

Regular Meeting 2/6/2007

The Graham County Board of Commissioners met Tuesday, February 6, 2007 at 6:00pm in the Conference Room of the Community Building at 196 Knight Street, Robbinsville, NC. Present were Commissioners Lynn Cody, Billy Cable, Jerry Sherrill, Raymond Williams and Eugene Trull. Chairman Cody called the meeting to order and Rev. James Vaughn gave the invocation.

1. Commissioner Williams made the motion to approve the Agenda. Commissioner Cable seconded this motion. Vote unanimous.
2. Commissioner Cable made the motion to approve the minutes. Commissioner Williams seconded this motion. Vote unanimous.
3. Chairman Cody opened the Public Comment session of the meeting. Sandy Sanders addressed the Board and asked for a refund on taxes in the amount of \$14,568.76 that he had paid when he quick claimed this property and he does not own the property. The property is on old Stecoah Road and approximately 200 acres. Ms. Orr, Tax Assessor, was releasing this property due to the fact that Mr. Sanders did not own it and was refunding his money after he requested a refund.

Rev. James Vaughn was requesting that the County donate about an acre of property for a building for the Graham County Emergency Food Bank and they would try to secure a grant to build a building and Mr. Vaughn stated that the property would only be set aside for this building and it would still belong to the County. Claudie Burchfield spoke to the Board on behalf of GREAT. GREAT has a non profit status to recognize the needs for Graham County. Ms. Burchfield stated that GREAT meets the 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday of each month and invited any of the Board members to participate on the GREAT Board. Teresa Garland was next to speak on behalf of the Graham County United Services. Ms. Garland stated that Graham County United Services is an all volunteer non-profit organization whose sole purpose is to raise money to help fund many of our County's non-profit groups and organizations. Chairman closed the public comment session of the meeting.

4. Chairman Cody opened the Public Hearing to receive comments on the planned improvements to the Graham County Pool and Recreation Park. Several County residents took turns and spoke of their support for the complex to be built. Kent Williams spoke to the Board about building the Recreation Park. Mr. Williams stated that how can you put a dollar amount on a child. The swim team uses the pool, the kids at school and the public. The children do not have a lot to do and the pool is a great thing to help keep the kids off of drugs. Mr. Williams told the Board that a vote against the pool was a vote against our children. Donna Cody told the Board that the present pool was built by raising local funds and the grant we have is a match and a chance for the County to move forward. The pool is for the kids of Graham County and this grant is pay as you go County match. Shelia

Styles stated that the pool helped her child with her self esteem when she joined the swim team. Ms. Styles stated that there were over 30 kids on the swim team and to please pass this for the kids. Ann Dock told the Board there was a lack of activity for the children of Graham County and adults and the pool was a wonderful thing. Commissioner Trull stated he was not against the pool but would the County have the money to make the payments. Lester Stewart stated that the pool did not need to be paid for by the taxpayers. Darrin Stewart asked what the County budget was and how much does it cost for the County to run for a year. Mr. Stewart stated that he was afraid that taxes will go up. Jacob Nelms spoke to the Board about the situation of the pool as it is today. The pool is 30 years old and the filter is the original and should be replaced every 20 years. There is a bad water leak and the shell is cracking and 2 drains are not up to the State code. Jeff Bishop, McGill & Associates, presented the proposal for engineering services related to the Recreation Park Improvements at Graham County Recreation Park located off Moose Branch Road. Mr. Bishop discussed the design and permitting, the bidding and award, construction administration, assumptions and the fee schedule. Mr. Bishop told the Board and the public that the plans for this project were in the County Manager's office for review. Melody Adams, County Planner, told the Board that the time frame was for a 3 years to complete starting May 2007. The Grant is for \$500,000. with a County match. The Rural Development Authority will donate \$50,000.00 and Travel & Tourism will donate \$5,000.00. Ms. Adams stated that they needed a commitment from the Board and we can't go and ask for more grants if we do not have the commitment. Ms. Adams stated the project needed to be put out to bid and look for other funds and approximately \$375,000.00 was the total needed for the match. Commissioner Trull asked Ms. Adams where she got the amount of \$375,000. we need to complete. Ms. Adams stated the match is \$500,000.00 and so far she had a \$50,000. Commitment from RDA, T&T a commitment of \$5,000.00 and the cost of the projected cost of the Park is \$930,000. and we have a matching grant for \$500,000.00. Ms. Adams stated that the citizens of Graham County will help raise funds for the pool but we need a commitment first. Commissioner Trull stated if you get the commitment for the pool you will have to pay more taxes. Commissioner Cable stated that he wanted the pool because the kids are our future. Ms. Adams stated the Board needed to approve the plans, put it out for bid for 90 days and the pool will only be closed for one summer. Commissioner Williams made the motion to approve the preliminary plans for the improvements to the Recreation Park and to approve to let bids for the project. After Commissioner Williams made his motion Blaine Stewart asked the Board how much money does Graham County have and didn't we need an audit to find this out? Commissioners Williams and Cable told Mr. Stewart that we had an audit and would have another one after the ending of physical year which is June 30<sup>th</sup>. Mr. Stewart stated if you don't know what you have coming in how do you know what's going out and how much money you have. Commissioner Trull stated that he had no answer. Chairman Cody stated that Commissioner Williams had made the motion to accept the plans tonight and Mr. Williams also added in this motion to appoint a committee to start raising monies and if someone gives \$100,000. or

\$150,000. donation that we name the pool after them and was there a second to this motion? Commissioner Cable seconded this motion. Commissioner Cody and Sherrill vote yes and Commissioner Trull voted no. Commissioner Cable passed out a paper showing the impacts of the Medicaid Burden on Graham County as a lot of the County residents did not know this. Chairman Cody asked the newspapers to advertise in the paper and see if anyone wished to be on the committee to over see raising of monies for the pool project and they could notify the County Manager's office. Mr. Vaughn asked the Board why they didn't give the Manna Emergency Food Bank an acre to place a building on so they could give food to the needy. Chairman Cody told Mr. Vaughn that there was a lot on Ft. Hill over to the side where the EMS facility will be built and the site will be cleared and graded.

5. Erma Orr, Tax Assessor, presented the Releases to the Board. Commissioner Cody made the motion to approve the Releases. Commissioner Williams seconded this motion. Vote unanimous. (Attached) Ms. Orr stated that she had called Mr. Sanders and told him that they had found the owners of the property on Stecoah that he had quick claimed and that he would have to request a refund for the taxes that he had paid. Ms. Orr asked the Board if they were going to again have the Senior Grant in Special Appropriations this year as her office needed this information for the coming year tax bills. Commissioner Cable made the motion to approve the Senior Grant and Commissioner Trull seconded this motion. Vote unanimous.
6. Shelley Lackey, Smoky Mountain Center, met with the Board to update the Board on the Smoky Mountain Center. Ms. Lackey is the co-coordinator for Smoky Mountain Center for the surrounding 7 counties. Ms. Lackey told the Board that a Stakeholders Meeting was set up and she was requesting that the Board attend and give their ideas at the meeting.
7. Terry Slaughter, EMS Director, presented the 2007/2008 Ambulance Rate Request to the Board for their approval. Commissioner Williams stated that he did not think that there should be a charge for a child that was playing youth sports because the ambulance was not tied up very long for this. Commissioner Williams made the motion to approve the Ambulance Rate Schedule as presented by Mr. Slaughter. Commissioner Cable seconded this motion. Vote unanimous. (attached) Commissioner Cable told Mr. Slaughter that it had been brought to his attention that some of the Ambulance personnel did not fill out their paper work and Mr. Slaughter told the Board that this had been addressed. Commissioner Trull asked if they were short handed because of the excessive over time that they were accruing. Mr. Slaughter stated that they are scheduled to work a 48 hour shift – two days on and 2 days off and you have more calls and you could bring the pay up and hire more people. Mr. Slaughter also stated that he would have the applications to present for part time employees at the next Board meeting. Terry Slaughter next discussed with the Board the change orders for the EMS facility. The change orders are number one and number two and the EMS Administration

- Building Remodeling. (attached) Commissioner Williams made the motion to approve the proposed change orders and get started as soon as possible. Commissioner Sherrill seconded this motion. Commissioners Cody and Cable voted yes. Commissioner Trull voted no. Mr. Slaughter gave the Board a copy of the Graham County EMS Transfer Policy and there were no questions from the Board.
8. Sarah Sims, Independent sales representative for AFLAC in Graham County, wanted permission to offer Aflac coverage for county employees. Ms. Sims stated that she would like to schedule times to meet with employees in their individual departments to explain policies and enroll employees. The Board agreed for Ms. Sims to go ahead.
  9. Alicia Parham, Interim Health Director, presented to the Board Budget Amendment for approval. Commissioner Williams made the motion to approve this Budget Amendment as presented. Commissioner Cable seconded this motion. Commissioners Cody and Sherrill seconded this motion. Commissioner Trull voted no.
  10. Commissioner Williams told the Board that he had been contacted by Dillard Smith wanting to rent office space and parking spaces for approximately 20 months at the upper plant on Ft. Hill. The Board recommended \$1500.00 and this amount will be put toward the pool and if this is accepted if the plant is sold they will be given a 30 notice. Commissioner Williams made the motion to approve \$1500. rent and this amount put toward the pool and if the building is sold the Board will give a 30 day notice and if any renovations are made it will be their responsibility and not the County. Commissioner Sherrill seconded this motion. Commissioner Cody voted yes.
  11. Commissioner Williams stated that he had been contacted by the Town of Robbinsville as they were wanting an easement on Depot Street to Main Street to be able to pump water out using an under ground pipe and this would be from basketball court on Depot Street to Main Street and this would help drain the water when it comes a heavy rain. Commissioner Williams made the motion to approve for County Attorney McKinney to draw up the easement from the County to the Town of Robbinsville for the purpose of pumping the excess water from Depot Street to Main Street. Commissioner Cable seconded this motion. Vote unanimous.
  12. Commissioner Trull left the meeting. Donna Cody met with the Board to discuss with them as she had been approached by several of them to concerning some problems and I had have relayed those on to Attorney McKinney and he has assured me that he is going to relay them to the Board as the potential liability to the Board and I am going to give him the opportunity to do that before I proceed any further. Commissioner Trull came back to the meeting after Ms. Cody finished speaking.

13. Sandra Smith, County Manager, told the Board that the NCAA stated that they need a Legislative Liaison between NCAA and the Board of County Commissioners. Commissioner Williams made the motion to appoint Sandra Smith to be the Legislative Liaison. Commissioner Cody seconded this motion. Vote unanimous. Ms. Smith also told the Board that she had an estimate from Garland's Automotive on a motor for a 2000 Chevrolet S10 (Recreation Department) as it needed to be fixed at total cost of \$3388.88. Commissioner Williams made the motion to solicit more bids from local mechanics and if anyone else in the County would be willing to do this and to go with the lowest bid and get the vehicle fixed. Commissioner Cable seconded this motion. Vote unanimous.
14. Erma Orr requested that her ambulance bill of 2001 be refunded as she had already paid it. The Board denied this request.
15. The Board agreed for Commissioner Raymond Williams to the Graham County United Services.
16. Commissioner Cody stated the NC Wildlife Commission has adopted as of January 1<sup>st</sup> fishing license and now you have to have fishing license in North Carolina and the Department of Social Services is required now to handle the paperwork who wishes to have fishing license with the exemption for a year and there needs to be a letter written to the Wildlife Commission in Raleigh requesting funding to issue those license. This has to be done each year. These licenses are for the Handicapped and Senior Citizens.
17. Commissioner Williams made the motion to go into closed session under GS 143.318.11 A (6) & (3). Commissioner Cable seconded this motion. Vote unanimous.
18. Commissioner Cable made the motion to come out of closed session and back into open session. Commissioner Trull seconded this motion. Vote unanimous.
19. In closed session the Board discussed Personnel and Attorney/Client with Attorney McKinney on certain Personnel matters. No decisions were reached until Attorney McKinney confers with another Attorney concerning Personnel matters.
20. Commissioner Williams made the motion to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Cable seconded this motion.