

January 21, 2009

The Duplin County Board of Commissioners met in Regular Session on Wednesday, January 21, 2009 at 9:00 a.m. in Commissioners' Room, County Administration Building (224 Seminary Street), Kenansville, North Carolina.

Present: Commissioners David Fussell, Harold Raynor, Frances Parks, Cary Turner, and Zettie Williams

Absent: Commissioner Reginald Wells; Ms. Julia Herring, Administrative Officer; and Ms. Wendy Sivori, County Attorney.

Also Present: Mr. Mike Aldridge, County Manager and Ms. Teresa Lanier, Finance Officer.

Commissioner Raynor gave the invocation.

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

Affidavits of Publication

Animal Control – December 2008  
Building Inspections – December 2008  
Cabin Lake – December 2008  
Communications – December 2008  
Health Department – December 2008  
Manager's Office – January 2009  
Register of Deeds – December 2008  
Services for the Aged – December 2008  
Social Services – December 2008  
Soil & Water Conservation – December 2008  
Water Department – December 2008

Motion was made by Commissioner Raynor, seconded by Commissioner Williams, carried unanimously, to approve the Consent Agenda which included the following: Minutes – January 5, 2009; Budget Amendments #0132 - #0135; Solid Waste Releases # 5826 - # 5856; Tax Releases # 5783 - # 5857; Health Department Bad Debt Writeoffs - \$3,362.68 [general services] and \$39.74 [dental services]; an itinerary for the commissioners' tour of county facilities; a schedule for interviewing Economic Development Director applicants; an agreement with Ms. Lisa Pickett on durable medical equipment; a bill for the safekeeping of inmates and the corresponding budget amendment; a discussion from Commissioner Fussell on the Legislative Goals Conference that he attended January 15 & 16, 2009; a reminder of the joint meeting between the Board of Commissioners and the Board of Education on February 9, 2009 at 7:00 p.m. at the Department of Social Services Community Meeting Room; a reminder of the report from Dr. Jim Johnson on Thursday, January 22, 2009 at 6:30 p.m. at Cooperative Extension; a report on the joint meeting between the Board of Commissioners and the Board of Education; a discussion on the sale of the old Chinquapin School; and a discussion on the application for the construction of a public safety building at James Sprunt Community College. Also, Mr. Aldridge stated that Mr. Dean Horne, of Pittard, Perry, and Crone, Inc., would not be able to attend today to give his annual audit report on fiscal year 2007-2008 due to illness and adverse weather conditions. Mr. Horne was rescheduled for the February 2, 2009 meeting.

Commissioner Raynor stated that he was misquoted in the Goldsboro News Argus three times and he wanted this corrected.

Mr. Mike Aldridge presented Administrative Budget Amendments # F197 - # G213 and Motor Vehicle Releases for December 2008 in the amount of \$10,011.32 to be made part of the minutes.

Public Comments:

Mr. Randall Tyndall, County Planner, appeared before the board to announce that the minutes and recordings from planning board meetings would now be available on the county website. He also stated that the planning board meetings would now be held in county commissioners room.

Mr. Ferrell Thigpen, Building Inspection Director, appeared before the board to give a departmental update.

Mr. Mike Barnette, McDavid Associates, appeared before the board to discuss several issues with CDBG housing. Mr. Barnette discussed the removal of the Eleanor Stanley house from the 2006 Scattered Site Housing Program. Mr. Barnette also sought approval from the board for work on the James Carlton house. (See handout in minutes.)

Motion was made by Commissioner Parks, seconded by Commissioner Williams, carried unanimously, to approve the letters that Mr. Barnette prepared regarding

Mr. Mike Aldridge presented a list of items from the former Parks and Recreation department to be declared as surplus. (See handout in minutes.)

Motion was made by Commissioner Williams, seconded by Commissioner Raynor, carried unanimously, to declare the items from Parks and Recreation as surplus.

Mr. Mike Aldridge continued a discussion on the use of county vehicles by certain employees in the Sheriff's Department. Mr. Aldridge stated that he had concern over bailiffs and school resource officers driving county vehicles home and how this complies with IRS regulations. Sheriff Blake Wallace stated that these employees are sworn law enforcement officers and therefore they have authority to make arrests in their jurisdiction if needed. (See handout in minutes.)

Motion was made by Commissioner Parks, seconded by Commissioner Williams, carried unanimously, to defer this issue to the next meeting and to give Chairman Turner the authority to get an answer regarding this issue from the IRS without requesting an audit and have answer at next meeting.

Commissioner Fussell discussed the possibility of integrating the use of ankle bracelets for nonviolent criminals.

Sheriff Blake Wallace announced that Duplin County will be one of eleven counties nationwide to implement the Secure Communities Program. This is a program that will allow law enforcement officials to run fingerprints of incarcerated individuals through a national database to see if that individual is an illegal immigrant.

Mr. Mike Aldridge presented a bill for the housing of inmates at Sampson County Law Enforcement Center in the amount of \$33,500.00. (See handout in minutes.)

Motion was made by Commissioner Williams, seconded by Commissioner Fussell, carried unanimously, for Mr. Aldridge and Ms. Lanier to find the money within the budget, not from the fund balance, and pay the bill from Sampson County Law Enforcement Center, thereby approving budget amendment # 0137.

Ms. Cynthia Potter, Interim Economic Development Director, appeared before the board on behalf of Veteran Fire. The owner bought a lot in Wallace, North Carolina with the stipulation that he develops it within a year, which will be in February.

However, he has not been able to make any developments on the land due to the bad economic situation the country is currently facing. He asked that the time limit be expanded six more months.

Motion was made by Commissioner Parks, seconded by Commissioner Raynor, carried unanimously, to grant six more months to the owner of Veteran Fire for development on the lot he purchased in Wallace, North Carolina.

Mr. John Vogt, Events Center Director, appeared before the board to request authorization to purchase stage lighting and professional services to wire the lighting. The low bid on the stage lighting was by Barbizon from Charlotte at a cost of \$97,155. The low bid for the wiring was from Giddeon's Electrical Service of Willard in the amount of \$39,750. This project has been planned for and funds are available in capital reserves in the Events Center project budget. (See handout in minutes.)

Motion was made by Commissioner Williams, seconded by Commissioner Parks, to approve bids from Barbizon in the amount of \$97,155 and Giddeon's Electrical in the amount of \$39,750, thereby approving budget amendment # 0136. Commissioners Raynor and Turner voted for; Commissioner Fussell voted against. Motion carried.

Mr. Tom Reaves, IT Director, appeared before the board to request the reorganization of his department as well as open advertising for a vacant Senior Applications Programmer position. Mr. Reaves said that the ultimate goal was to eliminate the need for contracted programmers. (See handout in minutes.)

Motion was made by Commissioner Parks, seconded by Commissioner Williams, to grant the request for the reorganization of the IT department and the open advertising for a vacant Senior Applications Programmer position. Commissioners Fussell and Turner voted against; Commissioner Raynor abstained from voting, therefore causing a tie vote. A tie vote results in no action being taken.

Commissioner Fussell requested time to discuss English as a second language. Commissioner Fussell said that he was in the process of doing research on this subject regarding services provided to illegal immigrants. He stated that he would have more information prepared at a future meeting.

Commissioner Fussell gave a summary of the North Carolina Association of County Commissioners Legislative Goals Conference that he attended January 15 and 16, 2009.

Ms. Donna Brown, Utilities Director, appeared before the board to request that a water well previously used by the water department that has been out of service for ten years be either abandoned by state regulations or declared as surplus. Ms. Brown stated that the costs of repairing the well would be too costly.

Motion was made by Commissioner Parks, seconded by Commissioner Williams, carried unanimously, to declare the well as surplus.

Ms. Brown also discussed raising current water rates. This issue was discussed at the January 5, 2009 meeting and was deferred to January 21, 2009. (See handout in minutes.)

Motion was made by Commissioner Williams, seconded by Commissioner Fussell, for the water rates in all the districts to be universal.

Commissioner Williams amended her motion to approve Proposal #1 which was prepared by Ms. Brown. This proposal suggests bringing all districts to the same base rate. That would create an average \$5.00 per 6,000 gallons of water for districts A, B, and C while the other districts would only increase \$2.00 for the average of 6,000 gallons. The average proposed bill for 6,000 gallons of water would be \$37.50.

Commissioner Fussell withdrew his second to the previous motion.

Commissioner Raynor seconded the amended motion made by Commissioner Williams. Commissioners Parks and Turner voted for; Commissioner Fussell voted against. Motion carried. The water rates will raise, according to Proposal #1, effective July 1, 2009.

Mr. Joe McKemey, PE, from McDavid Associates, appeared before the board to discuss several projects that may be funded by the pending economic stimulus package. He stated that these projects needed to be ready to go so that Duplin County may take advantage of these available funds.

Motion was made by Commissioner Williams, seconded by Commissioner Raynor, carried unanimously, to recess regular session and go into session as Water District B.

The board returned to regular session.

Motion was made by Commissioner Williams, seconded by Commissioner Fussell, carried unanimously, to recess regular session and go into session as Water District D.

The board returned to regular session.

Motion was made by Commissioner Williams, seconded by Commissioner Raynor, carried unanimously, to recess regular session and go into session as Water District E.

The board returned to regular session.

Motion was made by Commissioner Williams, seconded by Commissioner Raynor, carried unanimously, to recess regular session and go into session as Water District F.

The board returned to regular session.

Motion was made by Commissioner Williams, seconded by Commissioner Raynor, carried unanimously, to recess regular session and go into session as Water District G.

The board returned to regular session.

Mr. Aldridge stated that he had recently discussed the sale of the mental health building with Mr. Ken Jones. Mr. Aldridge stated that it would be wise to get an appraisal on the building prior to receiving any offers to it. Mr. Aldridge stated that he would follow up on this matter.

Mr. Aldridge stated that the commissioners were unable to tour the county facilities as planned. It was originally planned that the commissioners would tour the facilities on Wednesday, January 21, 2009. However, due to the inclement weather on Tuesday, county offices were closed and the scheduled commissioners' meeting was postponed until January 21, 2009. The commissioners agreed to tour facilities on February 9, 2009. They also agreed to tour the airport in addition to the facilities that were listed on the itinerary. (See handout in minutes.)

Mr. Aldridge presented a schedule for interviewing candidates for the vacant Economic Development Director position. It was the consensus of the board to include members of the Economic Development Commission board in the interviewing process. (See handout in minutes.)

Chairman Turner requested a discussion on the old Chinquapin School. He stated that he recently went and viewed the school. He stated that he would be interested in selling the school for one dollar upon the stipulation that the buyer use the property for

development. Chairman Turner stated that this would be a cost-saving move for the county as well as bringing an economic opportunity to the community.

Motion was made by Commissioner Parks, seconded by Commissioner Williams, to declare the old Chinquapin School as surplus and advertise the sale of the school with the stipulation that the buyer use the property for development.

Commissioner Williams stated that she would like for the board to reconsider the application that James Sprunt Community College recently brought to the board for approval. The deadline for this application is January 26, 2009. This application was for the construction of a new public safety building. Although there would be grant money provided for the construction, the board of commissioners would be responsible to pay for the utilities and general maintenance of the building. This cost would amount to approximately \$94,000.00 annually for five years.

Motion was made by Commissioner Parks, seconded by Commissioner Raynor, to approve the James Sprunt Community College public safety building application.

Commissioner Raynor withdrew his second.

Motion died due to lack of second.

Mr. Aldridge stated that the board has received the financial audit from the Board of Education.

Motion was made by Commissioner Parks, seconded by Commissioner Raynor, carried unanimously, to approve the audit and to make it part of the record.

Mr. Aldridge stated that the joint meeting between the Board of Education and the Board of Commissioners went very well. The next meeting will be held at the Department of Social Services Community Meeting room on February 9, 2009 at 7:00 p.m.

Mr. Aldridge presented a letter from the North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services, Division of Public Health, Women's and Children's Health Services regarding the W.I.C. office located at the Duplin County Health Department. (See handout in minutes.)

Motion was made by Commissioner Williams, seconded by Commissioner Raynor, carried unanimously, to invite the W.I.C. director and the advisory board to a future meeting before any changes are made regarding their department.

Mr. Aldridge presented an executive summary of the presentation to be given by Dr. Jim Johnson at Cooperative Extension on January 22, 2009. (See handout in minutes.)

Commissioner Parks stated that she would like for the board to discuss the list of cost cutting ideas that Mr. Aldridge previously submitted to the board for review. This list will be discussed at the February 2, 2009 meeting.

Commissioner Raynor stated that he was pleased with the increase of business that Cabin Lake saw this year, according to their monthly report. He also stated that the commissioners should tour Cabin Lake when on their tour of county facilities.

The board adjourned to meet again on February 2, 2009 at 9:00 a.m. in the Commissioner's Meeting Room, County Administration Building (224 Seminary Street), Kenansville, North Carolina

---

Clerk