

Regular Meeting – July 2, 2019

The Graham County Board of Commissioners met Tuesday, July 2, 2019 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 approval of the agenda. Manager Garland stated that we needed to remove Items #7 and #10 and Replace Item 6 Russ Harris with Commissioner Orr. Commissioner Eller made the motion to approve the agenda with the stated changes. Commissioner Cody seconded this motion. Vote unanimous.
5. Chairman Wiggins asks for approval of the minutes for the Workshop and Regular Meeting June 18 and the Continued Meeting June 25. Commissioner Orr made the motion to approve the minutes as stated. Commissioner Eller seconded this motion. Vote unanimous.
6. Chairman Wiggins asks Commissioner Orr to speak. Commissioner Orr stated that Russ Harris with Southwest Commission was unable to attend tonight and she gave the board a highlight of the WNC Housing Coalition for our (7) Western Counties. Commissioner Orr stated that Graham County has a demand for housing affordability so we need to be a part of this coalition. Commissioner Orr stated that the cost is \$2,000.00 per county but ARC are giving \$600.00 Scholarships to the counties making the final cost \$1400.00. Commissioner Orr stated that Graham County is the only county actively working our Rural Development Authority. Commissioner Orr stated that we needed all the help we can get due to our diminishing tax base. Commissioner Orr stated that the RDA is building new houses and this is their number one priority. Chairman Wiggins stated that there is a shortage in housing all across Western North Carolina. Commissioner Cody stated that this information needed to be open to the developers and they can see where the need is and move into the counties, which will create work for lots of people. The board asks Manager Garland if she can find the \$1400.00. Manager Garland stated that she could find the money for this project. Commissioner Orr made the motion to give the WNC Housing Coalition \$1400.00. Commissioner Cody seconded this motion. Vote unanimous.
7. Chairman Wiggins asks Donald Rogers to speak. Mr. Rogers stated that he was a local resident and taxpayer and he is seriously concerned on the increase of the taxes. Mr. Rogers stated that he came here in 2004 and found Graham County unbelievable not only for its beauty but for the people as well. Mr. Rogers stated that he came here from Canada and built his home and paid \$2800.00 in taxes which he felt was reasonable, then came the 2010 appraisal and his taxes increased to \$6700.00 and now they are going to \$9,000.00 which is a 10% increase. Mr. Rogers stated that he cannot afford to live here with these increases and has sold property on Atoah already. Mr. Rogers stated that our elderly people cannot afford this and he understands that we are owned 75% by the federal government. Mr. Rogers stated that our population is mostly senior citizens and we need to figure out a way to deal with the future where younger people will want to come here and live.
8. Chairman Wiggins asks about the Stecoah Residents that wished to speak on Corridor K. Manager Garland stated that they would like have a public comment session with the board so they can give their views of Corridor K. The board was agreeable with this request and wanted Rose Baugess and Brian Burch from NCDOT to come and bring the maps for the residents to review. The board wanted a workshop scheduled in August.
9. Chairman Wiggins asks for the Manager's report. Manager Garland stated that she had received the Homeland Security Report for the Election board by the Department of Homeland Security. Manager Garland stated that their recommendations are:
 - a. Installation of bollards or barriers in front of the building to protect from high speed approaches to the building.
 - b. Installation of better exterior lighting and cameras.
 - c. Installation of an alarm system.
 - d. Separate restrooms for staff of the election board and the public to maintain security of personnel and integrity of the board of elections space.

- e. Electronic key or card access to critical internal doors.
 - f. Add CCTV monitors for the BOE to monitor building activity inside and outside.
 - g. Identify a safe room and install CCTV monitors.
 - h. Generator or "quick" technology for core electronic functions.
10. Manager Garland stated that the stove in the Senior Center is going down and Director Hill has budgeted some funds for a replacement. Clerk Crisp and Melissa Crisp began getting estimates on a stove with a larger capacity oven and stovetop and the cost would be between ten to twelve thousand. Manager Garland stated that we will be obtaining quotes and asks permission for all to use our best judgment and do the research and get one ordered this coming week. Commissioner Orr made the motion to allow the purchase of the stove with the terms as stated. Commissioner Eller seconded this motion. Vote unanimous.
 11. Manager Garland stated that the NCACC has issued a white paper report with recommendations regarding the tailored plans for NCDHHS. The packets will start going out soon to Medicaid recipients under Medicaid Transformation. NCDHHS requested that the NCACC form a committee and study the issues surrounding the plans and has recommended that the seven LME-MCO regions stay the same through 2025 and that a moratorium be placed on counties moving to other regions unless the MCO-LME for their region becomes financially unviable. Manager Garland stated that Commissioner Orr reported on this information at our last informational workshop in June.
 12. Manager Garland stated that she received information that our EPA grant was not approved and we were informed that "NO" North Carolina projects were accepted. Manager Garland stated that we are working toward another conference call with EPA and our grant writer with Withers Ravenel as well as our representative from DEQ to see what the EPA has to say about our grant and to discuss steps going forward.
 13. Manager Garland stated that the NC Agriculture Extension is considering adding a position for Cherokee and Graham County to be shared between the two counties (EFNEP – Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program). Manager Garland stated that they are bringing back the role that Genevieve Cable fulfilled to work with families with food insecurity and to assist them in stabilizing nutrition for at-risk families. They would provide instruction and resources to these at-risk groups in-group settings. The state will fund 80% of the program for the first three years and then 50% in year four. Manager Garland stated that our cost share would be \$4063.00 in the first, second and third years and then \$10,156.00 in the fourth year. Manager Garland stated that this is not initially in the budget request and they did not advise the counties until after the budgets were laid out. Manager Garland stated that the extension office typically comes in under budget and asks if the board is interested in cost sharing with Cherokee County. The board wanted more data on this position and stated that this is coming in after the budget was approved so this fiscal year would not be likely.
 14. Manager Garland stated that Randy Collins was advised by the RC&D that Graham County needs a delegate to the RC&D Board as a dues paying member and has requested that the commissioners name a delegate with a preference that the member be a commissioner. Manager Garland stated that the meetings are held quarterly. The board wanted more information of when and where the meetings would take place and what the board would be doing.
 15. Manager Garland stated that the Community Para-medicine is moving forward; the job description is complete and will be posted this week.
 16. Manager Garland stated that the Project Manager position has been posted and we have several applications. Manager Garland stated that she would like to give it another week and would very much appreciate having some commissioners participate in the interview for this key position.
 17. Manager Garland gave the board some dates to remember.
 18. Chairman Wiggins asks for public comment. No public comment.
 19. Chairman Wiggins stated that the board would now go to the discussion items. Chairman Wiggins stated that the board needed to appoint a voting delegate for the NCACC Conference. Commissioner Eller made the motion to appoint Commissioner Orr as the voting delegate. Commissioner Nelms seconded this motion. Vote unanimous.
 20. Chairman Wiggins asks if any other board member wanted to attend the NCACC Conference in August. Commissioner Orr and Manager Garland will be attending.
 21. Chairman Wiggins asks about the sanitation board. Clerk Crisp stated that Commissioner Cody and Commissioner Eller previously sat on the board. Commissioner Orr made the motion to

reappoint Commissioners Cody and Eller to the Sanitation Board. Commissioner Nelms seconded this motion. Vote unanimous. The board asks that we reach out to Donnie Orr to see if he would be interested in serving on this board. Manager Garland will reach out to the surrounding Towns to see who would be interested in serving on this board.

22. Chairman Wiggins asks about the Courthouse Security Committee. Clerk Crisp stated that that board needed to make a motion to create the Courthouse Security Committee. Commissioner Orr made the motion to create the committee as stated. Commissioner Cody seconded this motion. Vote unanimous.
23. Chairman Wiggins asks for new or old business. Chairman Wiggins addressed Mr. Rogers, a county taxpayer and stated that the board was very concerned over the taxes being raised and this was a very hard budget process. Chairman Wiggins stated that he takes every comment very seriously and he is very concerned about our elderly and the families that struggle. Chairman Wiggins stated that we have been given unfunded mandates, which are not pleasant, and it is not easy trying to find the money. Commissioner Orr stated that we are very concerned about our young people staying and living here in this county and we have been fortunate to have (5) college graduates that have returned to Robbinsville to work.
24. 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 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 into open session. Commissioner Nelms made the motion to go back into open session. Commissioner Orr seconded this motion. Vote unanimous.
26. Commissioner Nelms made the motion to adjourn. Commissioner Orr 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