

December 17, 2007

The Duplin County Board of Commissioners met in Regular Session on Monday, December 17, 2007 at 6:30 p.m. at the Faison Fire Department (111 SW Center Street), Faison, North Carolina.

Present: Chairman Harold Raynor and Commissioners David Fussell, L. S. Guy, Jr., Cary Turner, Reginald Wells, and Zettie Williams

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

Rev. Michelle Clark from Faison United Methodist Church gave the invocation.

The following reports were received by the board and are on file with the clerk:

Affidavits of Publication
Animal Control – November 2007
Building Inspections – November 2007
Communications/Addressing – November 2007
Cooperative Extension – December 2007
Elections – November 2007
Emergency Management – November 2007
Finance – November 2007
Register of Deeds – November 2007
Social Services – November 2007
Soil & Water – November 2007

Motion was made by Commissioner Turner, seconded by Commissioner Wells, carried unanimously, to approve the Consent Agenda which included the following: Minutes – December 3, 2007; Budget Amendments #0113 - #0123; Solid Waste Releases #4639 - #4645; Tax Releases #4646 - #4660; to add Duplin County Board of Health appointments; and to add a discussion on James Kenan and North Duplin High School's recent football accomplishments.

Commissioner Turner stated that due to the meeting not being held at the regular meeting place, the board should not have Closed Session out of respect to the citizens attending the meeting.

Motion was made by Commissioner Turner, seconded by Commissioner Fussell, carried unanimously, to cancel the Closed Session portion of the meeting.

Mr. Mike Aldridge presented Administrative Budget Amendments # E041 - # F019 and Water District G – Contract No. 22 final payment and close out documents to be made a part of the minutes.

Motion was made by Commissioner Wells, seconded by Commissioner Guy, carried unanimously, to have representatives from the James Kenan High School football team appear before the board at a future meeting in order to recognize the team for winning the state championship in the 1-AA division.

Motion was made by Commissioner Wells, seconded by Commissioner Guy, carried unanimously, to have representatives from the North Duplin High School football team appear before the board at a future meeting in order to recognize the team for placing second in the state championship in the 1-A division.

Motion was made by Commissioner Williams, seconded by Commissioner Turner, to direct the county manager to contact the school superintendent for his recommendations on a financial reward for James Kenan High School for winning the state championship. Commissioners Fussell and Raynor voted for; Commissioners Guy and Wells voted against.

Public Comments: None

Mr. Thurman Wallace, chairman of the Duff's Creek Community Center, and Mr. Leroy Mathis appeared before the board to give an update on the usage of the center for the past year. (See handout in minutes.)

Mr. Lenwood Thompson of Faison, appeared before the board to give an update on the usage of the Juniper Community Center in the past year. (See handout in minutes.)

The board discussed the county's portrait policy as it relates to the portraits of Judge Stephen Williamson and Judge Kenneth Turner that are currently hanging in the Superior Courtroom.

Motion was made by Commissioner Turner, seconded by Commissioner Williams, to leave the portraits hanging on the balcony in the Superior Courtroom. Commissioners Fussell and Raynor voted for; Commissioners Guy and Wells voted against.

Mr. Ed Emory, Cooperative Extension Director, appeared before the board to give the annual update on the Duplin County Voluntary Agriculture District Program. The purpose of this program is to encourage the voluntary preservation and protection of farmland from non-farm development in Duplin County. He stated that currently there are 58 landowners and 18,937 acres in the program.

Ms. Delilah Gomes, Chairman of the Duplin County Community Building Task Force, along with Mr. Emory, recognized the recipients of the 2007 North Carolina Award for Outstanding Volunteer Service. The recipients were: (1) Faison Improvement Group for their work with several beautification & restoration projects and for organizing various town festivals and activities; (2) Mr. Leroy Dewitt for his service in delivering meals to senior citizens; (3) Ms. Mary Herring for her service in serving on various advisory boards for senior citizens; (4) Ms. Bertha Rhodes for her service in preparing income tax returns for senior citizens; and (5) Wallace 'Save the Depot' Committee for their fundraising and renovation efforts of the depot.

Mr. Randall Tyndall, Planning Director, appeared before the board to discuss the Sunset Drive Drainage Improvement Project. He stated that Dixie General Contractors, Inc. was the lowest bidder and that the project will be a joint venture with property owners to repair culverts in the neighborhood. The total cost of the project is \$7,500 and property owners and the county will share in the cost by contributing \$666.75 each. (See handout in minutes.)

Motion was made by Commissioner Turner, seconded by Commissioner Guy, carried unanimously, to approve the contract with Dixie General Contractors, Inc. and authorize the chairman to sign same, thereby approving BA #0124

Mr. Eric West, District Conservationist, appeared before the board to discuss the Goshen Swamp Water Management Project which consists of 25.3 miles of Goshen Swamp from the Northeast Cape Fear River to Emmett Jackson Road – SR1302. He explained that the proposed project would entail the trapping and removing of beavers, removal of beaver dams, and the removal of storm and woody debris from the channel. (See handout in minutes.)

Motion was made by Commissioner Guy, seconded by Commissioner Turner, carried unanimously, to adopt the resolution seeking funding from the State of North Carolina to assist in the cleanup and restoration of Goshen Swamp and authorize the chairman to sign same.

Mr. Jorge' Trujillo, Academic Advisor with the University of North Carolina at Wilmington, appeared before the board to discuss the transfer program agreement with James Sprunt Community College for students interested in a teaching degree. He explained that the program enables students to take basic courses at James Sprunt Community College then transfer to UNCW for the remaining courses.

Ms. Wendy Sivori appeared before the board to discuss the sale of Lot 4 at SouthPark to Veteran's Fire, Inc. approved at the February 2, 2007 board meeting. She stated that as part of the agreement, the land purchase was to be final within 6 months and construction to begin within 12 months. Ms. Sivori stated that Mr. Chuck Reimel, President of Veteran's Fire, had informed her that his company will close on the land purchase next week. Ms. Sivori felt that the board needed to be aware that the original time to purchase the land had expired. (See handout in minutes.)

Motion was made by Commissioner Guy, seconded by Commissioner Turner, carried unanimously, to move forward with the sale of Lot 4 at SouthPark by January 1, 2008 and authorize the chairman to sign the necessary documents.

Mr. Steve Moore, Aging and Transportation Director, appeared before the board to request \$60,000 in additional funding to cover the increasing fuel costs for the transportation department. He stated that he has not been able to identify sources of funding within his departmental budget to cover the costs.

Motion was made by Commissioner Williams, seconded by Commissioner Wells, to allocate \$20,000 in additional funding to cover increased fuel costs until January 2008 for the Duplin County Transportation Department, thereby approving BA #0125. Commissioners Guy, Turner, and Raynor voted for; Commissioner Fussell voted against.

Mr. Brian Pearce, Emergency Services Director, appeared before the board to discuss the recent legislation changes regarding 911 landline surcharge fees. He stated that as of December 31, 2007 the past fees collected, approximately \$600,000; would go into the general fund. Mr. Pearce stated that he would prefer the funds go into a capital reserve account in order to provide equipment for a back up call center for communications. (See handout in minutes.)

Motion was made by Commissioner Wells, seconded by Commissioner Turner, to place the 911 surcharge funds into a capital reserve account for communications – equipment/building improvements in order to provide equipment for a back up call center for the E-911 communications system.

Commissioner Wells withdrew his motion.

Motion was made by Commissioner Guy, seconded by Commissioner Turner, carried unanimously, to designate the 911 surcharge funds to be placed in capital reserve fund for communications – equipment/buildings for a back up call center but before any expenditures are made, a plan must be presented before the board for approval stating the purpose and amount of the expenditure.

Motion was made by Commissioner Wells, seconded by Commissioner Williams, carried unanimously, to go into session as Water District D.

The board returned to Regular Session.

Mr. Mike Aldridge informed the board that bids had been received for the acoustical project at the Duplin County Events Center. He stated that two bids were received with the low bid from Southern Interiors at \$177,777 which was about \$100,000 over estimate. Mr. Aldridge stated that in order to cut cost, the window blind portion of the project had been deleted bringing the revised bid to \$110,467. (See handout in minutes.)

Motion was made by Commissioner Wells, seconded by Commissioner Turner, carried unanimously, to accept the revised bid and award the contract to Southeastern Interiors and authorize the chairman to sign same, thereby approving BA #0126.

Mr. Aldridge stated that Ms. Daphany Hill, Executive Director with Eastern Carolina Human Services Agency is recommending that Ms. Rebecca Judge be reappointed to their board of trustees. (See handout in minutes.)

Motion was made by Commissioner Guy, seconded by Commissioner Wells, carried unanimously, to reappoint Ms. Rebecca Judge to the Eastern Carolina Human Services Agency Board of Directors.

Mr. Aldridge stated that Ms. Ila Davis, Health Department Director, is recommending that Mr. Jeff Howard be appointed to the Duplin County Board of Health to replace Mr. Jennings Outlaw as the engineer on the board, and Mr. Wayne Houston to replace Mr. Ralph Hunter as the pharmacist on the board. The terms would be from January 1, 2008 until January 1, 2011.

Motion was made by Commissioner Guy, seconded by Commissioner Williams, carried unanimously, to appoint Mr. Jeff Howard and Mr. Wayne Houston to the Duplin County Board of Health.

Mr. Aldridge presented the 2007 Secondary Roads Annual Statement from the North Carolina Department of Transportation. (See handout in minutes.)

Motion was made by Commissioner Guy, seconded by Commissioner Wells, to rescind the earlier motion regarding closed session in order to reinstate the closed session portion of the meeting. Commissioners Fussell, Raynor, and Williams voted for; Commissioner Turner voted against.

Motion was made by Commissioner Wells, seconded by Commissioner Guy, to go into Closed Session pursuant to N.C.G.S. 143-318.11 (a) (4). Commissioners Fussell, Raynor, and Williams voted for; Commissioner Turner voted against.

The board returned to Regular Session.

Motion was made by Commissioner Guy, seconded by Commissioner Wells, carried unanimously, to schedule a public hearing for January 7, 2008 at 9:30 a.m. regarding the sale of Lot #13 at WestPark to Mr. Lee Swinson.

The board adjourned to meet again on Monday, January 7, 2008 at 9:00 a.m. in the Commissioner's Meeting Room, County Administration Building (224 Seminary Street), Kenansville, North Carolina.

Clerk