

January 4, 2010

The Duplin County Board of Commissioners met in Regular Session on Monday, January 4, 2010 at 9:00 a.m. in the Commissioners' Room, County Administration Building (224 Seminary Street), Kenansville, North Carolina.

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

Absent: None

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

Commissioner Wells gave the invocation.

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

Affidavits of Publication

None

Motion was made by Commissioner Williams, seconded by Commissioner Wells, carried unanimously, to approve the Consent Agenda which included the following: Minutes – December 21, 2009; Budget Amendment # 124; Tax and Solid Waste Releases # 7049-7068; and to add an award presentation to the Wallace-Rose Hill Football Team for winning the state championship.

Mr. Aldridge presented Administrative Budget Amendments # F198 - # F213 and the NCDOT Non-urbanized Area Public Transportation Grant Agreement to be made part of the minutes.

Public Comments:

Dr. Alice Scott of the Pink Hill Community spoke against the new school facility plan that will consolidate the B.F. Grady, North Duplin and James Kenan school districts. She stated that the new school plan was not in the best interest of the children or the taxpayers of Duplin County. She urged the board not to approve this plan.

Ms. Sonya Smith of the Pink Hill Community spoke against the new school facility plan. She cautioned the board to not act in haste before making such an important decision.

Ms. Violet Goodson of Mt. Olive spoke against the new school facility plan. She stated that three of the six Duplin County Board of Education members are against the plan and the vote should not have been allowed in the absence of Mr. Gillespie. Ms. Goodson stated Chairman Reginald Kenan knew that Mr. Gillespie disapproved of the plan, the plan has not been thought out, and is fiscally irresponsible.

Mr. Willie Gillespie, Duplin County Board Of Education member, spoke in defense of why he left the BOE meeting early when the vote on the school facility plan was going to be taken. He explained that he left due to medical reasons as he had a medical procedure performed earlier that day. Mr. Gillespie stated he did not know to ask to be excused. He stated that Chairman Kenan was aware that he was not feeling well.

Mr. Ralph Britt of Calypso stated that the school facility plan does not have support of half of the BOE and would be a fiscal burden on the taxpayers of Duplin County. He stated that the majority of citizens oppose the plan and urged the Commissioners not to vote to support it.

Mr. Win Batten, Mayor of Warsaw, spoke about the renovations to the Warsaw Armory to become a community health and fitness center. He stated that the center costs \$1.1 million with \$500,000 funded by the North Carolina Parks and Recreation grant. Mr. Batten stated the center would be completed in 60 to 90 days and invited everyone to visit when completed.

Mr. Stuart Precythe of Faison spoke against the school facility plan and stated that citizens in the North Duplin District are not supportive of the plan and contrary to the opinion of some board of education members; North Duplin students are ready for the 21st Century.

Ms. Jerri Parker, NCDOT Maintenance Engineer, gave an update on various roads.

Roads discussed: Norwood Ezzell Road in Mt. Olive – sign is missing: Scotts Store and Kornegay Communities – signs are missing.

Mr. Gary Rose, Tax Administrator, discussed several land use applications that were not filed within the time limits of the general statues due to delays for various reasons. The following citizens appeared before the board for a decision to be rendered on their untimely land use applications: Ms. Edith Brinkley, Mr. Ross Powell, CPA representing Mr. Newland Crocker, Ms. Rita Butler, Ms. Rita Conley, and Mr. Bizzell J. Davis.

Motion was made by Commissioner Fussell, seconded by Commissioner Wells, carried unanimously, to accept the applications for land use as presented.

Ms. Ila Davis, Health Department Director, appeared before the board to discuss the dental contract between Duplin County and Dr. Matthew Fell to provide professional dental services for the mobile dental unit. Ms. Davis stated that the contract provides for Dr. Fell to earn bonus payment if a profit is earned and the date to begin the bonus is calculation needed to be in the contract, to begin October 1, 2009. (See handout in minutes.)

Motion was made by Commissioner Parks, seconded by Commissioner Williams, carried unanimously, to approve the contract between the county and Dr. Fell as presented.

Ms. Davis reviewed the process for bad debt write off for the Health Department. (See handout in minutes.)

Mr. Ken Avent, Sr. appeared before the board to request funds from the county for the Faison Fitness and Wellness Center to purchase kitchen equipment and bleachers. He stated that \$25,000 was needed but any contribution would be appreciated.

Motion was made by Commissioner Wells, seconded by Commissioner Parks to make a contribution of \$5,000 to the Faison Fitness and Wellness Center. Commissioners Parks and Wells voted for; Commissioners Fussell, Raynor, Turner and Williams voted against.

Mr. Brian Pierce, Emergency Service Director, appeared before the board to seek adoption of resolutions to commend several EMS units surrounding Duplin County that recently provided EMS coverage to Duplin County so the Duplin County EMS employees could attend the funerals of two co-workers. (See handout in minutes.)

Motion was made by Commissioner Wells, seconded by Commissioner Parks, carried unanimously, to adopt the resolutions commending the EMS units as presented and authorize the chairman to sign same.

Mr. Randall Tyndall, Planning Director, appeared before the board to request a public hearing regarding the closeout of the 2006 Community Development Block Grant Scattered Site Housing Program to be held at the January 19, 2010 meeting at 6:30 p.m.

Motion was made by Commissioner Williams, seconded by Commissioner Parks, carried unanimously, to authorize the county planner to advertise and conduct a public hearing to be held January 19, 2010 at 6:30 p.m.

Dr. Lawrence Rouse, President of James Sprunt Community College; and Ms. Lynn Davis, JSCC Small Business Center Director, appeared before the board to discuss the renovations to the WestPark Business Technology Center to construct an incubator kitchen center. No county funds are needed for this project. Mr. Bruce

Bowman, Architect with BMS Architects, was also present and reviewed renovation drawings. (See handout in minutes.)

Motion was made by Commissioner Wells, seconded by Commissioner Parks, carried unanimously, to authorize James Sprunt Community College to proceed with proposed modifications to the WestPark Business Technology Center.

Mr. Robbie Ferris, President and CEO of SFL&A Architects of Raleigh, appeared before the board to discuss the Duplin County Board of Education's school facility plan and finance options for the project. He stated that the cost to construct the new central high school is currently \$27,927,742 according to current construction costs. He explained that this does not include the purchase of land or sewer installation. Mr. Ferris emphasized that a decision to construct must be made within the next several weeks due to stimulus funding available through USDA, low interest rates, and available tax credits. (See handout in minutes.)

Commissioner Fussell inquired about land costs, transportation costs, and other pertinent questions regarding the construction of this new school.

Motion was made by Commissioner Fussell, seconded by Commissioner Parks, to table this matter until a resolution on the existing board of education law suit against the Duplin County Board of Commissioners.

Commissioner Fussell withdrew his motion in order for members of the public present at the meeting to ask Mr. Ferris questions. The following citizens were allowed to ask Mr. Ferris questions regarding the school facility plan: Mr. Gary Ange, Mr. Jennings Outlaw, Mr. Ralph Britt, Ms. Sonya Smith, Mr. Reginal Kenan, Mr. Brent Davis, Dr. Alice Scott, and Mr. Jack Zoesch.

Motion was made by Commissioner Williams, seconded by Commissioner Wells, carried unanimously, to meet with Duplin County Board of Education and their architect and demographic consultant within the next two weeks to discuss the business plan for the new school and funding options.

Mr. Dean Horne, CPA with Pittard, Perry & Crone, discussed the audit report for the fiscal year 2008-2009. He also discussed the revenue neutral tax rate as requested by the board at the previous meeting. Mr. Horne stated that he calculated the revenue neutral tax rate to be .695 cents. (See handout in minutes.)

The board requested an updated Debt Service Report from Ms. Teresa Lanier, Finance Officer, to be presented at the next board meeting.

Mr. Mike Aldridge presented a letter on behalf of Ms. Heather Beard, Economic Development Director, for the chairman's signature certifying the site at WestPark to be sent to the North Carolina Department of Commerce. (See handout in minutes.)

Motion was made by Commissioner Wells, seconded by Commissioner Williams, carried unanimously, to authorize the chairman to sign the letter of support for WestPark to be sent to the NC Department of Commerce.

Mr. Aldridge presented a contract between Mr. Ferrell Thigpen, former Chief Building Inspector, and Duplin County to provide employment services for the Building Inspections Department until his replacement is trained.

Motion was made by Commissioner Fussell, seconded by Commissioner Wells, carried unanimously, to approve the employment contract between Mr. Ferrell Thigpen and Duplin County and authorize the chairman and finance officer to sign same.

The board adjourned to meet again on January 19, 2010 at 6:00 p.m. at the Fountaintown Fire Dept. in Fountaintown, NC.

Clerk

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