETY AWARDS – Chairman Greg Minton recognized County Manager John Yates. Mr. Yates stated he and Ralph Broyhill attended the Safety Awards Banquet on June 22, 2017. He added all the departments do a great job by keeping the claims low and being safe which helps to

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keep the MOD factor down which decreases the cost of the Workers Comp Insurance. Chairman Minton added this saves money for the County. Mr. Yates presented the following awards:

Gold Award Criteria: Rate of days away from work, job transfer or restriction must be at least 50% below the industry average.

Gold Award/Third Consecutive Year:

County of Wilkes, Finance & Taxation Public Building, Animal Control, Elections, Registrar of Deeds, IT, Purchasing, Garage, Soil, Cooperative Extension and Veterans

(Jerry Shepherd accepted the award)

Gold Award/Third Consecutive Year:

County of Wilkes, Emergency Medical Services/Emergency Management, Airport, Inspections, Recreation, and Planning

(Eddie Price accepted the award)

Gold Award/Sixth Consecutive Year:

County of Wilkes, Department of Social Services

(John Blevins accepted the award)

Gold Award/Seventh Consecutive Year:

County of Wilkes, General Government & Commissioners

(Chairman Greg Minton accepted the award)

Gold Award/Eleventh Consecutive Year:

County of Wilkes, Sheriff's Department

(Sheriff Chris Shew accepted the award)

Mr. Yates stated it is a great accomplishment for the Sheriff's Department to obtain eleven consecutive years of safety. Chairman Minton added this is no small task for law enforcement.

FIRE MARSHAL – APPROVAL OF PERMIT FOR FIREWORK DISPLAY – Mr. Yates said Fire Marshal, Kevin Bounds received a permit request for a display to be held at Wilkesboro Dragway on August 5, 2017. Mr. Yates stated per Mr. Bounds they have met all the requirements of the 2010 Pyrotechnics Act and have the appropriate Certificate of Insurance. He added the Board of County Commissioners must approve all firework events.

Commissioner Keith Elmore made a motion to approve the Firework Display Permit Application for Wilkesboro Dragway, as presented. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Eddie Settle and passed unanimously.

PLANNING DEPARTMENT:

1. ROAD NAME REQUEST – NEW BEGINNINGS LANE – SET PUBLIC HEARING – Planning Director Eddie 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 New Beginnings Lane, 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.

Commissioner David Gambill made a motion to set a Public Hearing on Tuesday, August 15, 2017 at 6:55 P.M. or immediately following Pubic Concerns, regarding the Road Name Request as presented. The motion was seconded by Vice Chairman Gary D. Blevins and unanimously approved.

2. ROAD NAME CHANGE REQUEST – PORTION OF CONLEY SHUMAKER ROAD TO CHAMPION/MT. PLEASANT ROAD – SET PUBLIC HEARING – Planning Director Eddie Barnes asked the Board of Commissioners to set a Public Hearing on a Road Name Change Request received by petition to the Planning Department. He stated the request is to rename a portion of Conley Shumaker Road to Champion/Mt. Pleasant Road in Elk 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, August 15, 2017 immediately following the first Public Hearing regarding the Road Name Change Request as presented. The motion was seconded by Commissioner David Gambill and unanimously approved.

TAX DEPARTMENT:

1. TAX SETTLEMENT – TAX YEAR 2016 – Alex Hamilton, Tax Administrator, stated N.C.G.S. §105-373 requires the Tax Collector to come before the Board and make settlement for the 2016 taxes. As of July 1st the below has been collected:

	Owed	Paid	Rate
Real Estate	\$33,272,886.93	\$31,909,568.92	95.65%
Personal	<u>\$ 4,544,875.05</u>	<u>\$ 4,389,211.17</u>	<u>96.44%</u>
Total	\$37,817,761.98	\$36,298,780.09	95.74%

2. CHARGE TAX ADMINISTRATOR WITH COLLECTION OF 2017 REAL AND PERSONAL PROPERTY TAXES – Alex Hamilton, Tax Administrator, stated N.C.G.S. §105-321 requires that the Board charge the Tax Administrator/Collector with the collection of

the 2017 real and personal property taxes. Real Estate and Personal Property Taxes are as follows:

2017 Real Estate	\$33,680,580.37
2017 Personal Property	<u>\$ 2,794,040.20</u>
Total	\$36,474,620.57

Mr. Hamilton said Real Estate is up \$400,000 this year from what was billed out last year and they have not had this in a few years so there has been a little growth. He added the personal property is very different on this one compared to the 2016 settlement, because that settlement includes utilities. The utilities will not be billed until next month because the state sets this amount, he stated. Commissioner Elmore asked when the next tax re-evaluation will take place. Mr. Hamilton replied 2019, but they are already working on them now. Commissioner Elmore stated the re-evaluation will be completed and taxes will be levied on the new values for 2019. Mr. Hamilton replied that is correct. Commissioner Settle asked if the new values will be sent out in 2019. Mr. Hamilton replied yes around March. Commissioner Settle stated is that when the process will begin. Mr. Hamilton replied no they are looking at some of the problem areas now then he will get some help with the schedule of values and things like this. They added money in the budget this year to allow for this, he noted. Commissioner Settle said it is encouraging that they saw a \$400,000 increase this year. Mr. Hamilton agreed and added they have not worked on it enough at this time to know what it will look like, some values are up and some are still down, but the market is rebounding which is good to see.

Commissioner David Gambill made a motion to charge Alex Hamilton, Wilkes County Tax Administrator, with the collection of the 2017 Real and Personal Property Taxes as presented. The motion was seconded by Vice Chairman Gary D. Blevins and unanimously approved.

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES UPDATE – Chairman Minton welcomed John Blevins, DSS Director and Hal Wilson, Social Work Program Manager. Mr. Blevins said last month an article in the Winston Salem Journal was discussed. He added Mr. Wilson reached out to Forsyth County and his findings/report are in the packets. He stated Mr. Wilson has spent a lot of time and work to find out what they have done that helped lower the number of Foster Children in their county. Mr. Blevins said Mr. Wilson will give the Board a quick synopsis from his report.

Mr. Wilson stated he contacted Victor Isler, Family and Children's Division Director with Forsyth DSS and asked how they do things. He learned they have 118 people employed in Child and Family Services and 18 Welfare Teams that includes Child Services and Foster Care Staff. Mr. Wilson said Mr. Isler said they noticed their Foster Care numbers had increased quite a bit back in 2000 and they decided they needed to address that by asking the Forsyth County Board of Commissioners for additional staff for two more teams. He added these two teams would deal with In-Home/Case Management Services. Mr. Wilson stated they did this and their Foster Care numbers dropped from 387 to 168 currently, which is a significant positive change. Mr. Blevins stated they are not here to ask the Board for additional staff.

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Mr. Wilson stated Wilkes currently has 235 children in DSS legal and physical custody. They have 46 CPS Staff across 6 Child welfare teams to include CPS and Foster Care. Mr. Wilson said teams' 1 – 3 deal with Child Protective Services, teams' 4 – 6 deal with Foster Care. He stated after speaking with Forsyth they looked at restructuring CPS for the investigative side which are teams 1, 2, and 3. They have created a Case Management/In-Home Services Team (team 1) the remaining 2 teams will deal with investigations and assessments, he noted. Mr. Wilson said they hope by combining all the staff together they can discuss cases more effectively and come up with creative ways to fix the family problems in hopes to prevent Foster Care, which is their goal. He stated they decided to model their system more like Forsyth to see if they can make the change, and they feel good about this.

Mr. Blevins said this structure mimics what Forsyth has done. He added Attachment A in the packets shows how they were structured prior and Attachment B is with the changes. Mr. Blevins stated this way the Supervisors can focus on one area and one type of service provided, this will help a great deal and should be a benefit to them. Chairman Minton asked how the employees are receiving this change. Mr. Wilson replied they ask for this a few months ago and they had a few stumbling blocks with vacancies, but now they have made the transition and it is going really well, they like it.

Commissioner Elmore asked if the workers have the technology and things they need. He added he saw a worker that had a flip phone. Mr. Blevins said that issue has been resolved they all have smart phones now. Commissioner Elmore asked if they can text and all from their new phones. Mr. Blevins replied yes, this was included in this year's budget to get them all up to date. They can now go out to homes and take pictures on their phone, they have the talk to text for dictation on their phones as well. Commissioner Elmore asked if all workers can use this technology. Mr. Blevins replied yes. Mr. Wilson added they can all answer their email from their phones as well, which is very important and much easier. Vice Chairman Blevins ask if this is funded by the state. Mr. Blevins replied they get reimbursements. Vice Chairman Blevins asked if CPS is in NC Fast. Mr. Blevins replied no. Vice Chairman Blevins asked if it is being tested in some counties. Mr. Blevins replied yes and Wilkes uses it for searches currently and also they are one of the counties that is in compliance with staff being trained in this area. He added this has been delayed one month already, it is currently set for Investigations to roll out next August (2018) to NC Fast and Foster Care to follow. Chairman Minton asked if they will get snap shots of the pilot programs. Mr. Blevins replied yes they are supposed to. Chairman Minton asked him to bring these to the Board. Mr. Blevins replied he will be happy to. Chairman Minton said they want to see this because the state has concerns regarding that module within NC Fast and so does this Board. Mr. Blevins agreed he did as well and it has already backed up one month and it is concerning.

The Board thanked Mr. Wilson for the information and great job he and his team do for the Children. They added this was great a follow up to something they asked for at the last meeting and was a lot to accomplish in just one month. Mr. Blevins stated Mr. Wilson and all his employees do a great job and are super employees.

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Mr. Blevins provided the Commissioners with handouts for June. He briefly went over the monthly caseload report. He said he believes that WTA is now set up in NC Tracks so everyone in the county is now set up for Tracks. Commissioner Gambill said yes they are, but it is going to keep them a couple of month behind. Mr. Blevins said this is a worry. Commissioner Gambill agreed and added this will affect WTA's cash flow. Mr. Blevins said they sent a couple of employees for additional training on Tracks yesterday to see if there is anything they can do to speed this up. He added when it comes in they want to go through and do as quickly as possible so WTA can get their money. Commissioner Gambill stated WTA sent someone to the training as well.

Chairman Minton stated WTA has a tight cash flow operation. He asked if this was going to be a two month delay once the information is sent. Commissioner Gambill replied that is their guess, they are hoping it will come in by the end of the month. Vice Chairman Blevins ask what percentage of their budget is this going to be. Commissioner Gambill replied a large amount, more than half. Vice Chairman Blevins said they would need about a 20% fund balance to make this work, which is probably not the case. Jerry Shepherd, Finance Director added it would take at minimum 16% for them to cover this at WTA. Commissioner Gambill said they do not have a fund balance to cover this. Chairman Minton asked if the county sees any of this or if these funds go directly to WTA. Mr. Shepherd replied it goes directly to them, the county only receives the ROAP Grant funds and they forward those to WTA upon receipt. Commissioner Gambill said this helps, but they never know exactly when it comes in or for how much, the first comes around the end of August. Mr. Shepherd said they usually get two disbursements one in August and then the other comes later. Vice Chairman Blevins asked what is two month operating for WTA. Commissioner Gambill replied around \$60K. Chairman Minton said this will need to be reviewed it does not appear they can go two months without these funds. Commissioner Gambill agreed they cannot and this will have to be addressed. He added WTA now uses a tracking system which has made them much more efficient on trips. They are increasing trips, they do not have to call in as many part-time drivers and this will add some benefits for them, he said.

Mr. Blevins next went through the Foster Care financial report, Adoption Services financial report, Child Development and Subsidized Child Care financial report. He also went through the CPS Foster Care monthly reports for June. Mr. Blevins said the number of Foster Homes in Wilkes increased to 31, and will go up a little more next month. This is very good and much needed, he added.

Mr. Blevins stated the last item is an On-Site Fiscal Monitoring Report. He added they went through every department and audited. The report shows Salary and Fringe Benefits – no findings, General Administrative Cost – no findings, and Purchased Service – no findings. Mr. Blevins said this is what Joyce Blackburn handles and takes care of and as the report shows she does a great job, this was a very clean audit with no findings. He added this is their money, this is the reimbursement and they said they are doing everything they are supposed to do and it is correct.

The Board thanked Mr. Blevins for his update and the good reports from Mr. Wilson and the On-Site Audit thanks to Mrs. Blackburn.

NORTH CAROLINA ASSOCIATION OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS ANNUAL CONFERENCE – DESIGNATION OF VOTING DELEGATE – Chairman Greg Minton stated a voting delegate needs to be assigned and Vice Chairman Gary D. Blevins has said he would be willing to do this.

Motion was made by Commissioner David Gambill to appoint Vice Chairman Gary D. Blevins as the designated voting delegate for the North Carolina Association of County Commissioners Annual Conference as presented. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Keith Elmore and passed unanimously.

N.C. DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION:

1. ROAD PETITION – BERRY MOUNTAIN LANE – County Manager John Yates stated the Department of Transportation recently received a petition form SR-1 requesting consideration of the addition of Berry Mountain Lane to the State Maintenance system. He added the Commissioners approval is needed before this road can be added to the State Maintenance System.

Motion was made by Commissioner Keith Elmore, seconded by Vice Chairman Gary D. Blevins and unanimously adopted to approve the Road Petition for Berry Mountain Lane to be added to the State Maintenance System as presented and requested.

2. ROAD PETITION – THE FARM SUBDIVISION – County Manager John Yates stated the Department of Transportation recently received a petition form SR-1 requesting consideration of the addition of The Farm Subdivision which includes Peterson Farm Drive, Peterson Pond Drive, Old Homeplace Drive, and Topview Drive to the State Maintenance system. He added the Commissioners approval is needed for this Subdivison and these roads to be added to the State Maintenance System.

Motion was made by Commissioner Keith Elmore, seconded by Vice Chairman Gary D. Blevins and unanimously adopted to approve the Road Petition for The Farm Subdivison to include Peterson Farm Drive, Peterson Pond Drive, Old Homeplace Drive, and Topview Drive be added to the State Maintenance System as presented and requested.

HIGH COUNTRY COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS – WILKES COUNTY NURSING HOME COMMUNITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE – REAPPOINTMENT – County Manager John Yates stated he had received a letter from Stevie John, Regional Ombudsman, stating the appointment term for Peggy Elledge to the Wilkes County Nursing Home Community Advisory Committee will expire August 2, 2017. He stated Ms. Elledge 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.

Chairman Greg Minton stated he would like to commend Ms. Elledge for her continued service on this Committee. He added this is very hard committee to serve on and she is providing a great service to the community.

Vice Chairman Gary D. Blevins made a motion to reappoint Ms. Peggy Elledge to serve on the Wilkes County Nursing Home Community Advisory Committee for additional three-year term as requested. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Keith Elmore and unanimously approved.

CLOSED SESSION – Commissioner David Gambill made a motion 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. The motion was seconded by Vice Chairman Gary D. Blevins and unanimously approved.

Motion was made by Commissioner Keith Elmore, seconded by Vice Chairman Gary D. Blevins 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 Keith Elmore, seconded by Vice Chairman Gary D. Blevins and by unanimous vote adopted to adjourn the meeting of the Wilkes County Board of Commissioners at 11:47 A.M.

Sarah D. Call, Clerk

Gregory A. Minton, Chairman

WILKES COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

Approved: