

June 18, 2007

The Duplin County Board of Commissioners met in Regular Session on Monday, June 18, 2007 at 6:30 p.m. in the Auditorium, Duplin Commons Office Complex (165 Agriculture Drive), Kenansville, North Carolina.

Present: Chairman David Fussell and Commissioners L. S. Guy, Harold L. Raynor, Cary Turner, Reginald Wells, and Zettie Williams (by Conference Call)

Absent: None

Also Present: Mr. Mike Aldridge, County Manager; Ms. Julia Herring, Administrative Officer; Ms. Teresa Lanier, Finance Officer; and Ms. Wendy Sivori, County Attorney

Mrs. Peggy Herring Guthrie Wells gave the invocation.

The following reports were received and are on file with the Clerk:

Animal Control – May 2007
Building Inspections – May 2007
Communications – May 2007
Emergency Management – May 2007
Finance – May 2007
Register of Deeds – May 2007
Social Services – May 2007
Solid Waste – May 2007

Motion was made by Commissioner Turner, seconded by Commissioner Wells, carried unanimously, to approve the Consent Agenda which included the following: Minutes – May 23, 2007; May 24, 2007; May 25, 2007; May 30, 2007; June 4, 2007; County Water District D Minutes – June 4, 2007; and County Water District E Minutes – June 4, 2007; Budget Amendments #0245 - #0253; Solid Waste Releases #3976 - #3984; and Tax Releases #3968 - #3975; to add a letter to the Board of Education regarding the \$750,000; Budget Amendments #0254 - #0256; and a personnel report to be made part of the minutes.

Mr. Mike Aldridge presented Administrative Budget Amendments # K113 - #L057 and Motor Vehicle Releases – May 2007 – \$12,610.65 to be made a part of the minutes.

Public Comments:

Mr. Randall Tyndall, Planning Director, appeared before the board to express opposition to the employee salary increases recommended for the 2007 – 2008 proposed budget. (See handout in minutes.)

Mr. Ferrell Thigpen, Chief Building Inspector, appeared before the board to express opposition to the proposed salary increases. He stated that he can't retain qualified inspectors due to the low pay as compared to surrounding counties. Also, Duplin County is serving as a training ground - after his employees are trained and certified, they leave Duplin to work for other counties for more pay.

Ms. Donna Brown, Water Department, spoke about the unfairness in the salary increases in the proposed budget. She stated that some employees were receiving the recommended 2 percent while others were receiving 10 percent or more. Ms. Brown also spoke about the need to conduct a salary study and to compensate employees that have received certifications required by their position. (See handout in minutes.)

Mr. Win Batten, Mayor of Warsaw, stated that the board should make the funding plan for school construction a top priority.

Mr. Jim Harris of Warsaw also stated that he board should make school construction needs a top priority. He stated that Sampson County currently has three schools being built whereas Duplin County has none. Mr. Harris also stated that the county should address the poor sound system in the Duplin Commons Auditorium.

Commissioner Guy replied that it was his understanding that the Facility Needs Plan was approved by the Board of Education and submitted to the county commissioners who also approved the plan. In later discussion between the boards, the Board of Education requested that the adopted Facility Needs Plan be put on hold until the Board of Education could work through some concerns of the new Board of Education members. The commissioners agreed and are now waiting on the Board of Education to give the go ahead on seeking funding for the approved plan.

Motion was made by Commissioner Wells, seconded by Commissioner Guy, to conduct a work session between the Board of Commissioners and the Board of Education to be held within 45 days to discuss funding options for school construction. Commissioners Fussell, Guy, Raynor, Turner, and Wells voted for; Commissioner Williams voted against.

Mr. Randall Tyndall appeared before the board to discuss the Planning Department Budget. He stated that the travel, advertising, and CDBG Grant Application Matching Fund line items should be increased. (See handout in minutes.)

Mr. Mike Aldridge presented the 2007 – 2008 Budget Ordinance for adoption. (See handout in minutes.)

Motion was made by Commissioner Raynor, seconded by Commissioner Turner, carried unanimously, to approve the 2007 – 2008 Budget Ordinance setting the tax rate as follows and thereby authorizing the chairman to sign same: General Fund - \$.79; Oak Wolfe Fire District - \$.05; Glisson Fire District - \$.065; Sarecta Fire District - \$.055; East Duplin Fire District - \$.0525; Albertson Fire District - \$.075; Stacy Britt Fire District - \$.065; Northeast Fire District - \$.04; and Franklin Fire District - \$.08.

Motion was made by Commissioner Guy, to give an additional 1 percent salary increase to employees that were not approved for reclassification by the board. Commissioner Guy withdrew his motion.

Motion was made by Commissioner Fussell, to give an additional 3 percent salary increase to the Building Inspection Department employees with funds to come from the general fund balance. Motion died due to a lack of a second.

Motion was made by Commissioner Guy, seconded by Commissioner Turner, carried unanimously, to appropriate up to \$100,000 from the 06-07 budget to conduct a salary study and for the county manager to advertise for proposals to conduct the study and report to the board within 60 days, thereby approving BA# 257.

Mr. Carl St. Clair of Compass Management, appeared before the board to introduce the new Events Center Manager, Mr. Josh Sherrick of High Point. (See handout in minutes.)

Ms. Diane McNamara, Parks and Recreation Director, appeared before the board to discuss promotion of Cabin Lake Park. She stated that the Duplin County Parks and Recreation Advisory Board recommends issuing yearly passes to the park. The cost of the passes would be \$40 per person or \$100 per family. Also, a free ticket for camping would be issued to all group campers on a return individual trip.

Motion was made by Commissioner Turner, seconded by Commissioner Guy, carried unanimously, to issue yearly passes to Cabin Lake for \$40 per person/\$100 per family and to issue one free individual ticket to group campers for a return trip to the park.

Mr. Chris Jarman of 283 Otis Miller Road in Beulaville appeared before the board to discuss drainage issues at this residence. He stated that representatives from NC DOT have looked at the problem and have determined that drainage pipes are adequate and that the problem is a result of outfall ditches that need cleaning. Mr. Jarman stated that ditches are the responsibility of the Duplin Soil & Water Department and haven't been cleaned since the 1996 hurricanes.

It was the consensus of the board to have the Duplin Soil & Water Department to review the issue and report back to the board at a future meeting.

Mr. Joe McKemey and Mr. Van Lewis, engineers with McDavid Associates, appeared before the board to discuss a proposal from McDavid Associates to develop policy, procedures, standards, etc. to amend the currently county water private extension policy in order that other engineering professionals could be allowed to design private water line construction projects. (See handout in minutes.)

Motion was made by Commissioner Turner, seconded by Commissioner Fussell, to authorize McDavid Associates to prepare a Private Water Extension Policy. Commissioners Guy, Fussell, Turner, Wells, and Williams voted for; Commissioner Raynor voted against.

Ms. Donna Brown, appeared before the board to present a three-year contract for mowing services for each of the county water tank sites. Ms. Brown recommended that the contract be awarded to the lowest bidder, Mr. Thomas C. Vernon of Beulaville, DBA 3V Lawn Service. (See handout in minutes.)

Motion was made by Commissioner Wells, seconded by Commissioner Guy, carried unanimously, to approve the mowing services contract with Mr. Thomas C. Vernon and authorize the chairman to sign same.

Ms. Dothula Baron Hall, Executive Director of the Rural Empowerment Association for Community Health (REACH), appeared before the board to discuss a \$100,000 grant that her agency has received to study the environmental effects of the hog industry as it relates to the air & water quality for Duplin County citizens. Mr. Devon Hall, Project Coordinator, and Ms. Rachel Avery, an Epidemiology graduate student from the University of North Carolina Chapel Hill School of Public Health also spoke about health issues related to the hog industry. (See handout in minutes.)

Mr. Steve Moore, Transportation and Aging Director, appeared before the board to give an update on the Rural General Public Program (RGP).

Motion was made by Commissioner Wells, seconded by Commissioner Guy, carried unanimously, to hold a public hearing on July 2, 2007 at 9:45 on the Rural Operating Assistance Program (ROAP).

Mr. Randall Tyndall, Planning Director, appeared before the board to discuss awarding three professional services contracts for the buyout program. Mr. Tyndall stated that the following had been selected: Agri-Vest Realty for appraisal services; Smith and Blizzard, PA for legal services; and Mr. Willie G. Miller for surveying services. (See handout in minutes.)

Motion was made by Commissioner Wells, seconded by Commissioner Guy, carried unanimously, to approve the professional services contracts and authorize the chairman to sign same.

Mr. Mike Aldridge presented a summary of surplus property that has been sold on GovDeals.com to be made part of the minutes.

Mr. Aldridge presented an engineering agreement with McDavid Associates for the proposed water extension project at the Kenansville bypass to serve Carolina East Home Care and Hospice's proposed facility. (See handout in minutes.)

Motion was made by Commissioner Wells, seconded by Commissioner Guy, carried unanimously, to approve the engineering agreement with McDavid Associates and authorize the chairman to sign same.

Mr. Aldridge discussed the Communication Department's request to buyout the equipment lease for their telephone equipment that is used to answer 911 calls. He stated that the buyout would allow the equipment to be relocated to the courthouse basement for use as a backup answering point. Mr. Aldridge stated that he has received an invoice from the leasing company, TAMCO, for the buyout in the amount of \$30,627.15 and that funds are available in the current Communication's budget for the purchase.

Motion was made by Commissioner Wells, seconded by Commissioner Guy, carried unanimously, to authorize the buyout of the leased equipment in the amount of \$30,627.15, thereby approving BA# 258.

Mr. Aldridge presented the Transitional Duty Policy that was adopted by the Safety Committee as required by Key Risk, the county's worker's compensation insurance carrier. (See handout in minutes.)

Motion was made by Commissioner Guy, seconded by Commissioner Wells, carried unanimously, to adopt the Transitional Duty Policy as written to become effective June 19, 2007.

Mr. Aldridge stated that several boards had members whose terms would expire July 1, 2007:

Duplin County Planning Board [2 year term] – Mr. Marshall Britt, Ms. Bobbie Jean Rivenbark, and Ms. Tina Murphy.

Eastern Carolina Workforce Development Board, Inc. [2 year term] – Mr. Woody Brinson and Ms. Thomasina Williams.

Duplin County Airport Commission [3 year term] – Mr. Joe Bryant and Mr. Bob Quinn.

Duplin County Nursing Community Advisory Committee [1 year term] – Ms. Vicki Parker, Ms. Jerlene Merritt, and Ms. Dorothy Wyche.

Motion was made by Commissioner Turner, seconded by Commissioner Guy, carried unanimously, to approve the reappointments as outlined above.

The board recessed to meet again on Friday, June 29, 2007 at 3:00 p.m. in Commissioner's Room, County Administration Building (224 Seminary Street), Kenansville, North Carolina

Clerk