

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE
ROWAN COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
MAY 5, 2003-9:00A.M.
J.NEWTON COHEN, SR. ROOM, ADMINISTRATION BUILDING

Present: Steve Blount, Chairman
Gus Andrews, Vice-Chairman
Leda Belk, Member
Chad Mitchell, Member
Frank Tadlock, Member

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

Chairman Blount convened the meeting at 9:00 am.

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

ADDITIONS:

- Commissioner Andrews asked to discuss Air Quality to be listed as item number 10.1.
- Chairman Blount added item number 10.2, which included a discussion for a newspaper advertisement for Law Enforcement.
- Chairman Blount also requested to add an EMS Proclamation to be included with item number 6 on the agenda.
- Chairman Blount explained the process for revaluations. “When we fall below 90% property values, our utilities that are in our community get a chance to appeal their values and reduce their value; therefore, reduce their taxes to the county.”

LIAISON REPORTS

- Chairman Blount discussed a seminar in Charlotte, which he attended with Commissioner Andrews. This seminar concerned an Economic Development issue about the quality of life. Chairman Blount affirmed that it was a “very eye opening” experience.

CONSIDERATION OF CONSENT AGENDA

Commissioner Tadlock made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda. Commissioner Andrews seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

The Consent Agenda consisted of the following items:

- A. Approval of the 4/7/2003 minutes
- B. Approval of the Rowan County HIPAA Privacy Rule
- C. Approval of HCCBG Grant Application for FY 2004
- D. Approval to set a public hearing for road name change to Blackwelder Farm Road.
- E. Approval to set a public hearing for road name change to Tootsie Road.
- F. Approval to set a public hearing for Z-06-03
- G. Approval to set a public hearing for Z-12-03
- H. Approval to set a public hearing for a road closing
- I. Budget Amendments

PROCLAMATION FOR NATIONAL TOURISM WEEK

Commissioner Belk praised the Tourism Authority for “their fantastic job of outreach.”

Commissioner Belk made a motion to adopt the Proclamation declaring May 11-17, 2003 as National Tourism Week. Commissioner Tadlock seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

Chairman Blount presented Judy Newman, director of Rowan County Convention and Visitor’s Bureau, with the proclamation. Ms. Newman thanked the Board for the recognition. Frank Goodnight, chairman of the Tourism Authority, was also in attendance.

RECOGNITION OF AWARD FOR CHAPLAIN MICHAEL TAYLOR

Sheriff George Wilhelm informed the Board of the recent award presented to Rev. Michael Taylor as “2003 Chaplain of the year” by the National Sheriff’s Association.

Chaplain Michael Taylor was applauded for his work.

Chairman Blount read a certificate and then presented the certificate to Rev. Taylor in honor of this accomplishment.

Chaplain Taylor thanked the Board for this recognition.

APPROVAL OF PROCLAMATION FOR SHIELD-A-BADGE WITH PRAYER

Chaplain Michael Taylor discussed establishing the month of May as Shield-A-Badge With Prayer Awareness Month. In order to show appreciation to Law Enforcement Officers, this year Rev. Taylor will be passing out key chains, as to last year's paperweights. Rev. Taylor also handed each member of the Board a letter requesting donations to purchase bibles for the Sheriff's Department.

Commissioner Mitchell made a motion to accept the Proclamation to establish May as "Shield-A-Badge with Prayer Awareness Month". Commissioner Andrews seconded and the motion was passed unanimously.

APPROVAL OF PROCLAMATION FOR LAW ENFORCEMENT WEEK

Sheriff Wilhelm discussed the danger officer face everyday and he commented, "It is not always an easy job" and expressed appreciation for the Board's recognition of law enforcement officers through the Proclamation.

Commissioner Andrews made a motion to approve May 11-17, 2003 as "Law Enforcement Week". Commissioner Mitchell seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

Chairman Blount discussed advertising the May 13, 2003 event for law enforcement officers. Chairman Blount mentioned that he had spoken with Mayor Kluttz and they had discussed running an ad in the Sunday Newspaper for this special occasion. The total amount for the advertisement would be \$1800, which would be divided up amount local governments in Rowan County.

Commissioner Belk made a motion to approve funding and advertising for this event to a maximum cost of \$900. Commissioner Tadlock seconded and motion passed unanimously.

Sheriff Wilhelm also presented the Board with a handout, which showed statistics from 1994-2002 regarding crime rates in Rowan County.

PUBLIC HEARING FOR THE PROPOSED REVISIONS TO THE ROWAN COUNTY AMBULANCE ORDINANCE

Wayne Ashworth, Director of Emergency Services, spoke on the proposed changes to the Ambulance Ordinance, which included topics such as better insurance coverage and drug

testing. Mr. Ashworth stated that the present franchise holders expressed no specific problems with the new “rewrite” and urged the Board’s approval.

Commissioner Belk made a motion to adopt the text amendments as presented for this ordinance. Commissioner Tadlock seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

Chairman Blount mentioned that Rockwell Rural needed to revise their application.

Wayne Ashworth commented that they will give Rockwell Rural an application since it had been approved, and the present franchise holders will be given until July 1, 2003 to re-do their applications.

Addition: Proclamation

Commissioner Tadlock made a motion to approve the proclamation designating the week of May 18-24, 2003 as “Emergency Medical Services Week”. Commissioner Andrews seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

PRESENTATION OF LAND USE COST ESTIMATES

Marion Lytle and Ed Muire addressed the land use cost estimates. Ed Muire mentioned that the process is broken down into three phases:

-Phase one included the plan initiation in which a group would serve on an Advisory Committee to represent their contribution and guidance.

-Phase two included a plan development, such as the review of the survey and the review of future land use patterns. In addition, a telephone survey of county residents to identify issues and attitudes of land use related topics

-Phase three involved the plan adoption. In order for this to happen, the Advisory Committee, Planning Board and Board of Commissioners each would review the draft plan prior to the public hearing. After the review has been completed, a consultant would make a formal presentation of the final plan to the Planning Board and Board of Commissioners. Ed Muire stated that this would help the growth in Rowan County.

It was stated that the total estimates of this project for 21 months would range from \$140, 000-\$165,000.

Chairman Blount remarked that at the last two planning retreats, the Board agreed to move ahead on land use issues because it was important issue.

Marion Lytle, from the Planning Department, emphasized that the survey would be given to a sample large enough to break down for the county, as opposed to municipal areas so that a good sample of opinions could be obtained.

Chairman Blount mentioned taking a step further with the municipalities to see if they wanted “to get on board”. Chairman Blount asked for Board consensus for the Planning Staff to put together the advisory committee to bring back as a recommendation as soon as possible.

Chairman Blount mentioned the Board’s authorization to proceed with the process of phase one and the remainder will be taken up at budget time.

DISCUSSION ON PROPOSED USES FOR SUMMIT CORPORATE CENTER

Chairman Blount reviewed with the Board the three different experts that had previously spoken to the Board on different uses for Summit Corporate Center.

Commissioners Mitchell and Belk were in favor of retail/commercial development in Summit Corporate Center and also requested to set up visits to different developmental parks.

Chairman Blount handed out a news article titled: Expert: Preservation Brings Jobs. “We need to do all we can to improve the quality of our community and also help existing workers improve their skills,” commented Chairman Blount. Chairman Blount continued to urge the Board to continue looking towards the future.

Commissioner Andrews discussed that it was the county’s responsibility to promote growth, jobs and development and it was not the job of the county to develop strip shopping centers against private investors.

Commissioner Mitchell agreed with Commissioner Andrews and also emphasized that there are many citizens who are still in need of jobs.

Commissioner Belk also agreed with Commissioner Andrews and emphasized that Summit Corporate Center has not experienced any growth; therefore, a direction needed to be taken to promote development in that area.

Chairman Blount clarified that when the decision was made to establish Summit Corporate Center, it was not intended to compete with the private developers because at that time, there were no local developers of this ability.

Commissioner Andrews expressed that jobs were very critical, but emphasized that many workers who were working minimum wage job were living in poverty. Commissioner Andrews also remarked that it was the responsibility of the Board to create jobs in which people do not have to live in poverty.

Commissioner Tadlock was in agreement with Commissioners Belk and Mitchell in the need to take field trips in order to add strength to this study.

The Board agreed to postpone the discussion until a later date.

FURTHER DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE APPROVAL OF LETTER OF INTENT OR MOU FOR CLEAN CITIES

Commissioner Belk discussed the Clean Cities Act, which deals with alternative fuel sources and distributions of those services. Commissioner Belk mentioned that there were grants available to afford the cost of alternative fuels and commented, “If the cost is not significant, we need to bring parties together to make this happen.”

County Manager Tim Russell mentioned that the cost was not significant.

Commissioner Belk added that the “Queen City Program” was a first step and will also provide federal points to offsets those days of “non-attainment.”

Chairman Blount expressed that this is a purely voluntary process and the Board can choose not to participate.

Commissioner Belk mentioned that,” If we could get federal dollars to help our school buses, that is a big step is helping our air.”

Commissioner Tadlock commented on the situation with the school buses by stating that as long as the supply was there, the demand would be there.

Commissioner Belk made a motion to approve the Memorandum of Understanding as presented. Commissioner Tadlock seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

Chairman Blount expressed the correct name of the MOU as Centralina Clean Fuels Coalition.

It was declared that Commissioner Belk would be the representative to that Centralina Clean Fuels Coalition Group.

BOARD APPOINTMENTS:

The Board approved the following board appointments:

Carolina’s Regional Partnership:

Paul Fisher had submitted his resignation to this Board.

Steve Fisher was unanimously appointed to serve on a motion by Commissioner Belk.

Centralina Workforce Development Board:

Dee Dee Wright was unanimously re-appointed to serve on a motion by Commissioner Belk and Tom Halley was unanimously appointed to serve on a motion by Commissioner Andrews.

Criminal Justice Partnership Program:

Rose Cox was unanimously re-appointed to serve on a motion by Commissioner Andrews.

Industrial Facilities & Pollution Control Finance Authority:

Bill Wagoner was unanimously re-appointed to serve on a motion by Commissioner Andrews.

It was also noted that W.S Hall, Sr. and Steve Noble no longer wished to serve on this authority.

Senior Services Advisory Council:

The Board approved the change in the term of service for members of this council from two years to three years, which included list of names that were in the Board's packets.

ADDITIONS

Commissioner Andrews spoke on Air Quality and he mentioned several articles addressing the Air Quality of Rowan County. Commissioner Andrews stated that Rowan County was identified as the 'worst' for air quality in North Carolina and that this is a cause for the county's leadership to step forward. Commissioner Andrews also remarked on an article from the Rowan County Health Director, which stated that some counties have stations to monitor air quality. Commissioner Andrews mentioned that this is a national, regional and local concern. Commissioner Andrews recommended the Board establish a Task Force to research more details about this concern through contracting.

Commissioner Belk expressed that Centralina Council of Government has presented a program titled, "Bad Air".

Chairman Blount mentioned that there were also other groups to address the concern of making our air better. Chairman Blount also spoke about the "toolbox of local initiatives" which was things that could be locally adopted to help the region fight air problems. Chairman Blount added that this was a project through the EPA (Environmental Protection Agency).

County Manager Tim Russell mentioned the issue concerning the mass transit in Kannapolis and Charlotte.

Chairman Blount appointed Commissioner Andrews as chairman of establishing a local task force. Chairman Blount also requested that Commissioner Andrews let the Board of Commissioners know who would be serving on the local task force.

Chairman Blount asked the Board for recommendations on individual organizations that could make a presentation on air quality.

Commissioner Andrews stated the need to do all that is possible to improve Rowan County.

Commissioner Tadlock suggested working “under the umbrella” of the Health Department, in order to help with this concern.

Commissioner Andrews made a motion to establish a local task force to study our air quality. Commissioner Belk seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

In a query from Commissioner Tadlock, Chairman Blount stated that himself and Commissioner Andrews would develop a list of members for the task force and bring this information back to the Board.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There were no citizens present who wished to address the Board.

ADJOURNMENT

Chairman Blount reminded the Board about the upcoming budget schedule and encouraged the Board to study the budget and schedule a meeting with the manager to address any questions or concerns that they may have.

With no further business to come before the Board, Chairman Blount adjourned the meeting at 11:15 am.

Respectfully Submitted,

Rita K. Foil, CMC
Clerk to the Board