

Workshop Session
January 23, 2024

The Graham County Board of Commissioners met Tuesday, January 23, 2024, at 5:00 p.m. for their regular workshop session in the Graham County Community Building located at 196 Knight St. Robbinsville, North Carolina. All board was present. Also, present Interim Manager Kim Crisp, Attorney Coward, and Finance Director Stacy Carpenter.

1. Chairman Nelms called the meeting to order.
2. Chairman Nelms ask Nina Fette to speak. Ms. Fette stated that she was here to discuss the animal abuse and neglect in the county and to inquire who they need to call because they cannot connect with anyone. She has been told by the cops to call the health department and the health department told her to call the county commissioners and that is why she is here tonight. Who can tell them who is responsible for the safety of animals in our county? Ms. Fette stated that recently there was a bad case of neglect on tribal property, and they understand that the county does not patrol tribal property. Ms. Fette asks who they call. Chairman Nelms stated that it depends on specifics of the call. Glenda Alexander stated that her concern is that she has called the sheriff's office over the past two years and reported abuse, cruelty, improper shelter and this is not just dogs but all kinds of animals. Ms. Alexander stated that they need someone to take charge and take care of the animals in the county and they will help provide shelter if needed. Ms. Alexander stated that they can provide doghouses for people if they know there is a need and asks that they call them because she has seen many without water out in one degree weather without shelter and they suffer. Ms. Fette stated that they are asking the commission to follow the ordinance. Ms. Alexander asks why penalties are not given and if they know of animals needing food, water or shelter they will gladly assist but they really need help. Ms. Fette stated that there are so many cases of neglect in this county, and she did not know until today that Jacob Nelms was the animal control officer. Chairman Nelms stated that they follow the ordinance. Ms. Fette asks if they can hire another animal control officer that dedicates their time just to the animal control program. Chairman Nelms stated that this may come later but for now he asks that they call the county manager's office, and they will follow up on the report.
3. Cindy Zierk thanked the board for their time and for listening and she just became involved with Valley River. Ms. Zierk stated that two dogs were abandoned at the old water plant on Long Creek, and she borrowed a truck and fostered the dogs until they could be sent up north. Ms. Zierk stated that Valley River will work with you, and they will work to find safe places for the animals. Ms. Zierk asks that they contact the shelter prior to taking the animals because at times they are completely full and must be put on a waiting list. Ms. Zierk stated that Valley River will put the animals up for adoption, give them their shots and provide food and a cage until they can get transported up north.
4. Ms. Fette stated that just this week five puppies were dumped off and they need safe places available.
5. Ms. Zierk stated that they would be glad to have a food pantry for animals so that they can be fed, and they can also provide shelter because no animal should be left to starve and freeze to death like the ones that died on the tribal property.
6. Chairman Nelms asks for public comment. No further comment.
7. Chairman Nelms adjourned the workshop session.

Jacob Nelms, Chairman, Graham County Commissioner

Natasha Williams, Vice-Chair, Graham County Commissioner

Lynn Cody, Member, Graham County Commissioner

Connie Orr, Member, Graham County Commissioner

Keith Eller Member, Graham County Commissioner

ATTEST:

Kim Crisp, Clerk to the Board