

Special Workshop – March 8, 2018

The Graham County Board of Commissioners met Thursday, March 8, 2018 at 9:00 a.m. in the Graham County Transit Facility located at 201 West Fort Hill Robbinsville, NC for a special workshop session. All board was present.

1. Chairman Eller called the meeting to order.
2. Chairman Eller asks Manager Garland to proceed. Manager Garland stated that she needed to go over a few things with the board concerning capital projects. Manager Garland showed the board the square footage for the renovation at the community building and every office will be losing square footage from their sizes now. Manager Garland stated that we will have space constraints before we even move into the building. Manager Garland asks the board to stop any renovation to the community building at this time.
3. Manager Garland stated that we are having some issues at the P&J Building with the parts of the building that were existing and the architect was told to leave these areas “as is”. Manager Garland gave an examples of the issues. One involves a HVAC System that needs to be replaced and this should have been found during the renovations. Manager Garland stated that she will be keeping building maintenance busy with touch up repairs on the existing areas. Manager Garland stated that she was 90% happy with the building but was not 100% due to these oversights by previous management.
4. Manager Garland stated that the courthouse is needing an assessment and she has been reaching out to companies that can do this for us and the proposed cost is: Dude Solutions – security assessment and space utilization study - \$12,750.00; Moseley Architects – Compensation for services of in-depth study - \$40,000.00 to \$60,000.00; Heery – in-depth study - \$48,991.00 with travel \$3,500.00; Cope Architecture – evaluation with cost scenarios - \$6,500.00. Manager Garland stated that she is concerned about the vast differences in price and stated that the county needed to be real careful. Attorney Coward stated that he was involved in the Jackson County Courthouse and they had problems from day one so an in-depth study would be more feasible. The board wants Manager Garland to speak with other counties that have built a new courthouse and ask for their assistance. Manager Garland stated that Davenport showed us where we have the finances to do a courthouse without raising taxes. Manager Garland stated that we needed to move quickly in order to satisfy the judge’s order. The board all agreed that if the judge makes us spend \$33,000.00 per week to move court we will be out of money quick. The board discussed building a new justice center with jail and renovating the courthouse for the county administration offices. Manager Garland stated that she did not want to waste money but we have outgrown our building and the newly proposed renovations at the community center. The board had discussion on how to proceed. Manager Garland asks that we reach out to David Hyatt and see if he would contract with us on these buildings because she did not know anything about the structural stuff and we needed all help on construction costs. The board all agreed that we needed an action plan to contact HEERY and MOSELEY and get recommendations on moving forward. The board discussed installing a kitchen back in the community building. The board discussed unfunded mandates and would like to know the definition of “adequate” where court facilities are concerned. Attorney Coward stated that an in-depth study would tell the board these types of things. The board discussed the main requirement of a one entry to the building.
5. Manager Garland stated that she needed to know the budget priorities for the fiscal year 2018-2019 and so far the budget requests have been typical but the board would need to discuss the two cars that was totaled at the sheriff’s department. Manager Garland stated that one of the totaled vehicles was going to be used for a jail transport vehicle prior to the crash. Manager Garland stated that the Senior Center Escape is needing to be replaced and the Environmental Health truck will need to be replaced and repurposed to another department. The board learned that Ashton Massey has turned in her notice for August 2018, she is planning to return back to school.
6. Chairman Eller stated that Frank Klein would like for us to fund a smoke chaser who would serve as a second man to him and the amount being requested is \$8,000.00. Chairman Eller stated that this is for a part time position.
7. Manager Garland stated that recreation has some needs at their ballfields. We are in need of new dug-outs, bleachers and a concession stand. The board wanted to reach out to the school to see if they would be interested to assisting with these repairs. The board learned that we may be getting a grant that will help with these repairs as well.

8. The board asks if Manager Garland knows where the fleet policy is that the previous manager prepared. Manager Garland stated that she has never seen a fleet policy.
9. The board stated that there are issues at the Sheriff's Department that need to be addressed. Manager Garland stated that their DCI terminal is not secure and the sheriff wants a glass partition to be installed to prevent anyone from entering the building. Manager Garland stated that they also have laptops that will need to be replaced due to the fact that they were purchased used and are now out of date.
10. The board discussed IT and the many issues that they have dealt with since taking over. The board discussed hiring someone to be on the ground and work with Kevin.
11. The board discussed the pay plan and the pay study has been finished but the analysis is not yet completed. Manager Garland gave the board a study to review of where we stand with Cherokee and Swain Counties. The board discussed the pay plan that was implemented for DSS and the Health Department and the need to look closely at the EMS Staff. Manager Garland stated that there are some in the county that would like to move up.
12. Manager Garland stated that if the board gave a 3% COLA the cost to the county would be around \$180,000.00.
13. Melissa Blevins, Administrative Assistant to the Director at DSS presented the board the budget for DSS with the new implemented pay plan. Ms. Blevins stated that she is filling the open positions in the department and would hire when they moved into the new building. The board discussed the changes on funding at the state level and this will be closely watched. Ms. Blevins stated that the department will be required to have iPads with a cost of around \$25,000.00 and she does have this in the budget.
14. The board discussed an agency error at DSS that the board will require further discussion.
15. The board discussed evaluations of the manager. The board thanked Manager Garland for the extra duties that she took on such as Health Director and IT Director. The board learned that Manager Garland and Clerk Crisp will work on HR with the help of Western Carolina and we will be having a standard orientation for all employees. The board thanked Manager Garland for her leadership and have noticed the turn of morale with county employees. The board discussed hiring another person to take on the duties of finance officer to assist Manager Garland. The board all agreed that we did need an IT person present every day.
16. The board discussed placing the Foundations Freedom Monuments at the courthouse where the probation office is located. The monument will be close to the historical museum and across the street from Lynn's Place, a very popular restaurant in the county. The board agreed to this location for the monuments.
17. Commissioner Orr made the motion to adjourn. Commissioner Nelms seconded this motion. Vote unanimous.

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