

Regular Meeting – August 6, 2019

The Graham County Board of Commissioners met Tuesday, August 6, 2019 at 5:30 p.m. for their regular monthly meeting in the Graham County Community Building located at 196 Knight Street Robbinsville, NC. All board was present.

1. Chairman Wiggins called the meeting to order.
2. Chairman Wiggins asks Commissioner Cody to give the Invocation.
3. Chairman Wiggins asks Commissioner Orr to lead the Pledge of Allegiance.
4. Chairman Wiggins for changes to the agenda. Manager Garland stated that we needed to delete Item #8; add Attorney Coward to closed for attorney-client privilege and add Commissioner Orr to closed session for personnel. Chairman Wiggins asks for a motion to approve the agenda with the stated changes. Commissioner Eller made the motion to approve the agenda as stated. Commissioner Orr seconded this motion. Vote unanimous.
5. Chairman Wiggins asks for a motion to approve the July 2 Regular Meeting Minutes and the July 16 Workshop and Regular Meeting Minutes. Commissioner Orr made the motion to approve the minutes as stated. Commissioner Nelms seconded this motion. Vote unanimous.
6. Chairman Wiggins asks Ricky Hill with the Hinton Center to speak. Mr. Hill thanked the board for their time and stated that he wanted to discuss Drug Court with the board. Mr. Hill stated that this is necessary for our area and representatives from Cherokee, Clay and Graham Counties have met on this issue. Mr. Hill stated that the goal is to have a seven countywide support team with the help of Judge Richard Walker and get a plan approved. Mr. Hill stated that they would like to see the court allow charges to be reduced or dismissed if the person would agree to treatment for the drug and/or alcohol addiction. Mr. Hill stated that this plan would allow citizens to get better and be in good standing with the community. Mr. Hill stated that drug court would reduce the pressure and burdens on the judicial system by allowing an assigned judge, prosecutor and clerk for the Drug Court. Mr. Hill stated that they could receive treatment through AA Meetings, funding from non-profit organizations for treatment and have access to state funds. Mr. Hill stated that he has spoken with Ashley Welch, DA and a Judge and they agreed for this to move forward. Chairman Wiggins asks for literature to be sent to him. Mr. Hill will send the information and provide updates to the Board. Mr. Hill stated that they are working with Congressman Mark Meadow's office, Senator Jim Davis and Representative Kevin Corbin to find funding for Drug Court. Chairman Wiggins stated that an ARC Grant has been applied for to assist in Recovery to Work and this could help as well. Chairman Wiggins stated that we needed to get people to work. Chairman Wiggins stated that our Health Director Beth Booth could assist as well. Chairman Wiggins stated that Drug Court could run parallel with the other proposed programs.
7. Chairman Wiggins asks Sheriff Jones to speak. Sheriff Jones was not present at the time so they tabled his time until he arrives to the meeting.
8. Chairman Wiggins asks for the manager's report. Manager Garland stated that the CT Scanner has been installed and is ready to test with training this week. Manager Garland stated that we are still awaiting the delivery of the Mammography machine and the last report shows no later than the end of September. Manager Garland stated that she and Chairman Wiggins have been invited to attend the ARC Conference at Asheville in September to present the case for Graham County to Tim Thomas and to highlight the progress we have made so far with the Mammography and Para-medicine program. Manager Garland stated that they are given (10) minutes to provide our county vision and to help Mr. Thomas see the linkage between access to healthcare and our economic viability. Manager Garland plans to highlight the ways that ARC funds have helped us in the past and how the funding can provide a pathway to the future. Chairman Wiggins stated that we need a hand up, not a handout. Manager Garland extended thanks to Golden Leaf Foundation for their support from the beginning.
9. Manager Garland stated that on July 23, DHHS held a stakeholders meeting with representatives from Graham County, Harris Regional Hospital, Appalachian Community Health Services and Vaya Health to discuss the potential benefits and impacts of para-medicine in the county. Manager Garland stated that all the participants were excited about the benefits to be derived from the program and will create a coalition around the project to meet and ensure accountability and track our progress toward goals. Manager Garland stated that Beth Booth, Health Director commented that this program is as much about health education and linkage to the community resources as it is to providing a better level of preventative care to reduce EMS transports that could have been prevented. Manager Garland stated that we are seeing

potential linkage to the recovery to work project as well and will be meeting with folks from Duke Endowment and Office of Rural Health to go over grant applications and talk about the program. Manager Garland stated that the funding paired with the ARC funding could go a long way to help us get the program off the ground and be more sustainable.

10. Manager Garland stated that the ARC Recovery to Work grant application is in progress and Olivia Collier with ARC is helping us with the Office of Rural Health. ARC has given Graham County an extension on the July 31st grant application deadline to September 15th so that we can more fully research this process and strengthen our partnerships and our application. Manager Garland extended thanks to Olivia Collier and Jim McCleskey who have advocated so strongly for Graham County during our grant application processes.
11. Manager Garland stated that we had our debrief with the EPA on the EPA Brownfield Assessment Grant and we were within (4) points of being funded. Manager Garland stated that no North Carolina counties were funded so we received good counsel on getting funded the next round. Manager Garland stated that she would be working with Withers Ravenel on the next application.
12. Manager Garland stated that the meeting with USDA Representative Pam Hysong was cancelled last week due to lack of funding. Ms. Hysong stated that she could try to get us funds due to “significant need” but we would have to fund the money up front at our own risk. Manager Garland discussed the interest rates. The board will have further discussion on this issue.
13. Manager Garland stated that the county received a complaint from Lee Hill, our DENR Inspector for sanitation regarding the convenience site above Fontana Village. Manager Garland stated that we have to do a major cleanup at the site, which will be costly, and Mr. Hill gave the following recommendations.
 - a. Add dumpsters to the site with wildlife proof lids
 - b. More frequent runs to empty the garbage
 - c. Close the site from dusk to dawn to prevent illegal dumping
 - d. Manning the site

Manager Garland stated that Robert Vance with USFS has also contacted her with the complaint and he is unsure if the site is on USFS land. Manager Garland stated that she would have a meeting with Mr. Vance at the end of the month regarding this issue as well as permitting at the Wachacha Bald Tower (AT&T). Manager Garland stated that he has no record of the site being permitted by the USFS and is working to determine if the site should have been permitted. Manager Garland stated that this issue will have to be addressed or we will face stiff fines by the State. Manager Garland stated that she hopes to have the first Sanitation Committee meeting by the end of the month as well. Manager Garland gave a list of the present members: Gavin Colvard, Sanitation Director, County Manager, Shaun Adams, Robbinsville Town Alderman, Roger Carlton, Santeetlah Town Alderman, Tracy Williams, Fontana Town Alderman, and Commissioners Keith Eller and Lynn Cody. Manager Garland stated that she is still waiting on the GREAT member and the county citizen. Manager Garland stated that Recycling has become more of a challenge due to our vendor now charging us for our recycling. Manager Garland stated that cardboard prices are down from \$170.00 per ton to \$22.00 per ton.

14. Manager Garland stated that Sanitation is being audited for fuel tax compliance on September 5th and the last audit was in 2004. Manager Garland stated that she still has her paperwork from the first audit on how to file as a county purchasing fuel in bulk.
15. Manager Garland stated that the NC National Guard has requested a donation of \$1,000.00 to erect two monuments, one in France and one in Raleigh to commemorate the 100th anniversary of the 30th Division from North Carolina that broke the Imperial German Army’s strongest defensive line, the Hindenburg Line in 1918. Manager Garland stated that all the soldiers involved were from the Tar Heel State, they saw their duty, did it and came home. Manager Garland stated that they are also requesting (8) ounces of soil from every county to place inside the monument to be located in Nauroy, France. Commissioner Orr made the motion to donate the \$1000.00. Commissioner Cody seconded this motion. Vote unanimous.
16. Manager Garland gave the board a copy of the Vaya Quarterly report for June 30, 2019 and the report highlights the fact that the spendable cash balance for the agency is negative \$10 million. Manager Garland stated that the General Assembly pushed for a spenddown of cash for indigent care; especially in the substance abuse population and the IDD population that is waiting for a NC Innovation slot, (12,000 are on the wait list with an average wait of over 12 years). Manager Garland stated that Vaya used their reserves and the General Assembly did a reverse take and has failed to acknowledge the good faith efforts of LME’s who did a spend down and are not funding the shortfalls.

17. Manager Garland stated that NCDOT has a comment period for NC 28 Improvements and DOT engineers have started the project development, environmental and engineering studies on the improvements on NC 28 from the bridge at Fontana Dam to the entrance of the Fontana Marina. Manager Garland stated that they would like comments to be submitted by August 23rd and those comments can be sent to jwilliams@rkk.com.
18. Manager Garland gave the board a STIP schedule as well from NCDOT and they are doing a three-year gap between STIP cycles instead of a two-year gap due to the fact that there is not enough money to fund any new projects.
19. Manager Garland stated that the HHS building at P&J needs a new HVAC system that will cost \$8,200.00. The board all agreed to replace the unit.
20. Manager Garland stated that she would like to schedule interviews for next week for a project manager. The board agreed that Chairman Wiggins and Commissioner Nelms would serve on the interview panel.
21. Manager Garland stated that our community building has bathroom issues that need to be addressed. The board all agreed to re-do the bathrooms and run an ad in the paper for bids. The board all agreed to do the renovations at the same time as the Election Board renovations.
22. Manager Garland stated that she met with Timothy Webster from the Governor's office concerning Hometown Strong and he provided the latest tracking report and a report from Downtown Strong of the priorities that the Town of Robbinsville identified in the process.
23. Manager Garland stated that the Senior Center Policy has been completed and needs board's approval. Commissioner Orr made the motion to approve the new Senior Center Policy. Commissioner Eller seconded this motion. Vote unanimous.
24. Manager Garland stated that the Sheriff is holding an auction on September 21st on vehicles in the Impound and they have offered to make this a joint effort with the county so we can auction off the old vehicles that can be surplus and auctioned off. The board all agreed to this suggestion and Commissioner Eller will assist in identifying the vehicles for auction.
25. Manager Garland stated that she would be attending the NCACC Annual Conference with Commissioner Orr as well as the PILT Fly-In in September in Washington. The board all agreed that these meetings are very important to our county.
26. Manager Garland stated that she did have one budget amendment to approval. Budget Amendment #1 for a Health Department RCORP Pass Thru Expenditures of \$13,500.00 and Duke Energy Funds of \$6,500.00 for a total of \$20,000.00. Commissioner Eller made the motion to approve Budget Amendment #1 as stated. Commissioner Orr seconded this motion. Vote unanimous.
27. Manager Garland stated that we received (5) quotes for a new phone system and she would bring those at the next board meeting. Manager Garland stated that our current phone system is obsolete.
28. Manager Garland asks Cris Weatherford our new DSS Director to speak to the board. Mr. Weatherford stated that he is settling in and will be meeting with State Representatives to set up a game plan that they will follow and he is very happy to be working for Graham County. The board welcomed Mr. Weatherford and hopes great success with the agency.
29. Chairman Wiggins asks Sheriff Jones to speak. Sheriff Jones stated that he had previously spoken to Manager Garland about the purchase of guns, rifles and ammunition. Sheriff Jones stated that he tried to purchase locally but could save \$12,000.00 through Craig's Firearms. Sheriff Jones stated that he would purchase (24) guns total that includes (10) rifles, (14) hand guns, holsters and ammunition for \$17,063.07. Sheriff Jones stated that some deputies are currently carrying their own guns and the rifles were purchased when Steve Odom and Bob DeBruhl was sheriff. Commissioner Cody made the motion to approve the purchase of the new guns, rifles, holsters and ammunition for \$17,063.07. Commissioner Orr seconded this motion. Vote unanimous.
30. Sheriff Jones stated that he has received his quotes for new bulletproof vests and the total for (15) is \$14,133.65. Sheriff Jones stated that the vest he was currently wearing expired in 2002. Commissioner Nelms made the motion to approve the purchase of the vests. Commissioner Orr seconded this motion. Vote unanimous.
31. Sheriff Jones stated that he would be receiving \$180,000.00 in tax money for drugs since January. Manager Garland stated that the county has not received this kind of money in ten years.
32. Sheriff Jones stated that he contacted Adams Contracting about a new impound pad and they are willing to give the county the dirt for the pad. Sheriff Jones stated that he would bring the quote to the board once he received it.
33. Chairman Wiggins asks for public comment. No public comment.

34. Chairman Wiggins stated that the board would now go to the discussion items. Chairman Wiggins asks for the approval of the Releases of \$2,170.01 and the Discoveries of \$2,699.79. Commissioner Cody made the motion to approve. Commissioner Orr seconded this motion. Vote unanimous.
35. Chairman Wiggins asks for approval to appoint Rick Davis to fill the remaining term of M. Redmund on the T&T Board. Commissioner Orr made the motion to appoint Rick Davis. Commissioner Nelms seconded this motion. Vote called: Commissioners Wiggins, Orr, Nelms and Cody voted yes. Commissioner Eller voted no. Motion carried four to one.
36. Chairman Wiggins asks for a motion to reappoint Jess Wehr to the Travel and Tourism Board. Commissioner Orr made the motion to reappoint Jess Wehr. Commissioner Nelms seconded this motion. Vote unanimous.
37. Chairman Wiggins asks for a motion to appoint Johnnie Brooms to fill the remaining term of V. McGuire on the Jury Board. Commissioner Orr made the motion to appoint Johnnie Brooms. Commissioner Cody seconded this motion. Vote unanimous.
38. Chairman Wiggins asks about the award of the ambulance bid. The board agreed to sell the old ambulance rather than trade in. Commissioner Eller made the motion to approve the lowest bid, which was Southeastern Specialty Vehicles for \$207,720.00. Commissioner Orr seconded this motion. Vote unanimous.
39. Chairman Wiggins asks for a motion to replace himself with Brady Cody and reappoint Billy Brown to the RDA Board. Commissioner Eller made the motion to accept the replacement and reappoint Billy Brown. Commissioner Cody seconded this motion. Vote unanimous.
40. Chairman Wiggins asks if one of the board is willing to sit on the RC&D Board. Commissioner Orr volunteered to sit on this board. Commissioner Cody made the motion to appoint Commissioner Orr to the RC&D Board. Commissioner Nelms seconded this motion. Vote unanimous.
41. Chairman Wiggins asks for a motion to award the bid to WNC Marble and Granite Works for Tombstone Resets. Clerk Crisp stated that the Cemetery Board did approve. Commissioner Orr made the motion to accept the bid. Commissioner Cody seconded this motion. Vote unanimous.
42. Chairman Wiggins asks for new or old business. No new or old business.
43. 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.
44. Commissioner Nelms made the motion to go back into open session. Commissioner Orr seconded this motion. Vote unanimous.
45. Commissioner Orr made the motion to adjourn. Commissioner Cody seconded this motion. Vote unanimous.

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