

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE  
ROWAN COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS  
SEPTEMBER 4, 2001 – 9:00 AM  
J. NEWTON COHEN SR. ROOM, ADMINISTRATION BUILDING**

Present: Steve Blount, Chairman  
Gus Andrews, Vice-Chairman  
Arnold Chamberlain, Member  
Frank Tadlock, Member  
Leda Belk, Member

The County Manager, the Clerk to the Board, the County Attorney and the Finance Director were also present.

Chairman Blount called the meeting to order at 9:00 am.

Commissioner Tadlock provided the Invocation and Commissioner Andrews led the Pledge of Allegiance.

**ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA:**

- Commissioner Andrews requested to add a discussion on an old business issue.
- Chairman Blount requested to add a discussion on the YMCA contribution.

**COMMISSIONER LIAISON REPORTS:**

Commissioner Chamberlain informed the Board that representatives from the advisory committee of the Fire and Rescue Squad have recently met. This group is in conjunction with the Emergency Services Task Force. Commissioner Chamberlain asked the Clerk to note that representatives from this group will be presenting a report at the September 17, 2001 Commission Meeting.

Commissioner Andrews informed the Board of a “kick-off” appreciation dinner for the 50<sup>th</sup> year of the Rowan County Fair, which he recently attended. Commissioner Andrews encouraged everyone to attend the Fair, comparing this event to “apple pie and ice cream” for Rowan County. Commissioner Andrews asked that everyone who attends the Fair to notice the names on the buildings. These are people that have been involved with the Fair for forty plus years. Some of the funds from the Fair go towards scholarships.

It was announced that the Rowan County Fair will be held the week of September 17<sup>th</sup>.

**CONSIDERATION OF THE CONSENT AGENDA:**

Commissioner Chamberlain asked Leslie Heidrick, Finance Director, for clarification on item “K”, under the Budget Amendments, dealing with the Head Start Nurse Reimbursement. Ms. Heidrick stated that this dealt with a Grant from the Health Department and it was the County’s portion of the Grant.

Commissioner Tadlock made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda as presented. Commissioner Belk seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

The Consent Agenda consisted of the following:

Consideration Of Consent Agenda:

- A. Approval of the 08/20/2001 minutes
- B. Approval of the Fee schedule and revisions for the Health Department
- C. Approval to set a public hearing for Z-20-01 and CUP-20-01, a request from BEE Enterprises to rezone RA to CBI (CUD)
- D. Approval to set a public hearing for Z-23-01 and CUP-22-01, a request from Underwood Associates, Inc. to rezone RA to MFR (CUD)
- E. Approval of two Unanimous Petitions for the proposed road names of Black Dog Lane and Old Barnyard Lane
- F. Approval to set a public hearing for the proposed road name of Dark Hollow Road
- G. Approval to set a public hearing for the proposed road name of Playground Lane
- H. Approval to set a public hearing for the proposed road name of Leisure Lane
- I. Approval to set a public hearing for the proposed road name of Horseshoe Drive

- J. Approval to set a public hearing for the proposed road name of Millennium Drive
- K. Approval of the Budget Amendments

**PUBLIC HEARING FOR THE ROAD NAME OF PSALM STREET:**

Don Conner, Environmental Services Director, presented the background on the proposed name of “Psalm Street”, which is located east off of Kirk Avenue in Kannapolis. Mr. Conner noted that a public hearing was held previously with the proposed name of “Newfound Street”, in which there was opposition to this name. It was decided to allow this community to find a suitable and agreeable name. The proposed name of “Psalm Street” has been suggested by the community and recommended by Staff.

Chairman Blount opened the public hearing to entertain comments from the audience.

There being no one present who wished to address the Board. Chairman Blount closed the public hearing.

Commissioner Tadlock made a motion to approve the name of “Psalm Street”. Commissioner Andrews seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

**RECOGNITION FOR EMPLOYEES OF THE MONTHS OF AUGUST AND SEPTEMBER:**

Chairman Blount introduced Clai Martin, Animal Control Supervisor for five years, as the Rowan County Employee of the month for August. Mr. Martin recently received the Ralph Ketner Employee Productivity Award at the North Carolina Association of County Commissioner’s Conference, which was held in August 2001. This award was for a project that consisted of having inmates, from the NC Department of Corrections, to clean and care for animals at the Animal Shelter. This resulted in allowing staff more time to serve the citizens of Rowan County and also converted one fulltime position to a half-time position. This project also resulted in an estimated savings of \$35,000 and a positive rehabilitation program for the inmates.

Chairman Blount then introduced Patrick Holshouser, a Senior Codes Enforcement Officer for eight years with the Environmental Services Department. Mr. Holshouser has recently achieved the highest level of certification in all five areas of Codes Enforcement. Mr. Holshouser is one of 87 Code Enforcement Officials in North Carolina to have achieved the maximum of the top-level certificates.

Both Employees were presented certificates and a monetary award and congratulated for their hard work and dedication.

**REQUEST FOR APPROVAL OF THE PROPOSAL FOR THE MANAGEMENT OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE FOR RTS:**

Sandy Fisher, Rowan County Purchasing Agent and Clyde Fahnestock, Senior Services Director presented the background for the Rowan Area Transit System, Inc. (RTS) Request for Proposals (RFP).

Ms. Fisher reported that the recommendation for the operation and maintenance of the transportation service for RTS is Coach USA. Of the fourteen (14) notices sent to vendors, six (6) requested a copy of the RFP and five (5) vendors attended the pre-proposal conference. Rowan County received two (2) proposals: one from Coach USA and one from Elite Transportation.

Mr. Fahnestock highlighted the differences in the two proposals, stating that Coach USA had a more detailed proposal that met all the requirements. Mr. Fahnestock noted that Coach USA offered a higher per hour wage for drivers along with benefits, uniforms, software for the operating system and insurance provisions. Although Elite Transportation was the low bidder, this company presented a two-page proposal, which was not thorough and did not address the RFP requirements. The contract will be a three-year contract with two (2), one-year extensions.

The two proposals were as follows:

|                      |                         |
|----------------------|-------------------------|
| Elite Transportation | \$1.16 per vehicle mile |
| Coach USA            | \$1.35 per vehicle mile |

A question and answer period followed, in which the Board questioned Staff on the process and follow through procedures. Commissioner Chamberlain voiced concern about following through more thoroughly with Elite Transportation, since this was the low bid and would save a significant amount of money. Mr. Fahnestock responded that Elite Transportation did not follow the RFP requirements. The RTS Board voted to give the recommendation to the Board of Commissioners to award the contract to Coach USA.

Commissioner Belk made a motion to accept Staff's recommendation for Coach USA. Commissioner Tadlock seconded and the motion carried on a 4-1 vote. Commissioner Chamberlain voted against the motion.

**APPROVAL OF THE RECOMMENDATION FROM THE LLEBG ADVISORY BOARD FOR ALLOCATION OF FUNDS:**

Sheriff George Wilhelm addressed the Board on behalf of the Advisory Board for the LLEBG allocation of funds. Sheriff Wilhelm stated that the Advisory Board met on August 22, 2001 and is recommending using the funds for a County Safety/Security Sworn Position and also recommended hiring an experienced officer for this position. This position would be a liaison between the school system and would be responsible for evaluating and maintaining security of all County facilities.

Chairman Blount referred to past meetings with the Sheriff to discuss the security issue in the Rowan County Courthouse and this appeared to be a “win” situation for the Sheriff’s Department and the Board of Commissioners. Chairman Blount also clarified that this position would go before the Personnel Board before final approval is made.

The consensus of the Board was to set a public hearing for the next Commission meeting for the approval of the LLEBG allocation of funds at a time designated by the Clerk.

**REQUEST FROM THE LAND TRUST FOR A CONSERVATION EASEMENT  
ALONG GRANTS CREEK:**

Chairman Blount stated that this topic was for clarification and discussion and an opportunity to entertain questions.

Mr. Conner and Kevin Redding, Grants Creek Coordinator, provided an overview of the Grant’s Creek Project. Mr. Redding stated that the project consists of doing conservation work along the Grant’s Creek corridor. The funding is through the NC Clean Water Management Trust Fund, to an organization of the Yadkin Pee Dee River Basin Association, of which Rowan County is a member. In order to receive the maximum allotment of \$2.3 million, a matching \$1 million donation must be shown and any land approved by the Board would hopefully count towards this matching donation.

Mr. Redding continued to state that the Rowan County Property is important, not only because of the contribution towards the matching donation, but also because there is approximately one mile of creek frontage that the County owns and it would give the project a “boost” to have the support of the Board. Grant’s Creek connects Landis, China Grove, Salisbury and Spencer and feeds into the Yadkin River before reaching High Rock Lake. With the full support of the state, this would be an opportunity to clean up Grant’s Creek without having to spend any local money.

Mr. Conner stated that 90 – 95% of the property is in the floodplain and the small portion not located in the floodplain is in the clear zone of the airport runway. It was stated that the Landtrust would allow modification so the Board would be able to designate specific uses and future improvements and expansions to the airport. The County would still be responsible for the property.

It was discussed that anyone with questions about the easement agreement or anyone that would like to walk the property should contact Mr. Conner. It was also suggested to have Jerry Rowland, County Tax Assessor, involved in this process. Mr. Conner is to keep the Board updated in the future.

## **BOARD APPOINTMENTS:**

### **Adult Care Home Community Advisory Committee:**

Commissioner Chamberlain made a motion to appoint Jonette Powell, Chris Chaney and James Talton to this committee. The Board approved unanimously.

Commissioner Chamberlain expressed the importance of this committee in addressing the care for our senior citizens. Commissioner Chamberlain referred to a recent newspaper article concerning complaints in nursing home facilities.

### **Juvenile Crime Prevention Council:**

There is a need for someone to fill the Business Slot on this Council.

### **Piedmont Behavioral Healthcare Board:**

Mary Beth Smith has resigned from this board and a replacement is needed.

## **ADDITIONS:**

### **Old Business**

Commissioner Andrews reviewed with the Board the rezoning of property, at a previous public hearing, on a request from Primestar. There was discussion concerning the type of structures that would be placed on the property in question. Commissioner Andrews stated that he was led to believe that stick built houses would be placed on this property. Zoning allows structures to build according to what is required in that particular zoning. Commissioner Andrews stated that, in the future when someone comes for a conditional use permit and they are developers vs. individuals, he would like to encourage the Board to look at the conditional use permits given to developers more closely and “tie it down a little tighter on exactly what they are want to do with a piece of property”.

Chairman Blount added that the most dangerous rezoning is from RA (Rural Agriculture) to a Commercial, because the Commercial Zoning allows for a long list of changes that could be detrimental.

Commissioner Chamberlain voiced concern about “dishonest” remarks from those who speak at these public hearings.

### **Discussion of YMCA Contribution**

Chairman Blount stated that he would like to clarify some details about the recent contribution to the YMCA. Chairman Blount stated that Commissioner Tadlock and himself were approached by members of the YMCA to make a contribution to the capital needs in Rowan County. The discussion took place to merge this contribution into the

Rowan County Government Employees Wellness Program and the United Way Campaign by providing memberships to the area YMCA's. Chairman Blount stated that the Manager was asked to get consensus from the Board. At the last Commission Meeting, a budget transfer of \$10,000 was approved, to fund the first year of a five-year commitment. Ten adult memberships per year have been committed from the YMCA.

Chairman Blount stated the twofold purpose:

1. To support the YMCA expansion of programs and buildings.
2. Memberships for employees to help with the Wellness Program and the United Way Campaign.

Commissioners discussed this issue, emphasizing the benefits to the Wellness Program to encourage employees to better health and also to support the YMCA. There was also a discussion of opposition to the money being used for capital projects.

Commissioner Andrews voiced confusion and stated that he thought he was voting for "Y" memberships to aid the Wellness Program, thereby helping with the County Health Insurance Cost and not for capital projects. Commissioner Andrews stated that with the tough budget struggles, where cuts were made and departments felt the effects, he could not support giving money for building expansions to the YMCA. Commissioner Andrews reiterated that he was in favor of supporting the Wellness concept, but not for building expansion.

Commissioner Chamberlain agreed with Commissioner Andrew's comments.

Commissioner Chamberlain made a motion to find out how much money would be going towards the memberships and pull back the remaining amount and address that amount annually, as the Board sees fit.

After a brief discussion, Commissioner Chamberlain restated his motion.

Commissioner Chamberlain made a motion to get figures "in house" to find out how much these memberships would cost. The difference between that and \$10,000 would be the amount withdrawn for this year. Also, to withdraw the \$10,000 for the four remaining years and visit that on an annual basis, as the Board "sees fit". Commissioner Andrews seconded the motion. The motion failed on a 2-3 vote with Commissioners Blount, Tadlock and Belk voting against the motion.

Further discussion took place among the Commissioners.

Commissioner Tadlock made a motion to continue as planned with the offer to the YMCA for the memberships and then asked staff to best utilize those memberships, with that in mind, on how to enhance the Wellness Program. Commissioner Belk seconded the motion. The motion passed on a 3-2 Vote. Commissioners Chamberlain and Andrews voted against the motion.

**PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD:**

Chairman Blount opened the public comment period to entertain comments from those in attendance.

Those wishing to address the Board were as follows:

1. Norene Foster, a Rowan County citizen, stated that she is a federal retiree and pays her own membership to the YMCA. She pays her tax dollars and has been working since April to solve a problem in the County and that problem has not been solved. Ms. Foster does not agree that tax dollars should go the YMCA memberships, unless it is a senior citizen or a handicap individual. Ms. Foster does not agree with this unless Fisherman's Cove and Rowan County can get additional information on where tax dollars are going.
2. Bobby Call, a citizen in the Enochville area, voiced his concern about the police protection and the response time in his area. Mr. Call asked the Board how to get an investigation on the Sheriff s Department, to determine if a "good job" is being done for the people "on the edge" of the County.

It was decided that Commissioner Belk would assist Mr. Call in arranging a meeting with the Sheriff to address his concerns.

There being no other citizens who wished to address the Board, Chairman Blount closed the public comment period.

Chairman Blount reviewed the moratoriums currently in place.

There being no further business, Chairman Blount adjourned the meeting at 10:40 am.

Respectfully Submitted,

Rita K. Foil  
Clerk to the Board