

Regular Meeting – April 22, 2013

The Graham County Board of Commissioners met Monday, April 22, 2013 at 5:00 p.m. for their regular monthly meeting in the Graham County Community Building located at 196 Knight Street Robbinsville NC. All board members were present.

1. Commissioner Edwards called the meeting to order and welcomed everyone.
2. Commissioner Edwards gave the Invocation.
3. Commissioner Edwards asks Commissioner Orr to lead the Pledge of Allegiance.
4. Commissioner Williams asks if everyone would have a moment of silence for Tommy Cunningham who was a very good friend of his that had just passed away. The board gave a moment of silence in remembrance of Tommy Cunningham.
5. Commissioner Edwards asks for approval of the agenda. Commissioner Holder made the motion to approve the agenda. Commissioner Williams seconded this motion. Vote unanimous.
6. Commissioner Edwards asks for approval of the Workshop and Regular Meeting Minutes for March 18, 2013. Commissioner Orr made the motion to approve the minutes. Commissioner Williams seconded this motion. Vote unanimous.
7. Commissioner Edwards asks for the finance report. Ms. Rebecca Garland stated that the county ended the month of March with \$4.8 million in the bank and the county was in good standing. Ms. Garland stated that the tax office had been working very hard on debt setoffs and garnishments and thanked the taxpayers of the county for continuing to pay their taxes. Ms. Garland stated that the county was running at a surplus at this time but that amount would lower due to the school bond payment that will be made but in all the county is still tracking ahead. Ms. Garland stated that the departments were doing okay, with a few running very tight and encouraged all department heads to hold the line on their spending.
8. Ms. Garland stated that she did need authorization to open a Federal Drug Tax Bank Account for the Sheriff's Department. This account will be used for any federal drug tax money collected from drug raids. Ms. Garland stated that the past sheriff's have had this type of account and the county is just now receiving some federal funds.
9. Ms. Garland asks the board to consider shifting some money to capital management which would allow us to draw a little more interest on our money. Ms. Garland suggested that the county put \$500,000.00 in the fund for a start. Ms. Garland stated that anytime a county can show that they are sound then the local government commission is pleased. The board asks questions on penalties for early withdrawal if needed and Ms. Garland stated that there would not be any penalties on the money.
10. Ms. Garland presented the board with a request from the sheriff's department for new computers. Ms. Garland stated that some of their computers had been given to them after the fire destroyed the old sheriff's department building. Ms. Garland stated that the money was in the budget for the purchase of the computers but the cost was above her spending limits and needed board approval. Commissioner Williams stated that the sheriff should be allowed to use his money in his budget. Ms. Garland stated that no one could go against the budget control act of the state and this is a rule that department's are not allowed to spend over their budget without prior approval. Commissioner Orr stated that the commissioners owed due diligence to the taxpayers of this county to see that the monies are spent in the correct way. Ms. Garland stated that she had been working with Chief Deputy Jerry Crisp on the sheriff's budget and that was working very well.
11. Ms. Garland also presented the board with a request from the 911 funds for a total of \$41,222.00 for software upgrades. Ms. Garland stated that the 911 funds could only be used for specific items and this is one that would be approved. The board all agreed that the 911 funds should be available to the county for any use because it is paid by the taxpayers on their phone bills. Ms. Garland stated that the new system would tack on to the old system and be able to provide a more quality information system.
12. Ms. Garland also presented a request for new chairs for the dispatchers at a cost of \$909.00 each. Commissioner Williams stated that the dispatchers are there 24 hours per day and they need good chairs. Ms. Garland stated that these chairs can be paid with 911 funds also.
13. Ms. Garland stated that the last thing for discussion was new software for the finance office. Ms. Garland gave a brief review of the software and the benefits it would have to the county plus she would bring payroll in-house and save those monies and well as freeing up some of Clerk Crisp time on the calculations of annual and sick leave. Ms. Garland stated that the program would allow all department heads to do purchase requisitions on their computers and would allow the departments to know where they are at with their budget calculations. The commissioners were very happy with the presentation and the availability of knowing where the county is with budget at all times.

14. Commissioner Edwards stated that the board would now go into action items for the finance office. Commissioner Williams made the motion to allow a Federal Drug Tax Bank Account be opened for the sheriff's department. Commissioner Orr seconded this motion. Vote unanimous.
15. Commissioner Orr made the motion to shift \$500,000.00 to a capital management trust fund for a better interest rate. Commissioner Holder seconded this motion. Vote unanimous.
16. Commissioner Williams made the motion to allow the purchase of the new computers for the sheriff's department. Commissioner Orr seconded this motion. Vote unanimous.
17. Commissioner Williams made the motion to allow for the 911 expenditures for computer software and chairs. Commissioner Eller seconded this motion. Vote unanimous.
18. Commissioner Holder made the motion to approve the purchase of the finance office software. Commissioner Orr seconded this motion. Vote unanimous.
19. Commissioner Edwards asks Tabitha Myler and Revonda Williams to speak. Ms. Myler stated that she was here seeking a letter of support from the commissioners to use the property on Hwy 129 By-Pass as a parking and picnic area for the new proposed Welcome Center. Ms. Williams stated that United Community Bank was willing to allow Travel and Tourism to sign a long term lease for the paved property that sits beside the county property to build a Welcome Center. The board all agreed that a new Welcome Center would be great but would like to see the Travel and Tourism try and purchase the property from the bank at some point. The board also agreed that they will consider signing over the county property as collateral if Travel and Tourism needed it. The board all agreed to a letter of support with the plan to lease the property from the bank and to consider an option to buy the property in the future. Commissioner Williams made the motion to write the letter of support. Commissioner Eller seconded this motion. Vote unanimous.
20. Commissioner Eller made the motion to allow the use of the county property located on Hwy 129 By-Pass for a Welcome Center and to consider transferring ownership of that property to Travel and Tourism contingent upon the agreement with United Community Bank. Commissioner Williams seconded this motion. Vote unanimous.
21. Ms. Myler requested that the board consider increasing the room occupancy tax to 6% and to charge a 1% food tax. Ms. Myler stated that the room occupancy tax is paid by tourists and this would create much needed revenue for travel and tourism activities. Commissioner Williams made the motion to increase the room occupancy tax to 6%. Commissioner Holder seconded this motion. Vote unanimous. Commissioner Orr wanted to clarify that the municipalities that chose to charge 3% can do so and the county would collect the remaining 3% as usual. Ms. Garland stated that this was her understanding as well. Commissioner Edwards stated that the municipalities have the right to do that and we respect their decision in doing so.
22. Commissioner Williams stated that he has been receiving complaints on the vendor charges for the Heritage Festival. Ms. Myler stated that Teresa Garland was in charge of the Heritage Festival and not Travel and Tourism.
23. Commissioner Williams also stated that he had complaints about Travel and Tourism not funding the Music on the Square. Ms. Myler stated that the Travel and Tourism Authority did not fund Music on the Square this year but she was seeking private donations to continue the event. Ms. Williams stated that the request to Travel and Tourism was to fund the entire event and the board's purpose is to draw people to our county to rent rooms and this particular event did not draw a lot of out of town people. Steve Jordan, a member in the audience stated that his band would play for free to help out when they could. The board all agreed that this should be revisited by the Travel and Tourism Board.
24. Commissioner Edwards asks Juanita Colvard to speak. Ms. Colvard stated that she is here to get approval for Architectural Administrative Services for the additional amenities to the Transit Facility project and extending the contract time at the new Transit Facility. The cost for those services is \$6000.00. The board congratulated Ms. Colvard on obtaining more funding from the state for the new transit facility. Commissioner Orr made the motion to approve the Additional Services fee of \$6000.00. Commissioner Williams seconded this motion. Vote unanimous.
25. Commissioner Edwards asks Alicia Parham to speak on the Electronic Medical Records. Ms. Parham stated that by going to electronic medical records, her department could speed up the cash flow of payments made by the state for Medicaid. Ms. Parham stated that at this present time her staff can only bill out three times per month and this is not feasible. Commissioner Orr stated that the county needed to move forward with collecting all the monies that we can as efficiently as we can. Ms. Rebecca Garland stated that the county could receive incentives if they join the program now which would help with the cost. Commissioner Orr made the motion to approve Electronic Medical Records with the incentive package as presented. Commissioner Holder seconded this motion. Vote unanimous.
26. Commissioner Edwards asks for public comment. Clerk Crisp stated that no one had signed in for public comment.

27. Commissioner Edwards stated that the county would now go into the discussion items and asks Manager Cable to proceed. Manager Cable stated that he was now finished with classes at Chapel Hill and stated that he did graduate and has his certificate in his office.
28. Manager Cable stated that he has a request from Relay for Life for a cash sponsorship. The board all agreed to provide the in-kind services, bleachers (setting up and taking down) and the garbage cans (installing and removing) as well as supplying the personnel.
29. Manager Cable stated that he would need approval on our yearly renewal for our Verizon Wireless account which is over his threshold of spending limit.
30. Manager Cable stated that he would need approval for the poll that was taken on March 21, 2013 on the new Senior Center Site.
31. Manager Cable asks if the board wanted to participate in the Beaver Management Assistance Program at a cost of \$4000.00. The board all stated "no".
32. Manager Cable stated that he would need approval on the extra cost for the senior center meals through the end of June 2013 at a cost of \$12,625.60.
33. Manager Cable stated that our Graham County sign had been stolen at Topton and recommended that the board go with a metal sign which will be remarkably cheaper.
34. Manager Cable stated that the Board of Health had taken over the Hill Top Advisory Board due to the non-participation of the board members.
35. Manager Cable asks if the board wanted to do a resolution to defend rights to keep and bear arms on the 2nd amendment to the US Constitution. The board all felt that this was not an issue since the bill was defeated in the Senate.
36. Manager Cable stated that he had a request for the county to contribute funds to the Corridor K Coalition. The board all agreed that if any one board member wanted to contribute they could, but county taxpayer dollars would not be used.
37. Manager Cable gave an update on the recycling in the county and stated that the Stecoah site was almost ready and was awaiting Duke Energy to hook up the power. Manager Cable stated that the East Buffalo site was ready and the recycling board was making every effort to keep the destruction of the sites at a minimum. Manager Cable stated that the recycling board did suggest cameras but he felt that these would be destroyed. Manager Cable stated that the other alternative is to minimize the sites and keep them manned. The board all agreed that they would need to hold public hearings and get the public's views. The board all agreed that if people did begin throwing out their garbage illegally then they needed to be prosecuted and the US Government could patrol their own properties.
38. Manager Cable stated that the county did receive a Community Development Block Grant for \$225,000.00 for new homes and possible home repairs.
39. Manager Cable stated that the school had asked about the pool fees for the summer camps and stated that they did need certified lifeguards when they are attending the pool. Clerk Crisp stated that Recreation Director Jason Sawyer was in the process of getting the names together for lifeguards and we would send two for certification.
40. Manager Cable stated that he did have a couple of new items which include a class for Misty Hembree and Tabby Phillips to attend a 911 Dispatcher course in Boone, NC in June which will be paid by 911 funds.
41. Manager Cable stated that he was ready for the board to approve the county pay plan and further stated that the Office of State Personnel had approved the plan as well.
42. Manager Cable gave an update on the Sheriff's vehicles and stated that one car and the sheriff's truck was due in this week.
43. Commissioner Edwards stated that the county would now go into action items. Commissioner Edwards asks for approval of the Releases and Discoveries. Commissioner Williams made the motion to approve the releases and discoveries. Commissioner Holder seconded this motion. Vote unanimous.
44. Commissioner Edwards stated that the county doesn't like to do polls but the county must for the new Senior Center Facility due to the necessity of getting the building built quickly. Commissioner Edwards stated that the board had taken two polls for site changes and needed the board to approve the polls. The polls were taken on March 21, 2013 for \$2270.00 and on April 16, 2013 for \$7000.00 for site changes. Commissioner Eller made the motion to approve the two polls. Commissioner Williams seconded this motion. Vote unanimous.
45. Commissioner Edwards asks about the Relay for Life request. Commissioner Williams made the motion to give in-kind services to the Relay for Life. Commissioner Holder seconded this motion. Vote unanimous.
46. Commissioner Orr made the motion to approve the HCCBG 2013-2014 Grant Provisions for County-Based Aging Services. Commissioner Williams seconded this motion. Vote unanimous.
47. Commissioner Williams made the motion to approve the Verizon Wireless cell phone renewal for the county. Commissioner Orr seconded this motion. Vote unanimous.

48. Commissioner Orr made the motion to enforce a Tobacco Free Parks Ordinance for the county. Commissioner Edwards asks for a second. Motion failed for lack of a second.
49. Commissioner Williams made the motion to charge the same fees that was charged last year for the school summer camp programs. Commissioner Orr seconded this motion. Vote unanimous.
50. Commissioner Orr made the motion to give \$1000.00 to Williams Construction to install a water line under the road at the new senior center site. Commissioner Williams seconded this motion. Vote unanimous.
51. Commissioner Orr made the motion to approve the outside design of the new Senior Center building and use stack rock similar to the new transit facility. Commissioner Eller seconded this motion. The board was aware that there is a price difference of the rock around \$9000.00. Vote unanimous. Commissioner Orr stated that the buildings needed to be similar in appearance.
52. Commissioner Orr made the motion to accept the CDBG Award of \$225,000.00 for Scattered Site Housing. Commissioner Williams seconded this motion. Vote unanimous.
53. Commissioner Williams made the motion to approve the extra senior meals for \$12,625.60 till the end of June 2013. Commissioner Orr seconded this motion. Vote unanimous.
54. Commissioner Williams made the motion to allow Andy Cable to travel to Raleigh on May 7th to accept the CDBG Award. Commissioner Orr seconded this motion. Vote unanimous.
55. Commissioner Williams made the motion to allow Misty Hembree and Tabby Phillips to travel to Boone, NC in June for the 911 Dispatcher Course. Commissioner Orr seconded this motion. Vote unanimous.
56. Commissioner Williams made the motion to go into closed session under G. S. 143-318.11(a) (1) (3) (6) for privileged or confidential information, attorney-client privilege, personnel and contracts. Commissioner Holder seconded this motion. Vote unanimous.
57. Commissioner Orr made the motion to go back into open session. Commissioner Williams seconded this motion. Vote unanimous.
58. Commissioner Orr made the motion to hire Tony England as a part time custodian. Commissioner Holder seconded this motion. Vote unanimous.
59. Commissioner Edwards stated that the board gave a directive to Transit Director Juanita Colvard to use her discretion and judgment to implement any necessary changes to ensure that Graham County Transit utilizes all Federal / State grant funding that has been appropriated for Graham County Transit.
60. Commissioner Orr made the motion to adjourn. Commissioner Eller seconded this motion. Vote unanimous.

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

Keith Eller, Member, Graham County Commissioner

Billy Holder, Member, Graham County Commissioner

Connie Orr, Member, Graham County Commissioner

Raymond Williams. Member, Graham County Commissioner

ATTEST:

Kim Crisp, Clerk to the Board