

Workshop Session – January 22, 2013

The Graham County Board of Commissioners met Tuesday, January 22, 2013 at 4:00 p.m. in the Graham County Community Building located at 196 Knight Street Robbinsville, NC for their regular workshop session. The meeting date was changed due to the holiday closing on Monday, January 21, 2013. Commissioners present were: Robert M. Edwards, Chairman; Billy Holder, Vice-Chairman; Keith Eller, Member and Connie Orr, Member. Commissioner Williams was absent due to illness.

1. Commissioner Edwards called the workshop session to order.
2. Commissioner Edwards asks Tammy Holloway to speak. Clerk Crisp stated that Ms. Holloway was unable to attend and Chief Jailor Chuck Stewart would present the request. Mr. Stewart asks the board's permission to swap his office with the magistrate office. Mr. Stewart stated that this move would provide a better location for him to oversee the jail and would provide more space to the magistrates which they need when dealing with small claims hearings. Mr. Stewart stated that he would have the inmates do the actual moving and further stated his only concern was about the phone lines. Clerk Crisp stated that there is a CISCO line into the magistrate office and this should be very easy to swap out. Mr. Stewart stated that Ms. Holloway would notify the state about moving their phone lines and requested that she be allowed to paint the office. Mr. Stewart stated that he would use the inmates to complete the work.
3. Commissioner Edwards asks Alicia Parham, Health Director to speak. Ms. Parham stated that she was here to present the Community Health Assessment which is the foundation for improving and promoting the health of county residents. Ms. Parham stated that the role of the assessment is to identify factors that affect the health of population and determine the availability of resources within the county to adequately address these factors. Ms. Parham gave a detailed report on the issues that face Graham County and stated that she is working extensively with hospitals and other community partners to develop strategies to improve at least two of the priority areas. Ms. Parham stated that this is an ongoing process to improve and promote the health of Graham County. Ms. Parham stated that the Community Health Assessment will be used as the foundation for concerned citizens and community leaders to strengthen the capacity for moving forward to change both individual and community health outcomes. Ms. Parham asks the board for any questions. No questions were asked.

Ms. Parham also asks the board for permission to purchase a storage building from the school carpentry class. Ms. Parham stated that the building is approximately \$2600.00 and would be used to store items that can be used at the farmer's market such as sidewalk stands, tote bags, coolers and tables. Ms. Parham stated that these items can be signed out for use by the public and further stated that these items were purchased with a community grant. Commissioner Orr stated that she would like to go see the building and Ms. Parham stated that they were behind the high school where the carpentry class was located.

4. Commissioner Edwards asks Erma Phillips to speak to the board on the tax revaluation. Commissioner Edwards stated that the board needed to hear the reasons why the county needed to contract the work out versus doing the work in house. Ms. Phillips stated that she did not have enough personnel to do the revaluation in house and she did not have the time to have someone trained. Ms. Phillips stated that she had spoken with three companies and she recommended one of the companies. Ms. Phillips stated that the revaluation will be done in 2015 but it has to be started this year. Ms. Phillips stated that values are down. Commissioner Edwards stated that he needed a better understanding on the schedule of values prior to the acceptance of the values. Commissioner Orr asks how they are determined. Ms. Phillips stated that she must use qualified sales which determine the price per acre and the prices per square foot. Commissioner Holder stated that the county needed to adjust acreage on the land that is too rough and rocky to use. Commissioner Holder stated that the old maps showed the property lines as ridges and branches and it was hard to determine the correct acreage. Commissioner Orr stated that it would be hard to get a true medium when there have been so few sales. The board all wanted this studied out before any decisions were made.
5. Commissioner Edwards asks Barry Levy to speak on the Travel and Tourism. Mr. Levy stated that the Travel and Tourism had a very small budget with 40% going to labor which did not leave enough revenue for the department to operate and asks that the commissioners consider raising the occupancy tax to 6%. Mr. Levy stated that this did not affect local citizens but only applied to tourists. Mr. Levy also stated that he has been doing some research on a 1% meal tax which would also help bring in revenue. Mr. Levy stated that this would catch the day trippers and provide revenue. Commissioner Edwards stated that this would have to be brought before the legislature. Finance Officer, Rebecca Garland stated that she needed to research this and see how the authorization is given to raise the occupancy tax and further stated that she would be

glad to speak with Representative West to determine how the county could implement this change. Commissioner Edwards stated that the county needed to study this and find out what the requirements are.

6. Commissioner Edwards asks John Fiel to speak. Mr. Fiel stated that he was here on behalf of the Chamber of Commerce with concerns of the landslide on the Cherohala. Mr. Fiel stated that this was a main thoroughfare for tourists and asks the commissioners out the time limit for the repairs. Mr. Fiel stated that he would like to see this project be moving faster and urged the commissioners to pass a resolution asking our representatives to help reopen the road as quickly as possible. Commissioner Eller stated that he thought the road was being worked on now and a temporary access would be opened as quickly as possible. Mr. Fiel stated that the closing of the road would make a hard impact on our tourism.
7. Commissioner Edwards adjourned the Worksession.

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Robert M. (Mike) Edwards, Member, Graham County Commissioner

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Keith Eller, Member, Graham County Commissioner

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Billy Holder, Member, Graham County Commissioner

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Connie Orr, Member, Graham County Commissioner

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Raymond Williams. Member, Graham County Commissioner

ATTEST:

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Kim Crisp, Clerk to the Board