

Workshop Minutes – July 21, 2015

The Graham County Board of Commissioners met Tuesday, July 21, 2015 at 5:00 p.m. in the Graham County Community Building located at 196 Knight Street Robbinsville, NC for their regular monthly workshop session. All Board was present.

1. Chairman Eller called the workshop session to order.
2. Chairman Eller asks Manager Cable to speak. Manager Cable stated that the county has been working on a comprehensive plan as well as the transportation plan for the county and he provided a copy of the comprehensive plan to the board members. Manager Cable stated that he had met with Ryan Sherby with Region A – Southwest Commission which is a conduit on our behalf and he stated that they could facilitate this plan to get it done quickly. Manager Cable stated that Sara Thompson would also be assisting. Manager Cable stated that some parts of plan we like and some parts we do not and the board needed to give their input to the plan. Manager Cable asks the board for any discussion. Commissioner Nelms stated that the board needed to put our vision on paper and it needs to be portrayed exactly as we see it. Commissioner Orr stated that she agreed with Commissioner Nelms and we further needed a business plan put into place. Manager Cable stated that if the board was agreeable to allowing Ryan Sherby and staff facilitate we would need to schedule some workshops to get this plan completed. Commissioner Nelms asks if public hearings were held concerning this plan. Manager Cable stated that yes we did host a public hearing as well as focus groups and charrette meetings. Rebecca Garland stated that Ryan Sherby could assist us to allow this plan to be active instead of sitting on a shelf. Commissioner Orr stated that we needed to meet with Ryan Sherby. The board agreed to meet for a workshop on Tuesday, August 4, 2015 at 4:30 p.m. to begin this process.
3. Commissioner Orr gave a brief update on the NACO Convention that she attended. Commissioner Orr stated that she sits on the Public Lands Committee and one big factor of this group is the PILT Funding. Commissioner Orr stated that NACO consists of 3,069 counties throughout the United States and NACO supports the efforts concerning PILT.
4. Commissioner Orr stated another topic was maintaining the SRS (Secure Rural School) Funding and NACO supports this as well. Commissioner Orr stated that this funding supports our schools and our sheriff's departments. Commissioner Orr asks if the county had a contract with the Forest Service. Clerk Crisp stated that we did have a signed contract with the Forest Service.
5. Commissioner Orr stated that NACO is also supporting a bill that would allow our local Sheriff's to deputize Wildlife Officers if needed and the local sheriff would have complete authority and control.
6. Commissioner Orr stated that NACO is also supporting a reclassification of trees and timber products due to the bug infestation to our trees specifically Hemlocks.
7. Commissioner Orr stated that we also have a great contact with the US Secretary of Department of Transportation, Anthony Fox. Mr. Fox is from Charlotte and we need to make contact with him.
8. Commissioner Orr also stated that NACO was involved in House Bill 912 and asks Manager Cable to speak on this bill. Manager Cable stated that this bill removes the county's ability to tax non-tribal members on trust land who have businesses. This would impact our county as well as the neighboring counties negatively. Manager Cable stated that this could result in losses as great as \$90,000.00 in Jackson County and \$70,000.00 in Swain County and Cherokee County's numbers are not identified at this time. Commissioner Orr gave an example that if a local business wanted to park their equipment and set up an office on tribal land in the county who was not a tribal member then his business and equipment could not be taxed. The board wanted Senator Jim Davis to be informed that we are against this bill.
9. Commissioner Williams stated that he asked Larry Hembree, EM/EMS Director to come tonight and gave him thanks for assisting the Town of Santeetlah after the storm had destroyed a lot of property in that area. Commissioner Williams stated that Larry was there to assist immediately following the storm and has assisted every day since. Commissioner Williams stated that DENR had come to the Town and was giving them a hard time about the brush being placed at a site not designated as a debris removal site and Manager Cable had assisted in this by letting DENR know of the debris removal site which was opened for our use. Commissioner Williams stated that he appreciated all of Larry's efforts along with the Town of Santeetlah and the Thunderbird Community. Commissioner Williams stated that the Town has applied for reimbursement for the

damage and hopefully the Town would receive 75% of the money spent back into their general fund.

10. Chairman Eller asks for further comments. No further comments was given.

11. Chairman Eller adjourned the workshop session.

Keith Eller, Chairman, Graham County Commissioner

Jacob Nelms, Vice-Chairman, Graham County Commissioner

Lynn Cody, Member, Graham County Commissioner

Connie Orr, Member, Graham County Commissioner

Raymond Williams, Member, Graham County Commissioner

ATTEST:

Kim Crisp, Clerk to the Board