

Regular Meeting – July 21, 2015

The Graham County Board of Commissioners met Tuesday, July 21, 2015 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 Eller called the meeting to order.
2. Chairman Eller asks Commissioner Williams to give the Invocation.
3. Chairman Eller asks Commissioner Orr to lead the Pledge of Allegiance.
4. Chairman Eller asks for approval of the agenda. Commissioner Nelms made the motion to approve the agenda. Commissioner Orr seconded this motion. Vote unanimous.
5. Chairman Eller asks for approval of the Regular Meeting Minutes of July 7, 2015. Commissioner Orr made the motion to approve the minutes as stated. Commissioner Williams seconded this motion. Vote unanimous.
6. Chairman Eller asks for the finance report. Ms. Garland stated that the final total of year end June 30, 2014 will change a little due to the last of the bills coming through but the final cash balance is \$4,830,185.00 which is better than expected and further stated that this gave us a surplus of \$488,000.00 above this time last year. Ms. Garland stated that all the paperwork had been sent to USDA on the financing of the Transfer Station and we should get approval sometime next week. Ms. Garland stated that our tax collection rate for the year was 96.75% and commended the tax office for their hard work in working the current and past years tax collections. Ms. Garland stated that she did receive the SRS funds and she will be distributing those funds as soon as she gets clarification on the allocation. Ms. Garland stated that the school and the rescue/fire departments receive this allocation. Ms. Garland stated that she is pleased to say that our year to date surplus is \$223,000.00 and this raises us above the 35% average required by the Local Government Commission. Ms. Garland stated that our sales tax collections was up and we ended the year with a \$11,268.00 surplus over last year's collections and this lets us know that people are buying local. Ms. Garland stated that the average tax collection rate throughout North Carolina was .60 cents which makes us come in a little under at .58.5 cents and she is hoping that this will not affect our low wealth funding for the schools. Ms. Garland stated that she had spoken with Lester Green, Finance Officer for the school, and has asked that he come to a meeting and discuss the impacts the statewide budget cuts have made to their funding. Ms. Garland stated that Dr. Knight and Mr. Green would come to a board meeting in the near future. Ms. Garland stated that she did not do a budget report for this meeting due to the closeout of year end but she would have one at the next meeting.
7. Ms. Garland stated that Larry Hembree, EMS Director had reached out to the salesman on the cardiac monitors and the price if we purchase all three is \$90,000.00 or \$30,188.00 each or the county can finance the purchase but usually at a high interest rate for these types of items. Commissioner Cody asks about the value on the return of the old monitors. Ms. Garland stated that Larry Hembree was seeking this information and she could let the board know the amount when it came in. Commissioner Williams made the motion to see what the trade in cost is and if it is minor then donate the monitors to another county in North Carolina and to purchase the three monitors outright. Commissioner Orr seconded this motion. Vote unanimous.
8. Ms. Garland stated that Joseph Jones had found two 2015 Dodge Chargers at Highpoint NC and they are available with a very limited window. Ms. Garland stated that the cost of each vehicle is \$23,779.00 which is \$10,000.00 below the manufactured price. Ms. Garland stated that he had also found two four wheel vehicles, Dodge Nitro heat, for a price of \$15,745.00 each. Commissioner Williams asks how much the total price for all the vehicles is. Ms. Garland stated that the total cost was around \$79,000.00. Commissioner Williams made the motion to get these cars and suv's ordered and on their way. Commissioner Orr seconded this motion. Vote unanimous.
9. Ms. Garland stated that the trade in value for the KIP was \$1,000.00 from the Mapping Department or we could transfer the machine to another department. Ms. Garland stated that the total cost for the new KIP was \$15,500.00. Commissioner Williams made the motion to purchase the new KIP with the trade in of \$1,000.00 on the old machine. Commissioner Nelms seconded this motion. Vote unanimous.
10. Ms. Garland stated that she has an invoice from the Jail for a wood splitter for a cost of \$1,920.41. Commissioner Williams asks what company was used for this quote. Ms. Garland stated that this is from Sears. Commissioner Williams stated that we have two local companies

that can give quotes on a wood splitter and wanted these companies contacted. The board will await those quotes before approving this expenditure.

11. Ms. Garland stated that recreation needed to purchase several more helmets, pants and pads with a cost of around \$1,000.00. Ms. Garland stated that the old pants were not fitting some of the kid. Commissioner Nelms made the motion to approve this purchase. Commissioner Williams seconded this motion. Vote unanimous.
12. Ms. Garland stated that she had been contacted by Jan Garrison, a United Community Bank Corporate Officer and she would like to speak with the commissioners on a UCB Community Reinvestment program. Ms. Garrison felt that she could help our Tier 1 County with grants and other initiative. Ms. Garland stated that Ms. Garrison is Johnny Brooms sister and she wants to help her hometown. Ms. Garland stated that she would contact Ms. Garrison and see when she could meet with the board if they desired. Commissioner Orr made the motion to schedule the meeting. Commissioner Cody seconded this motion. Vote unanimous.
13. Ms. Garland stated that the county had received a new grant and asks Alicia Parham to speak on this grant. Alicia Parham, Health Director stated that the county and schools had received a Teen Outreach Pregnancy Grant in the amount of \$999,999.00 annually for the next five years and Graham County would receive \$100,000.00 of this money on this program. Ms. Parham stated that the grant cycle would be from July 1, 2015 to June 30, 2020.
14. Chairman Eller asks Joan Stillwell to speak. Ms. Stillwell stated that she was here to give the board an update on the USDA projects and the new CDBG project. Ms. Stillwell stated that the new CDBG project was ready for the engineer and the county did well on the score sheet and it is good enough to apply for this grant. Ms. Stillwell requested that she be allowed to use the remaining USDA funds in the Old Sweetwater Road area. Ms. Stillwell stated that this would help us in the new CDBG project qualifications. Ms. Stillwell asks how the board wanted her to proceed with the procurement in order to meet the deadline. Ms. Stillwell stated that DENR will not reimburse for the engineer so if we do procure an engineer and the county doesn't receive the grant then the county would be responsible for the bill. Manager Cable stated that we did not have to send RFQ's on this particular part of the grant due to cost of the procurement. Commissioner Orr asks how much the engineering bill be would be. Ms. Stillwell stated the cost would be approximately \$4,000.00 to \$6,000.00. Commissioner Orr made the motion to approve the request by Ms. Stillwell and to procure an engineer for the CDBG Project. Commissioner Williams seconded this motion. Vote unanimous.
15. Ms. Stillwell stated that in order for us to strengthen the project we would need to try and use the USDA Housing Improvement funds on Old Sweetwater Road. Ms. Stillwell stated that she did audit this area and three of the homes that would be allowable with these funds are: 156 Old Sweetwater Road; 445 Old Sweetwater Road and 1366 Old Sweetwater Road. Ms. Stillwell stated that she hoped to have enough funds to cover all three homes but if not then she recommended using the first two homes. Commissioner Orr made the motion to allow the use of the USDA funds on the homes named by Ms. Stillwell. Commissioner Williams seconded this motion. Vote unanimous.
16. Ms. Stillwell stated that she did get approval on the roof repair for the home located at 876 Beech Creek Road and the bids for that repair was: Betterbuilt \$8,320.00 with a \$600.00 contingency for a total of \$8,920.00 and Charles Toomey \$10,450.00 with a \$8,000.00 contingency for a total of \$18,450.00. Commissioner Orr made the motion to approve the lowest bid which is Betterbuilt. Commissioner Williams seconded this motion. Vote unanimous.
17. Ms. Stillwell stated that she needed to correct the bid amounts from the last meeting and further stated that this home is located on 282 West Eller Branch Road and the bids were: Betterbuilt \$5,393.78 with a contingency of \$2,015.07 for a total of \$7,408.85 and Charles Toomey \$5,750.00 with a contingency of \$2,000.00 for a total of \$7,750.00. Ms. Stillwell stated that these bids are awaiting USDA approval. Commissioner Orr made the motion to accept the lowest bid pending approval by USDA. Commissioner Williams seconded this motion. Vote unanimous.
18. Chairman Eller asks Lynn Cody to speak. Commissioner Cody was here to present a possible projects planning guide. Commissioner Cody stated that this is part of the plan that Rebecca Garland had outlined and touch based on earlier with her Capstone Project. Commissioner Cody stated that the county did not have a planning process and we need to step up and make this happen. Commissioner Cody stated that over the years we have put Band-Aids to correct the problems and now they are not holding so we need to take a step in a new direction. Commissioner Cody stated that we needed to slowly take the large steps instead of sweeping

them under the rug to be forgotten. Commissioner Cody asks that a program be created that published once a month the outline of the projects in the county. Commissioner Cody stated that this would include the new recreation park, purchasing vehicles, and the construction of new buildings or improvements on any item in the county. Commissioner Cody stated that we have issues and concerns from citizens for a new jail and we need to see if this is a feasible project for the county. Commissioner Cody stated that this program would benefit the people of Graham County in allowing them to know the targeted dates and projections for all work in the county. Commissioner Cody stated that the people of Graham County deserve us being good stewards of the funds and we need our stockholders to be aware of how we are using these funds. Commissioner Cody stated that this program will keep the commissioners and the citizens updated on all issues going on in the county and this will improve the morale all around. Commissioner Cody stated that we do not have an outline of what to do and we can only hope that if new commissioners are elected that the projects are continued but at this point a new commissioner has no way of knowing what projects the county are doing or pursuing. Commissioner Cody stated that we can wish and dream but we can't fund those and we need to have the backing of the people on large projects such as a new jail. Commissioner Cody stated that we do need a new DSS building because we have employees that have to share one office with a partition wall between them and this is a disgrace. Commissioner Cody stated that you cannot remain confidential if you do not have privacy. Commissioner Cody stated that we need our projects on paper so that we can take the steps as needed. Commissioner Orr made the motion to have this on the agenda once a month with the listing and status of all projects in the county. Commissioner Orr thanked Commissioner Cody for bringing this idea to the board and the taxpayers did deserve to know of all projects in the county. Commissioner Nelms seconded this motion. Vote unanimous.

19. Shawn Adams a member in the audience asks why the property is blocked off at the Stanley Recreation Park. Chairman Eller stated that the main reason is to keep vehicles from going back there. Manager Cable stated that there were concerns of vehicle traffic tearing up the property and the possibility of someone being injured. Manager Cable stated that we were made aware of trees being cut on the property and did not find out until later that it was Duke Energy. Shawn Adams stated that there is no reason to block this off and the sign says authorized traffic only. Chairman Eller stated that Bill Morphew had concerns earlier and we informed him that he can run his beagles on the property we just couldn't allow vehicle traffic. Shawn Adams stated that we were discriminating against handicapped people and someone in a wheelchair could not have access. Manager Cable stated that if anyone needed assistance they can come to the manager's office at any time and we would see that anyone with disabilities were taken care of. Shawn Adams stated that he wanted the sign taken down. Manager Cable stated that RFQ's were going out for the design of the recreation park and the county is starting the development of the park and vehicle traffic would not be allowed once this is started.
20. Chairman Eller asks the manager to present the discussion items. Manager Cable stated that he needed approval for the Releases and Discoveries. Commissioner Williams made the motion to approve. Commissioner Cody seconded this motion. Vote unanimous.
21. Manager Cable asks for the approval on a Resolution for Disposal of Surplus Property. Manager Cable stated that there are statutory guidelines that we needed to follow and someone needed to be made the delegate to dispose of the property by resolution. Commissioner Williams made the motion to adopt the Resolution for Disposal of Surplus Property. Commissioner Nelms seconded this motion. Vote unanimous.
22. Manager Cable stated that the NCACC had requested that we adopt a Resolution for the Stepping Up Initiative concerning inmates with mental illnesses in jails. Manager Cable stated that Ronnie Beale was in full support of this resolution as well. Commissioner Orr made the motion to adopt the Resolution for the Stepping Up Initiative. Commissioner Williams seconded this motion. Vote unanimous.
23. Manager Cable stated that he needed a reappointment for Bobbie Carpenter to the Senior Tar Heel Delegate. Commissioner Nelms made the motion to approve. Commissioner Williams seconded this motion. Vote unanimous.
24. Manager Cable stated that he did have a couple of new business items. Manager Cable gave the board copies of the proposed signs and stickers for the sanitation sites to stop the loitering, rummaging and scavenging of the dumpster sites. The board was agreeable to the signs and stickers.

25. Manager Cable stated that FEMA would be sending representatives to our county to study our streams for non-encroachment and floodplain boundaries. Manager Cable stated that we should see a significant decrease in the amount of acreage that will be affected by the non-encroachment. The board asks what streams they will be studying. Manager Cable stated that the proposed streams are Sweetwater Creek; Tallulah Creek; Long Creek; and Stecoah Creek. The board wanted to know if all the streams could be done. Manager Cable stated that this all depended on the funding that FEMA receives for the studies but Graham County can hire a private company to complete the non-complete studies if needed.
26. Manager Cable stated that he was pursuing the best solution on the tennis court repair and would report back to the board as soon as he got confirmation.
27. Manager Cable stated that he is working with Andy Lynn on the development of the shooting range.
28. Commissioner Williams stated that he had a problem with DENR at Thunderbird after the big storm had occurred over the removal of the limbs and trees. Commissioner Williams stated that they were using a site that belonged to J.J. Odom and this was not an approved site according to DENR. Commissioner Williams stated that he did contact Manager Cable who opened the Bear Creek Site for the debris and then DENR couldn't say anything. Commissioner Williams asks that the board consider alternative sites in the county to be named as debris removal sites so that in the future we would have closer proximity to the site. Commissioner Williams stated that the cost to haul to the Bear Creek Site is a lot more than hauling to the site they were using. The board was agreeable to this request.
29. Chairman Eller asks for further business. No further business was discussed.
30. Chairman Eller asks for a 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 Orr made the motion to go into closed session. Commissioner Nelms seconded this motion. Vote unanimous.
31. Commissioner Williams made the motion to go back into open session. Commissioner Nelms seconded this motion. Vote unanimous.
32. Commissioner Orr made the motion to hire Regina Franks as the Senior Center Weekend Cook at the recommendation of the department head. Commissioner Williams seconded this motion. Vote unanimous.
33. Commissioner Nelms made the motion to hire David Lee Jordan as the Sanitation Driver at the recommendation of the department head. Commissioner Orr seconded this motion. Vote unanimous.
34. The board agreed to review the pay plan for adoption at the next regular meeting.
35. The board agreed to hold all raise requests until further information was gathered and discussion would be at the next regular meeting.
36. Commissioner Orr made the motion to adjourn. Commissioner Cody seconded this motion. Vote unanimous.

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Keith Eller, Chairman, Graham County Commissioner

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Jacob Nelms, Vice-Chairman, Graham County Commissioner

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Lynn Cody, 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