

Regular Meeting February 4, 2020

The Graham County Board of Commissioners met Tuesday, February 4, 2020 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 asks Commissioner Orr to lead the Pledge of Allegiance.
4. Chairman Wiggins asks for changes and approval of the agenda. Chairman Wiggins asks that Item 6 & Item 7 be switched. Commissioner Eller made the motion to approve the agenda with the stated changes. Commissioner Orr seconded this motion. Vote unanimous.
5. Chairman Wiggins asks for approval of the Workshop and Regular Meeting Minutes of January 21, 2020. Commissioner Eller made the motion to approve the minutes as stated. Commissioner Nelms seconded this motion. Vote unanimous.
6. Chairman Wiggins stated that we would now go to the Discussion Items and stated that he board has a Resolution on Graham County being a Second Amendment Sanctuary. Chairman Wiggins stated that it was sad that we need to do this but our current climate that we live in calls for these types of resolutions. Chairman Wiggins read the Resolution on Second Amendment Sanctuary to the board members and public in attendance. Commissioner Orr made the motion to adopt the Resolution as stated. Commissioner Cody seconded this motion. Vote unanimous. The public thanked the board for adopting this resolution.
7. Chairman Wiggins asks for the Manager's Report. Manager Garland stated that our Project Manager Jason Marino was out on military maneuvers for two weeks but prior to leaving he obtained quotes for the civil design on the Cemetery and Recreation Buildings. In Mr. Marino's letter he stated that he was providing justification for a Civil Site Work Engineering Services Consultant as requested. Mr. Marino stated that the main reason was to protect the County by ensuring funds are spent on quality product. Mr. Marino stated that will give direction on site work but it comes to clear and precise direction and liability. Mr. Marino stated that if an engineered set of drawings are used and the contractor installs incorrectly, they are liable and the same would apply if the engineers design doesn't work the engineer is liable. Mr. Marino stated that the pre-engineered buildings will come with Engineer Stamped foundation, anchor bolt and erection plan so having a stamped civil site work would cover the project. Mr. Marino stated that the low proposal is from Withers/Ravenel at \$11,000 (\$5,500.00 per site) and the cost was figured into the construction estimate. The board had discussion and Commissioner Orr asks that more proposals are received. The board agreed.
8. Manager Garland stated that Heery is working on the blocking and stacking models of the courthouse and they wanted to add a Phase I Environmental and a Geotech Study to the proposal that we approved in December. Manager Garland stated that this is an additional \$2500.00 taking the final contracted cost to \$26,675.00. Manager Garland stated that we also need topographical data and we have a surveyor (Aaron Stewart) working to help us with that aspect. Commissioner Orr made the motion to approve the additional \$2500.00 for Heery. Commissioner Eller seconded this motion. Vote unanimous.
9. Manager Garland stated that she had communication with Angela Knight, School Superintendent on the School Construction Grant and they are working to get a building committee scheduled. Manager Garland stated that Ms. Knight is waiting on some preliminary drawings. Manager Garland stated that she offered Jason Marino, our project manager, to sit on the committee and provide on the ground support during the project and she was happy to accept the assistance from the county.
10. Manager Garland stated that our Paramedicine program is beginning to get fully underway and we have ordered under the Duke Grant, promotional materials. Manager Garland stated that she attended the regional coalition meeting at Swain Hospital and made some good contacts with Mountain Home and Swain Home Health and the discharge planner at the nursing home. Manager Garland stated that they are excited about the program and want to partner with us to make referrals and they see the value in our paramedic going to the initial visit with home health to better coordinate at home care.
11. Manager Garland stated that Maggie Sauer with Hometown Strong along with representatives from our health department, EMS, MAHEC, Erlanger, Harris Regional, Appalachian Mountain Community Health Services and Cherokee Tribal Hospital. Casey Cooper presented the NUKA

system of care that they adopted several years ago and demonstrated how the whole person system of care model is working for tribal members which is a single port of entry for everyone to attain their health and mental health needs along with access to specialty care. The group discussed how the different systems of care can best serve the people of Graham County. Manager Garland stated that they plan to bring in other participating stakeholders to the monthly meeting model.

12. Manager Garland stated that Goldenleaf announced that they are getting ready to launch a \$5 million grant pool to help develop work force in rural areas. Manager Garland stated that the grants will target disconnected youth aged 18 to 24 years of age not working and not in school and adults who are underemployed and the long term unemployed. Manager Garland stated that the grant program will help them engage and be transitioned into new work or work in general. Manager Garland stated that Tom O'Brian has been communicating with the county on ways to leverage this funding for collaboration with the county, with the ARC Grant, the Recovery to Work and other opportunities.

13. Manager Garland stated that Vaya Health is operating in a loss in excess of \$1.1 million last fiscal year and with cuts to their services they are operating at a surplus year to date. Manager Garland stated that their operating cash is a little above \$45 million but the spendable cash is a negative \$10 million and they are scheduling a meeting in Franklin for the stakeholders to discuss options for continuation of critical crisis programs. Manager Garland stated that Vaya has experienced \$53 million in cuts from the state and the population that has felt these cuts are the uninsured. Commissioner Orr stated that they have voted to take \$1.4 million of fund balance for operations and they will be speaking with NCDHHS. Commissioner Orr stated that she would attend the stakeholders meeting.

14. Manager Garland stated that she received a call from Cherokee County Manager Randy Wiggins and received two letters stating that Cherokee County Board of Commissioners will no longer allow Cherokee County EMS to do hospital to hospital transports on behalf of Clay or Graham County for Erlanger WNC. Manager Garland stated that counties are not obligated to handle transfers and we have a long standing policy of not handling these calls due to our limited resources and our distance to the hospitals. Manager Garland stated that there is a private enterprise in the works to handle these transports and will report later with details.

15. Manager Garland stated that our scrap tire grant payment was a shock at \$422.71 instead of the \$4 to \$5 thousand that we used to receive. Manager Garland stated that after checking into the shortage a funding reduction was taken by the General Assembly in 2013 and now the majority of the fees come from the tire fees that the consumer pays at purchase. Manager Garland stated that she did reach out to Representative Kevin Corbin to ask for help. Manager Garland asks the board if they would be willing to pass a resolution to send to the NCACC and General Assembly for the restoration of these funds. The board was agreeable to a resolution.

16. Manager Garland stated that the sanitation committee has had three meetings and are working on proposals to bring to the board during budget workshops. Manager Garland stated that they did travel to neighboring facilities and will report on this as well. Manager Garland stated that their goal is to have cost estimates prepared of the different models for consideration of the board.

17. Manager Garland stated that a NCDOT Corridor K meeting was held on January 29th and she requested a face to face meeting.

18. Manager Garland stated that she received notifications from the Local Government Commission that the audit was accepted with no changes. Manager Garland stated that DSS Single Audit was 100% of no findings and she gave special thanks to Kay Fields and the new DSS Director Cris Weatherford. Manager Garland stated that we had an unrestricted fund balance of \$6.3 million dollars for a percentage of 41%. Manager Garland thanked that board for all of their efforts to increase fund balance due to the judge's order that we construct a new courts facility. Manager Garland stated that no violations where in our audit.

19. Manager Garland stated that the board needed to schedule a budget workshop to go over broad strokes for the budget to include the health insurance pool and the sanitation committee findings. Manager Garland requests a meeting mid-March. The board agreed to meet Friday, March 20th from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon.

20. Manager Garland stated that she did have a Budget Amendment for the board's approval.
a. Budget Amendment #10 to amend for additional food costs and revenue for Swain County meals and to amend to shift wages for transfer of staff from public buildings to senior center due to health issues.

Chairman Wiggins asks for a motion to approve Budget Amendment #10. Commissioner Orr made the motion to approve the amendment as stated. Commissioner Nelms seconded this motion. Vote unanimous.

21. Chairman Wiggins asks for new or old business. No new or old business.

22. Chairman Wiggins asks for public comment. Manager Garland stated that Joe Deddo and Patrick Odell was signed in for public comment. Chairman Wiggins asks Joe Deddo to speak. Mr. Deddo stated that he lives at 1612 Panther Creek Road and he thanked the board for serving and he was proud of the meeting with the Prayer and Pledge and stated that we are living in different times. Mr. Deddo stated that he knew the latest discussion was alcohol for the Town and County and that this would help the tax base but he would like to know at what cost. Mr. Deddo stated that (28) million children are affected by alcohol from infants to 18 years of age and there were over 88,000 related deaths each year with 28% of those being traffic accidents by persons under the influence. Mr. Deddo stated that it touched his own family and he has seen divorce, kids not getting what they need and just having hard situations in general and he would like to urge the county commissioners not to allow the sale of alcohol. Deddo stated that the Bible did speak of wine but that wasn't all that it said, it said don't be taken by much wine and that wine is a mocker. Mr. Deddo stated that he owns a campground and he tells the people that he does not allow people staying up to two or three in the morning drunk and brawling. Mr. Deddo stated that he wanted the board of commissioners to consider the cost that alcohol will bring into our county and if does affect children. Mr. Deddo thanked the board for the passing of the Second Amendment Sanctuary and further stated that people will freely kill babies 863,320 in 2017 and the Bible speaks against that as well. Mr. Deddo stated that the it blesses our Lord that the commissioners that serve study and make decisions on facts and encourages again for the board to consider the cost. Mr. Deddo stated that there may be some good but a lot bad in alcohol and it does affect the kids and that's not right and we need to do our part in keeping it out of our local stores. Mr. Deddo thanked the board for their time.

23. Chairman Wiggins asks Patrick Odell to speak. Mr. Odell stated that he would make his very simple. Mr. Odell thanked the board for what they are doing with the resolution tonight and state that God gave us the right to bear arms. Mr. Odell asks if this resolution will stop the Federal and State Government from taking our guns. Chairman Wiggins stated that this resolution is not law but what it says is we will not assist or allow our county buildings to be used or any county asset to be used in the confiscation of our guns. Mr. Odell thanked the board for the resolution on declaring our rights. Chairman Wiggins stated that he hoped the taking of peoples guns would never happen because he is afraid it would start another Civil War. Mr. Odell stated that he appreciated the good answers that the board gave and he stands against alcohol and further stated that it would not help our county and there is no good in it. Mr. Odell stated that he attended the Town of Robbinsville meeting at the library and they postponed a decision and put it back on the county commissioners.

24. Chairman Wiggins thanked everyone for attending the meeting and stated that the board would now 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 Orr made the motion to go into closed session as stated. Commissioner Eller seconded this motion. Vote unanimous.

25. Chairman Wiggins asks for a motion to go back into open session. Commissioner Orr made the motion as stated. Commissioner Eller seconded this motion. Vote unanimous.

26. Chairman Wiggins asks for a motion to adjourn. Commissioner Orr made the motion to adjourn. Commissioner Nelms seconded this motion. Vote unanimous.

Dale Wiggings, Chairman

Lynn Cody, Vice-Chairman

Keith Eller, Member

Jacob Nelms, Member

Connie Orr, Member

ATTEST:

Kim Crisp, Clerk to the Board