

Workshop Session – June 19, 2018

The Graham County Board of Commissioners met Tuesday, June 19, 2018 at 5:00 p.m. for their regular workshop session in the Graham County Community Building located at 196 Knight Street Robbinsville, NC. All board was present.

1. Chairman Eller called the workshop session to order.
2. Chairman Eller asks Manager Garland to speak. Manager Garland stated that she asked the Sanitation Department to come before the board and express their thoughts on the garbage issues that the county is facing.
3. Sanitation Director Gavin Colvard stated that his one concern was the brush that the county sees at the dumpster sites and at the transfer station and asks if the board would allow him to take the brush and have it cut up for mulch or contract and have it hauled out. Director Colvard stated that it is becoming a huge problem for residents that have no way to dispose of the brush. Chairman Eller asks if the state would allow for the transfer station to collect the brush. Director Colvard stated that we can if we change our Operations Plan. Director Colvard stated that we could charge to take the brush and this will offset the cost of contracting the disposal of the brush. Commissioner Nelms stated that he thought this was a good idea. Commissioner Williams asks that Director Colvard obtain prices for a grinder.
4. Commissioner Williams stated that we also have an issue with illegal garbage disposal at the site on Highway 28. Commissioner Williams stated that people from Swain County that are charging residents to pick up their trash in Swain County is bringing their garbage to Graham County and disposing of it for free instead of paying for the disposal in Swain County. The staff was fully aware of this situation and further stated that we are having the same issues at Bear Creek with Cherokee County residents using that site. The staff suggests that the county allow the sites to be manned again for at least 6 months to see if we can separate the garbage and do more recycling.
5. Commissioner Williams stated that he had spoken with people from Fontana and they were requesting a dumpster to be placed at the Appalachian Trail so that the hikers will dispose of their garbage in this can instead of throwing the waste into the lake. Commissioner Williams stated that they also had comment on the \$65.00 charge to empty their can. Director Colvard stated that Fontana fills up the dumpsters at Prince Road and the overflow goes to the Hwy 28 site. Director Colvard stated that Fontana is charged for a maximum of two cans. Director Colvard stated that he has requested that Fontana Staff assist our personnel when we have to clean up the site due to the garbage being placed on the ground.
6. Director Colvard stated that his department has been discussing better ways to pick up the garbage and suggested that 12 hour days be worked in the summer months. Manager Garland stated that she and Director Colvard would need to sit down and do the math to see if his budget would allow this. Director Colvard stated that he is also discussing running a truck for half of a day on Sunday's which would help with the pilfering. Employee Hooper suggests that the county block off the sites at 8:00 p.m. Commissioner Williams stated that the people would just set their garbage off in front of the gates.
7. Employee Hooper stated that the pilfering is a major problem and people tear open the bags and scatter the contents all over the dumpster sites. Employee Hooper also stated that women are afraid to go to the dumpster sites after dark due to the pilfering and our residents should not be afraid to go to any of our dumpster sites.
8. Employee Shaffer stated that we needed gates at every site and shut down the sites at 8:00 p.m. every night. Employee Shaffer asks if the county had law on the books to regulate people from destroying these sites and if so, the county needed to prosecute. The board all stated that we have an ordinance but it is not enforced. Employee Hooper stated that he would write tickets and hand them out. The staff discussed the needles that are found at the dumpster sites and the danger that this poses for children. Employee Shaffer stated that we needed some way to remove the cardboard from the sites because the taxpayers are paying for this to go to Ballground and the county could be making money.
9. Employee Higdon stated that he witnessed kids being at the sites with no shoes on and there are needles and glass everywhere. Employee Higdon stated that if someone gets hurts at these sites they will sue the county. Employee Higdon stated that we needed to find some method

that is accessible for everyone to dispose of their garbage. Employee Higdon stated that they try to do a good job.

10. Employee Jones stated that we needed better signage concerning the recycling.
11. Employee Hooper stated that we needed to get the Sheriff's Department to help us with this situation because we are only talking about a few people who are destroying these sites. Employee Hooper stated that we needed cameras to be reinstalled at these sites and catch the people who are responsible for destroying the sites.
12. The staff stated that they will help the county enforce the ordinance. Manager Garland stated that the county can write citations and the county would have to take the individuals to small claims court to collect the fees but law enforcement did need to stand behind us in making this happen.
13. Employee Hooper stated that once you began to write the citations, the others will hear about it and hopes that they will stop destroying the sites. Manager Garland asks Tajuana Ledwell is the county could do debt set-off. Ms. Ledwell stated that debt set-off only works for people who receive a state tax refund and some of the people do not work.
14. Employee Hooper stated that most residents are afraid of the scales and they need to be told that they are not charged for certain items that cross the scales. The board all agreed that this needed to be run in the paper again and educate the public about what can be brought to the station.
15. Employee Jones stated that one morning someone threw out bunk beds and a couch and the staff has to pick these up and load them on trucks.
16. Employee Millsaps stated that the Sweetwater Site is the worst and something needed to be done.
17. Employee Shaffer stated that if people would help the county and tell on the people who set these items out then the county could write tickets.
18. The board thanked the sanitation staff for their hard work and would continue to work on a solution concerning the dumpster sites.

Keith Eller, Chairman, Graham County Commissioner

Connie Orr, Vice-Chairman, Graham County Commissioner

Jacob Nelms, Member, Graham County Commissioner

Dale E. Wiggins, Member, Graham County Commissioner

Raymond Williams, Member, Graham County Commissioner

ATTEST:

Kim Crisp, Clerk to the Board