

Regular Meeting – December 18, 2018

The Graham County Board of Commissioners met Tuesday, December 18, 2018 at 5:30 p.m. in the Graham County Community Building located at 196 Knight Street Robbinsville, NC for their regular monthly meeting. All board was present.

1. Chairman Wiggins called the meeting to order.
2. Chairman Wiggins asks Commissioner Nelms to give the Invocation.
3. Chairman Wiggins led the Pledge of Allegiance.
4. Chairman Wiggins asks for changes to the agenda. Manager Garland stated that we needed to add Reid Miller under #9 Discussion Items and Attorney Coward needed to add a lawsuit to Item #10 Closed Session. Chairman Wiggins asks for approval of the agenda with the stated changes. Commissioner Eller made the motion to approve the agenda. Commissioner Cody seconded this motion. Vote unanimous.
5. Chairman Wiggins asks for approval of the minutes for the Organizational Meeting December 3rd; Regular Meeting December 4th and the Special Meeting December 11th. Commissioner Eller made the motion to approve the minutes as stated. Commissioner Nelms seconded this motion. Vote unanimous.
6. Chairman Wiggins asks Sophia Paulos for the EDC Monthly Report. Ms. Paulos began tonight's report by welcoming the return of Commissioner Cody who was a member of the board that brought her on here in Graham County. Ms. Paulos stated that she has been serving here has been one of the greater honors she has had in her life and she is excited to see the work that she knows we will continue to accomplish together.
7. **Main Street:** This past month they held the first full team meeting for the revitalization of Main Street. Currently there are two major grant and state funded efforts underway. The Economic Development Plan being done for the Town of Robbinsville by Ann Bass and the state Main Street & Rural Planning Office and the Feasibility Study being conducted for the Graham County Historical Association. Both plans require similar research and to guide that effort Mrs. Bass and she have assembled a team of some of Graham County's finest citizens. With representation from the tribe, 3 local non-profits including GCHA, Church Mouse Ministries, and GREAT, property owners, and members of the RHS student council they are well on their way to two successful projects that will be able to leverage each. Progress is already being made through the extraordinary efforts of Michelle Shiplet, funding has been secured to begin the community garden in earnest this spring and are now a finalist for grant funding that will pay to begin the mural project on Main Street in a collaborative effort with the tribe. The team will begin meeting monthly in the New Year and will launch listening sessions with members of the public as well as surveys for local, regional, national, and international visitors. This data will be used to inform both the Economic Development Plan for the town and the historical association's feasibility study. The team is excited and she stated that she appreciated this board's support of all of the efforts by so many to revitalize our downtown. It's working! As a side note, Lisa Buckley with the State Historic Preservation Office, has completed her final draft of the comprehensive survey of historic Robbinsville properties.
8. **Health:** Ms. Paulos has been working hard to help secure resources to support the county wide efforts to improve health care for our citizens and as reported last month she was able to locate a new funding source to support those efforts while in Raleigh and now our partners have those resources. Over the last few weeks connection was made between Swain Community and Harris Regional hospitals with the information and contacts they need to secure funding that can support their efforts to improve rural health care beyond the walls of the hospital. Ms. Paulos thanked Manager Garland for sharing this information with our partners for the dialysis center as well. Investments like this from the state improve the ROI of rural health care facilities and increase access to health care for our citizens and is truly grateful for the hard work so many are doing in this regard. This effort has been one of the focal points of support from Hometown Strong as we lift up our many projects while simultaneously facing the deficits anticipated to be created by Medicaid transformation. Through local meetings and several discussions with Maggie Sauer, Director of DHHS' Office of Rural Health, Graham County is leading the way in Health Care. Through these efforts it was decided that preparing for the depths of Medicaid transformation was something that the whole region needs to consider. As a result, a regional stakeholder meeting to address Medicaid transformation, rural health, and the attempt to improve access and services in the face of change and challenges is being planned for the morning of January 25th at Southwestern Community College. Ms. Paulos thanked Sarah Thompson, Executive Director of the Southwestern Commission, for helping to facilitate and

coordinate this meeting and encourages those of you who are able to plan to attend and she will keep the board apprised of the details as they solidify.

9. **Outdoor Recreation Industry:** The history of the economy in these mountains has been a struggle between manufacturing and tourism for centuries now. Never did anyone ever begin to imagine the two would merge as they are now. Ms. Paulos reported quite a bit on this over the past year and she was happy to share that because yesterday was the first advisory council meeting for the \$1M ARC POWER awarded to Mountain BizWorks. As a member of the Board of Directors for Mountain BizWorks, Graham County has a seat at that table with Ms. Paulos on the board and she thanked this board for their continued support of that role. Part of the grant will see (6) towns, or groups of towns, have the opportunity to be advised by industry leaders on how to best grow and thrive in the outdoor recreation economy. Ms. Paulos asked the board for permission to work with the Towns of Fontana, Robbinsville, and Santeetlah to collectively submit a letter of interest for Graham County's three towns. While the submission date has not been determined she would like time to work with the town to prepare for this group effort. Ms. Paulos asks the board's support to move forward on this effort. Commissioner Eller stated that the Towns are a part of Graham County and she did not need to ask permission to work with them. The board agreed.
10. **NFPF:** Our work with the Nantahala Pisgah Forest Partnership continues to bear fruit. Many took the time to listen to the (30) minute radio program produced by Carolina Public Press and WPVN public radio which aired several times beginning on Thanksgiving Day. Our partners in the forest partnership have taken a great interest and active role in supporting Graham County. The partnership's dedication to the county has led to the development of an outdoor recreation proposal that, when complete, we will submit to the USFS. As you may recall early this past year members of American Whitewater, SORBA, IMBA, SELC, The Access Fund, and Backcountry Horsemen came to meet with our tourism officials and town leaders to explore possibilities for a proposal that will create a recreation loop around the county. As the forest plan has taken shape we have worked to ensure that such a proposal will fit within the prevue of the anticipated forest plan alternatives. Anticipating the release of those draft alternatives now in March, she and our partners are piecing together the final draft to share with our towns, TDA, and this board so that we can finalize it and submit the proposal prior to the forest plan draft release. This proposal has created great interest among the partner organizations and some believe they may even be able to fund substantial portions of it. Additionally it will support the work of myself and Ann Bass as we work on the Outdoor Recreation Economy Strategic Development Plan. After reviewing the draft with the towns, GREAT, and the TDA, she will share the final draft with this board for final approval and thanked Shaun Garrison for working so hard to help myself and the TDA create maps critical to planning and marketing.
11. **Workforce:** The Southwestern Commission administers the Southwestern Workforce Development Board. Per 2015 Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) legislation, a consortium of local governments in the Southwestern Workforce Development region (Region A) act jointly to fulfill the legal and financial requirements of operating as the Workforce Investment Area under WIOA. The Consortium is documented in an agreement between the 7-county geographic areas covered by the Southwestern Commission. As part of the agreement, a "Chief Elected Official" for the Southwestern Workforce Development Board was established. Michael Sorrels was the acting Chief Elected Official until the end of his term on December 3, 2018. Section 4 Article 3 of the agreement will need to be amended to reflect a new Chief Elected Official. The Southwestern Commission and Southwestern Workforce Development Board recommend Gary Shields, Macon County Commissioner, as the next Chief Elected Official for our region. Attached is a copy of the amended consortium agreement mentioned above. It has been amended to reflect Macon County (Gary Shields) as the WIOA Chief Elected Official. Will this board please accept the amendment to Section 4 Article 3 of the agreement in support of the Commission's recommendation for Gary Shields, Macon County Commissioner, as the next Chief Elected Official for our region's Workforce Development Board?
12. **Last but not Least:** This has been an incredible year for our County. Ms. Paulos has now been serving the people here for two and a half years. In that time, she has secured roughly \$3.7 million dollars in investment capital for our small businesses and manufacturing facilities and secured \$534,000 in grant funding directly for Graham County and partnered in securing \$1.3 million in grants; \$1.1M POWER grants, and \$100,000 Strategic Tourism Implementation grant. Ms. Paulos has helped create nearly (100) jobs, worked to drive the unemployment rate down from 8.5% to 5.5%, and partnered with our towns, citizens, and non-profits to make great things happen for this county. Ms. Paulos thanked Juanita Colvard and Rebecca Garland for their relentless dedication to this county. Edd Satterfield and Michelle Shiplet for their dedication to the revitalization of Main Street, Brian Johnson for his exemplary service as town alderman and dedication to the many projects that require true partnerships to achieve, Rick Davis and the members of GREAT for their continued leadership in making this county the best that it can be,

the Partners of Joyce Kilmer for maintaining our trails, all of the dedicated staff who work hard to do well by the county, and the countless citizens without whom this county would not be the incredibly special place that we all call home. Last but certainly not least, she thanked the board for their continued support not only of her office but the staff as a whole and those who are working tirelessly to make Graham County thrive again. Ms. Paulos stated that she appreciated every single person in this room for what they do and with that wished each of them a very Merry Christmas and a blessed New Year!

13. Chairman Wiggins asks for the Finance and Manager's Report. Manager Garland stated that we ended the month with a cash balance of \$7,573,891.14 and are owed \$391,741.80 from the 911 Board which would put us ahead \$271,121.91 of last year at this time. Manager Garland stated that we have collected \$913,058.59 in real taxes; \$6,706.00 in prior year taxes for a monthly total of \$919,764.59. Manager Garland stated that we collected \$35,460.25 in DMV taxes. Manager Garland stated that our year to date taxes for real is \$2,603,205.46 and DMV of \$208,988.61. Manager Garland stated that our tax collection rate is 40.29% which is a little behind from this time last time.
14. Manager Garland stated that our expenditures for the month was \$1,510,622.84 and our revenues was \$1,498,082.05 for a deficit of \$12,540.70. Manager Garland stated that our year to date expenditures are \$5,794,110.64 and our revenues are \$6,069,435.05 for a year to date surplus of \$275,224.41.
15. Manager Garland stated that our sales tax collection for the month is \$188,271.30 and we are ahead from this time last year.
16. Manager Garland stated that we have collected \$473,047.25 in past due taxes and since 2013 we have collected a total of \$613,311.57 in past due taxes and thanked the tax office for their hard work.
17. Manager Garland stated that our budget is going good and we are at 62%.
18. Manager Garland stated that Heery has sent dates to do a call in January and can do January 7th or 8th; or the 14th or 15th. The board asks that the meeting be booked on a Friday. Manager Garland will get back to the board with a confirmed date.
19. Manager Garland stated that the school capital project committee met this morning and constructed an action plan for the next month to include beginning talks about property acquisition and researching the costs of maintenance of the current elementary campus. Manager Garland and Angela Knight, School Superintendent will need to travel to Raleigh January 24th to meet with the school facility people at DPI to get more information on putting together a successful grant application and in addition she got a preliminary drawing for an elementary school at the current high/middle school campus and those drawings were reviewed.
20. Manager Garland stated that the board had requested her to draft a resolution in support of permanent funding for the SRS funding in Congress and presented to the board for approval. Commissioner Cody made the motion to adopt the Resolution in Support of Permanent Funding of Secure Rural Schools by Congress. Commissioner Nelms seconded this motion. Vote unanimous.
21. Manager Garland stated that she, Commissioner Eller and Commissioner Nelms went to Asheville for the meeting between the consultants, DOT and the agencies concerning A-0009. There are no new surprises to report, they went over the draft report and are working toward public input sessions in January or February.
22. Manager Garland stated that Commissioner Wiggins and she reviewed some policies at sanitation and we allow local business owners to get weighed on our scales for reference to ensure they are not overweight. Our scale operators have been asked to stamp tickets and provide blank tickets as certified for reimbursement by other entities. Manager Garland drafted a policy with Attorney Coward's approval for the board to adopt. Commissioner Orr asks if everything is in the policy that needs to be there. The board felt that it was complete. Commissioner Cody made the motion to adopt the policy for scale use at sanitation. Commissioner Eller seconded this motion. Vote unanimous.
23. Manager Garland stated that she has a bill for the bell housing on the Kenworth for Sanitation for \$4500.00. Commissioner Orr made the motion to approve the repairs. Commissioner Cody seconded this motion. Vote unanimous.
24. Manager Garland gave the board more information concerning the EMS Schedules for the board to study and review.
25. Chairman Wiggins asks for public comment. No one was signed in for public comment.
26. Chairman Wiggins stated that Larry Reeves and requested the following individuals be named to the Joint Community Advisory Committee for Long-Term Care, Keisha Greene, Anne Hager, Molly Lunsford and Patsy Williams. Commissioner Orr made the motion to approve the recommendation from Larry Reeves. Commissioner Nelms seconded this motion. Vote unanimous.

27. Chairman Wiggins opened the sealed bids for the surplus vehicles. Ford Escape – Alisa Eller \$202.06 and Machelle Crisp \$200.00; 2006 Crown Victoria – Drew Ford \$200.00; F350 truck – Barry Adams \$500.00. There were no bids for the 2008 Crown Victoria. Commissioner Eller made the motion to accept the bid from Drew Ford and Barry Adams. Commissioner Orr seconded this motion. Vote unanimous. Commissioner Orr made the motion to go with the highest bid for the Ford Escape Alisa Eller. Commissioner Nelms seconded this motion. Vote unanimous. Commissioner Orr made the motion to salvage the 2008 Crown Victoria and allow the Rescue Squad to use the vehicle as training and after the training to dispose of the car in the scrap pile. Commissioner Nelms seconded this motion. Vote unanimous.
28. Chairman Wiggins asks if the board would like to make a donation to the Regional Veteran’s Dinner. Commissioner Nelms made the motion to give \$1000.00 to the Regional Veteran’s Dinner. Commissioner Cody seconded this motion. Vote unanimous.
29. Chairman Wiggins stated that we received information on a NC Urgent Repair Program Grant and asks if the board would be interested in pursuing this grant. The board was in agreement to applying for this grant program. Ms. Sophia Paulos stated that this is a low repayment program with a very minimal payback and is income dependent.
30. Chairman Wiggins asks for a motion to surplus the old copier that was located at the Register of Deeds. Commissioner Orr made the motion to surplus the old copier from the Register of Deeds Office and asks that it be placed in the museum at the Old Snider’s Store. Commissioner Cody seconded this motion. Vote unanimous.
31. Chairman Wiggins stated that we have received a quote to line the County Parking Lot from Aldridge Brothers for \$3705.00. Commissioner Nelms made the motion to accept the quote from Aldridge Brothers to stripe the parking lot. Commissioner Orr seconded this motion. Vote unanimous.
32. Chairman Wiggins stated that the board had a meeting last week with the EMS Employees to discuss a change in their scheduling. Manager Garland presented the board paperwork of how the pay would look like on the new schedule versus the old schedule. The board discussed the hourly wage at length and felt that the wage would have to increase with the understanding that if this new scheduling did not work, then the employee would be returned to their original pay rate that they have now. Chairman Wiggins stated that some employees are happy with this proposed change and some are not. The board also discussed adding a moonlighting policy to our current county policy to reflect the amount of time that the employee has to be off between shifts. Chairman Wiggins stated that some counties have a (6) hour rest period and some have a (12) hour rest period. The board will make a final decision on the January 15th meeting. The board all agreed that we needed to do something because we are running out of medics and it seems that the neighboring counties are going to this new schedule.
33. Chairman Wiggins asks for new or old business. No new or old business was discussed.
34. Chairman Wiggins asks for a motion to go into closed session under G.S, 143-318.11(a) (1) (3) (5) (6) for privileged or confidential information, attorney client privilege, personnel and contracts. Commissioner Nelms made the motion to go into closed session as stated. Commissioner Orr seconded this motion. Vote unanimous.
35. Commissioner Eller made the motion to go back into open session. Commissioner Orr seconded this motion. Vote unanimous.
36. Commissioner Eller made the motion to deny the demand letter from Reid Goldsby Miller concerning NC General Statute 105-381 Demand for Refund for Parcels #553800010080, 553800010081, 553800010082, and 553800010083 (collectively, the “Property”). Commissioner Orr seconded this motion. Vote unanimous.
37. Chairman Wiggins asks for further business. No further business was discussed.
38. Commissioner Cody made the motion to adjourn. Commissioner Nelms seconded this motion. Vote unanimous.

Signature page attached!

Signature page for the Regular Meeting December 18, 2018

Dale Wiggins, Chairman, Graham County Board of Commissioners

Lynn Cody, Vice-Chairman, Graham County Board of Commissioners

Keith Eller, Member, Graham County Board of Commissioners

Jacob Nelms, Member, Graham County Board of Commissioners

Connie Orr, Member, Graham County Board of Commissioners

ATTEST:

Kim Crisp, Clerk to the Board