

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE
ROWAN COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
January 5, 2004 – 9:00 AM
J. NEWTON COHEN, SR. ROOM, ADMINISTRATION BUILDING**

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

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

Chairman Andrews convened the meeting at 9:00 am. Commissioner Mitchell provided the Invocation and Commissioner Belk led the Pledge of Allegiance.

ADDITIONS

1. Attorney John Holshouser requested a brief Closed Session in order for the Board to provide him with guidance on a legal matter.
2. Tim Russell added a budget amendment from the Health Department.
3. Chairman Andrews added discussion regarding Commissioners' recommendations for board appointments.

LIAISON REPORTS

Commissioner Belk said it was a privilege to work with the Department of Social Services (DSS). Commissioner Belk reported that the agency had served 2,435 children through the Christmas Happiness Fund and made a comparison to the number of children served last year, which totaled 1,500, stressing the current needs within the county during a period of layoffs.

Commissioner Belk also referred to the Correspondence in the agenda packets from the EPA congratulating the Board for its action supporting the Sustainable Environment for Quality of Life (SEQL) initiative. Commissioner Belk said the initiative was being “fostered” by Centralina Council of Government (COG) and said SEQL would work with Catawba College to improve the quality of life issues for Rowan County.

Commissioner Blount followed up on the comments from Commissioner Belk concerning COG, saying that there would be a presentation from Voices & Choices on the next “report card” at the upcoming COG meeting.

Commissioner Belk said she would be bringing information to the Board in the near future concerning the Regional Planning Alliance. Commissioner Belk said efforts were being focused on bringing jobs into the region.

Chairman Andrews commended the Board, especially Commissioners Belk and Blount for their support of the SEQL initiative.

Chairman Andrews praised the outstanding job of the Health Department in dealing with the flu season in Rowan County. Chairman Andrews said the department had done an excellent job to ensure that the citizens at risk of developing the flu had received a flu shot. Chairman Andrews also expressed his appreciation to Rowan Regional Hospital for providing the Health Department with additional doses of the flu vaccine.

Chairman Andrews commended the efforts of those involved with the Capital Campaign for the South Rowan Library.

CONSIDERATION OF THE CONSENT AGENDA

Commissioner Tadlock moved to approve the Consent Agenda. Commissioner Mitchell seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously. The Consent Agenda consisted of the following:

- A. Approval of the December 1, 2003 minutes
- B. Approval of the December 15, 2003 minutes of the special called meeting
- C. Proclamation for Martin Luther King, Jr. Day

REPORT ON THE ROWAN COUNTY EMPLOYEES’ UNITED WAY CAMPAIGN

Jeff Hall and Phil Barton were present to provide the Board with a report concerning the Rowan County Employees’ United Way Campaign. Mr. Hall said the employees had pledged \$62,495.42 to the United Way, a 13% increase over last year. Mr. Hall also reported that 466 employees had made contributions to the campaign, as opposed to last year’s total of 417 employees.

Mr. Hall thanked the Department Heads and Representatives who had worked to increase the contribution levels. Mr. Hall also thanked Lori Swaim, Don Conner, Rita Foil, Tim Russell and Phil Barton for their guidance and support.

Chairman Andrews commended Mr. Hall for his leadership in the campaign as well as the employees for their participation.

Chairman Andrews took the opportunity to announce that Mr. Hall was selected to be the Employee of the Month for January. Chairman Andrews praised Mr. Hall for his service and dedication to the library and to the citizens of Rowan County for over fifteen (15) years.

Phil Barton, Library Director and current President of the United Way Board of Directors stated that he was “extremely proud” of the Rowan County employees, as well as the success of the campaign.

Mr. Barton said he had nominated Mr. Hall as Employee of the Month primarily for his work on the campaign during such a challenging year considering the state of the economy. Mr. Barton said Mr. Hall had “stepped up to the challenge” and developed strategies to ensure the campaign’s success. Mr. Barton reiterated Mr. Hall’s comments that the campaign was successful due to the help of a number of people representing the county’s departments.

Mr. Barton pointed out that throughout the campaign, Mr. Hall had undertaken the task of renovating and expanding the History Room. Mr. Barton explained that Mr. Hall had also been “heavily involved in the migration to a new automation system.”

Mr. Barton said the work that Mr. Hall performed on the campaign, as well the projects just described, were typical of the work Mr. Hall does on a daily basis. Mr. Barton thanked the Board for recognizing Mr. Hall as Employee of the Month, saying the award was well deserved.

Chairman Andrews asked the Board to stand and called Mr. Hall forward to present him with a certificate honoring him as Employee of the Month. The presentation was followed by a round of applause.

PUBLIC HEARING FOR Z-17-03 (CUP-37-03), REQUEST FOR RA TO CBI (CUP)

Chairman Andrews read the Chairman’s Speech (Exhibit A) and declared the public hearing for CUP-37-03 to be in session. Chairman Andrews said the hearing would focus on an application submitted by the applicant, David K. Land, for approval to establish a metal machine shop. A rezoning from RA to CBI (CUD) has to be in place on said property in order for this business to exist on site. The property is identified as Tax Parcel 644-117 and located off the 3100 block of Poole Road in Salisbury, NC.

The Clerk swore in those wishing to provide testimony in the case.

Matt Ward of the Rowan County Planning Department provided the Background (Exhibit B) regarding the case saying the property was identified as Tax Map 644 Parcel 117, currently zoned RA. Mr. Ward said the request from the applicant, David K. Land was to rezone the property from RA to CBI with a conditional use district attached. Mr. Ward described the site location as being north of High Rock Lake in the extreme eastern portion of Rowan County. Mr. Ward said the requested rezoning would approximately replace 2.100 acres zoned RA with CBI zoning.

Mr. Ward reported that the applicant, David Land, is requesting to rezone said property in order to establish a metal machine shop facility designed primarily to manufacture and repair transportation equipment.

Mr. Ward highlighted the Staff Report (Exhibit B):

1. There were not any adopted plans.
2. Consistency with this article and the requested zoning district's purpose and intent. Mr. Ward said unfortunately, CBI zoning without someone living on the property is the only way for this lot to accommodate a business of this type. Mr. Ward explained that a rezoning with a conditional use district would prove to be less problematic by reducing the type of widely accepted uses permitted in the CBI District and at the same time set a beneficial precedence for future CBI cases occurring in the same area. Mr. Ward said CBI is required here rather than NB because size limitations and the building size will exceed the "build upon area."
3. Compatibility of all uses within the proposed zoning district classification. Mr. Ward said most of the property in the area is zoned RA with a few exceptions along Bringle Ferry Road. Mr. Ward said it was his opinion that the business would not create any more of an inconsistent use of land than the businesses currently located on Bringle Ferry Road. Mr. Ward explained that the land surrounding the site is developable but the majority of it is in farming use or heavily wooded.
4. Potential impact on facilities such as roads, utilities, or schools in the area. Mr. Ward said there would be no harmful impacts on any roads, utilities or schools.

Mr. Ward reviewed the Required Findings (Exhibit B):

1. The development of the property in accordance with the proposed conditions will not materially endanger the public health or safety. Mr. Ward reported that the future facility would not pose any harmful conditions on the public health or safety in this area. Mr. Ward said the building must be built to state building codes and NCDOT has approved a commercial driveway permit.
2. Mr. Ward did not read Item #2 in the Required Findings (Exhibit B).
3. That the location and character of the development in accordance with the proposed conditions will be in general harmony with the area in which it is located and in general conformity with any adopted county plans. Mr. Ward said the proposed development would be approved or denied based on the certain uses

allowed under the conditional use district and only those uses would be considered in the general makeup of the development.

Mr. Ward discussed the Evaluation Criteria (Exhibit B) explaining that the applicant had supplied staff with information regarding the dimensions of the driveway, the size of the building, and buffering requirements.

Mr. Ward reviewed the Staff Recommendation (Exhibit B) saying that staff recommended RA to CBI (CUD) rezoning of the parcel listed as Tax Map 644 117. David Land met with staff and is in agreement to the implications of buffering and the conditional use conditions per Z-17-03/CUP-37-03.

1. Applicant has agreed to limit his uses on site to the Standard Industrial Classification Codes listed below:
 - (a) #34 Fabricated metal products, except machinery and transportation equipment.
 - (b) #35 Industrial and commercial machinery and computer equipment.
 - (c) #37 Transportation equipment.
2. Type B Buffering
 - (a) Buffer: 80 feet
 - (b) Location and type of screening shall be determined at time of permit.
3. Any expansion of the proposed building or change of use will require an amendment to the permit and board approval.

Mr. Ward discussed the Planning Board Recommendation (Exhibit B). Mr. Ward said the Planning Board unanimously recommended the Board of Commissioners to rezone Tax Map 644 117 from RA to CBI (CUD) during their regular scheduled meeting on November 24, 2003 with the condition that David Land use only one entrance exclusive to Poole Road.

Mr. Ward mentioned that the application, a listing of adjoining property owners and a map with an aerial photo (all included in Exhibit B) were also included in the agenda packets.

Commissioner Blount asked if the buffering would be across the front of Poole Road or also on the adjacent sides. Mr. Ward said staff was limited to requiring the buffer to be on the sides and rear but said the Board could require a buffer along the road front.

Commissioner Blount confirmed with Mr. Ward that the Board could require a buffer along the front of the property to protect the home across the street. Commissioner Blount questioned the location of the proposed building and the driveway to be used. Mr. Ward referred to the survey (Exhibit B) and pointed out that the proposed building was 60' x 100' and the applicant was suggesting parking in the rear. Mr. Ward said he had calculated the building would be approximately 220' off of the road.

Commissioner Blount confirmed that the Board would be rezoning the 2-acre parcel.

Commissioner Belk commented that she would like to see the buffer extended across the front in order to protect the home across the street.

Chairman Andrews opened the floor to entertain citizen input. With no citizens wishing to address the Board, Chairman Andrews closed the public hearing and the Board went into deliberation.

Commissioner Blount agreed with Commissioner Belk that the Board should require screening across the front of the property and also reconfirmed that the Board would require screening on the remaining three (3) sides of the property in an effort to protect the adjacent property owners.

Commissioner Blount moved to approve the rezoning and conditional use permit subject to the three (3) Staff Recommendations and a (4th) fourth being that the screening be extended across the Poole Road side of the property. Commissioner Tadlock seconded the motion.

Commissioner Tadlock asked if the buffering on the front of the property had been discussed at the Planning Board meeting. Mr. Ward said it had not been discussed and that the property owner had been in agreement with staff regarding buffering. Mr. Ward said the Planning Board had been concerned with a property owner's request that the driveway be located off of Poole Road. Mr. Ward said the Planning Board had made it a condition to require the driveway to be located on Poole Road.

Commissioner Blount made a "restatement" of his motion, adding a (5th) fifth requirement to be a single point of access off of Poole Road. Commissioner Tadlock accepted and seconded the motion.

Commissioner Mitchell asked if the property extended to Bringle Ferry Road. Mr. Ward said the property does not touch Bringle Ferry Road.

Mr. Ward confirmed to Commissioner Mitchell that requiring the buffer along the road front would not hinder the ability of the business to operate.

Commissioner Tadlock asked if the applicant fully understood the requirements. Mr. Ward felt that the applicant understood and said the applicant was present if the Board wished to ask him questions.

The motion carried.

Chairman Andrews declared the **Findings of Fact** to be as listed in the Staff Report (Exhibit B):

Mr. Ward reviewed the Required Findings (Exhibit B):

1. The development of the property in accordance with the proposed conditions will not materially endanger the public health or safety. Mr. Ward reported that the future facility would not pose any harmful conditions on the public health or safety in this area. Mr. Ward said the building must be built to state building codes and NCDOT has approved a commercial driveway permit.
2. That the location and character of the development in accordance with the proposed conditions will be in general harmony with the area in which it is located and in general conformity with any adopted county plans. Mr. Ward said the proposed development would be approved or denied based on the certain uses allowed under the conditional use district and only those uses would be considered in the general makeup of the development.

PUBLIC HEARING FOR Z-20-03, REQUEST FOR CBI (CUD) TO RA

Marion Lytle, County Planner, provided the Staff Report concerning the request. Mr. Lytle recalled that Mr. Hut Stricklan had gone through a lengthy process in 2000 to have the property across from his house rezoned for a potential race shop. Mr. Lytle said that grading had been done on the site and the permit had been kept active.

Mr. Lytle reported that since that time, Mr. Stricklan's business had veered from racing and that Mr. Strickland would be operating an automobile salvage business within the zoning of the Town of Cleveland. Mr. Lytle explained that as a courtesy Mr. Stricklan was requesting that the property be rezoned back to RA.

Mr. Lytle said the Planning Board and staff recommended approval.

Chairman Andrews opened the public hearing to entertain citizen input regarding the rezoning request. With no citizens wishing to address the Board, Chairman Andrews closed the public hearing.

Commissioner Blount moved to approve the rezoning request as stated. Commissioners Mitchell and Belk seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

PUBLIC HEARING FOR Z-19-03, REQUEST FOR RA TO CBI

Matt Ward provided the background regarding the rezoning request. Mr. Ward reported that the property in question is situated between Goldpark Road to the south and St. Peters Church Road to the north along US Hwy 52. Mr. Ward said the requested rezoning would replace approximately 1.500 acres zoned RA with CBI zoning.

Mr. Ward said the applicant, Ashley C. Morrow was requesting to rezone the property in order to establish a retail business that would provide the future occupant of the building opportunity to establish a tire retail business where the repair of automobiles and their parts can be permitted.

Mr. Ward highlighted the Staff Report:

1. Relationship and conformity with any adopted plans and policies. Mr. Ward said the area does not have any adopted plans or policies.
2. Consistency with this article and the requested zoning district's purpose and intent. Mr. Ward said rezoning this particular parcel would not pose an inconsistency with the existing land uses.
3. Compatibility of all uses within the proposed zoning district classification with other property and condition in the vicinity. Mr. Ward said tax records indicated that the building has been there for years and is uniform to the properties surrounding it. Mr. Ward said the make up of the structure could accommodate a business or residence.
4. Potential impact on facilities such as roads, utilities or schools in the area. Mr. Ward reported that any business in a rural agricultural zone has the potential to disrupt the quality of life in the neighborhood; however, this will not negatively harm any infrastructure facilities in that area. Mr. Ward said staff would like to see an approved commercial driveway permit from the NCDOT due to the nature of Hwy 52 being a heavily traveled corridor.

Mr. Ward said staff recommends RA to CBI rezoning of the parcel listed as Tax Map 368 085. Mr. Ward recommended that the following conditions be met prior to having an opportunity to issue a permit:

1. NCDOT commercial driveway permit approval
2. Type A buffering along side and rear property lines that adjoin parcels with residential dwellings.
 - (a). Buffer: 20 feet

Mr. Ward reported that the Planning Board met on November 24, 2003 and agreed to favorably recommend approval to rezone Tax Parcel 368 085 from RA to CBI, petition case Z-19-03.

In response to a query from Commissioner Blount, Mr. Ward said the applicant's intention is to "set up shop" for "something coming in the near future."

Commissioner Blount said his concern was that the Board normally approves a CBI rezoning in an RA district with a site plan in hand and a plan for the business. Commissioner Blount said having the site plan and knowing the type of proposed business for the site would allow the Board the opportunity to determine if other restrictions might be necessary.

Mr. Lytle said he, along with Ed Muire and Mr. Ward had discussed that with commercial zoning across the street and industrial zoning all around the area. Mr. Lytle said staff felt that based on the definition of the commercial district, being on a major corridor and being close to major intersections, it might be a situation where conditional use district zoning would not be required.

Commissioner Blount asked Mr. Lytle if the neighbors understood that approval of the request would provide for “a long list of things” that could be located on the property. Mr. Lytle said he “wouldn’t want to say they did.” Commissioner Blount said if the neighbors had understood, they would probably be attending the public hearing to speak on the issue.

Mr. Ward said he had not received any phone calls concerning what type of business might locate on the site.

Commissioner Belk asked if the applicant planned to establish the business in the house. Mr. Ward responded that the applicant planned to use the existing facility. Mr. Lytle said the applicant planned to use the garage for the business.

Commissioner Belk emphasized that the site was in a farming area and said she had concerns not knowing exactly “what is going in there” and how it would impact the neighborhood.

Commissioner Mitchell commented that in the past when citizens had concerns they had attended the board meetings to “make sure that something was going to go as planned and they wanted to make sure that what they assumed was going in on that parcel was what in actuality would end up on that parcel.” Commissioner Mitchell said he felt comfortable in approving the request with the knowledge that there had been no calls or complaints regarding the issue.

Mr. Lytle said in general staff does receive calls and cited a recent rezoning where neighbors were vocal about the case. Mr. Lytle said the Board could table the issue and allow staff time to contact the neighbors to make sure they understand the proposed rezoning.

Commissioner Blount asked if the request were to be approved subject to the review and approval of the site plan, would the applicant be “tied to that site plan as part of the rezoning.” Mr. Lytle said the Board “can’t really do that under the framework that is set up here.”

Commissioner Blount stressed that he would feel more comfortable approving the request with some type of controls on the future use of the land.

Commissioner Tadlock felt the issue had received “proper scrutiny” and said the Board should consider the pro-business aspect. Commissioner Tadlock said he supported the request and would like for the Board to accept staff’s recommendation as presented.

Commissioner Andrews opened the public hearing to entertain citizen input and with no citizens wishing to address the Board, Chairman Andrews closed the public hearing.

Commissioner Blount said he was in favor of approving the rezoning to allow the business to operate as requested by the property owner. Commissioner Blount felt other retail uses would not be too intrusive and would be acceptable to the neighbors but emphasized that the neighbors would not want “a bar right there.”

Commissioner Blount moved to ask staff to meet with the applicant to come up with a limited list of uses that the applicant is willing to accept and come back to the Board for approval on that basis. Commissioner Belk seconded the motion.

Commissioner Mitchell questioned the length of the delay. Mr. Lytle said he could bring the recommendation to the next board meeting.

The motion carried 4-1 with Commissioner Tadlock opposed.

SHERIFF’S PRESENTATION CONCERNING “STAFF ISSUES”

Sheriff Wilhelm read a prepared statement to the Board, which highlighted the increased volume of calls to the Rowan County Sheriff’s Department since 1994. Sheriff Wilhelm reported that the actual instances of committing crimes had dropped or stayed constant and that the increased number of calls deputies responded to were due to 911 hang up calls, alarm and disturbance calls. Sheriff Wilhelm said he had shown the trends in past budget requests and said “every year my pleas are cast aside for things that you perceive as more important.”

Sheriff Wilhelm read the N.C. General Statute that spells out the sheriff’s responsibility to court operations, detention center and law enforcement as well as the statute that lists the Commissioners the power to fix the number of employees the sheriff has to work with.

Sheriff Wilhelm said, “We need to work together so that I can serve the people of this county in a more effective manner.” Sheriff Wilhelm praised the job performed by his deputies but said they are limited in their ability to be proactive towards crime.

Sheriff Wilhelm said, “Country ain’t country no more” and there are now small cities where there use to be farms. The Sheriff said the population has increased by approximately 25,000 since 1994, with most of the growth being in the rural areas.

Sheriff Wilhelm said a large part of Homeland Security lies on his shoulders and said he felt he should be included in the search for the new Emergency Services Director, whose new focus will be in Homeland Security.

Sheriff Wilhelm said he had read that the Board was trying to find ways to create jobs in Rowan County. Sheriff Wilhelm said he needed more employees, which would mean more jobs for Rowan County.

Sheriff Wilhelm reviewed the number of deputies/staff that had been added to the department and Detention Center since 1994.

Sheriff Wilhelm outlined reorganization within the department in an effort to provide “efficient and effective 24-hour coverage by this office.” Sheriff Wilhelm asked to be allowed to keep four (4) extra vehicles this year and asked for an additional \$20,000 for the remainder of the year to provide part-time salaries for courthouse security.

Sheriff Wilhelm distributed a handout that reflected crime statistics and the department’s reorganization. The Sheriff highlighted the handout.

The Sheriff said that without the additional \$20,000, the department might have to begin random screening and checks of people entering the courthouse, such as every third or fifth person.

Sheriff Wilhelm said response times range from eleven minutes to fifty minutes for a deputy to respond to a call. The Sheriff said in 1994 a patrol deputy averaged 228 calls in one year; in 2003 a patrol deputy averaged 1,371 calls in one year.

Sheriff Wilhelm said, “The bottom line is people are calling us for help and they expect it” but “I can’t give it to them unless you give me the manpower to do it with.”

Sheriff Wilhelm emphasized that the deputies are getting the job done but said the department could be “so much more efficient” in the safety of the citizens.

Commissioner Andrews thanked the Sheriff for his presentation and said it was understandable that as the county grows the needs of the Sheriff’s Department become greater.

Commissioner Belk applauded the Sheriff for looking within to reallocate personnel. Commissioner Belk felt that adding new deputies to patrol would have a direct effect on burglaries, etc.

Sheriff Wilhelm pointed out that the reorganization would provide the additional patrol coverage on nights and weekends.

Commissioner Belk asked if the department took any reports by phone to save the manpower. Sheriff Wilhelm said “some” are taken by phone, but it requires manpower to answer the phone.

Commissioner Blount asked the Sheriff to describe how courthouse security functions now as compared to the proposed reorganization. Sheriff Wilhelm responded that there

are currently three people who work the door, with two of those having only been there part-time in the past several months due to school. Sheriff Wilhelm said he had been using part-time help for the past four months. Sheriff Wilhelm said instead of paying full-time salaries, he could utilize one full-time officer and several part-time. Sheriff Wilhelm said he had several officers from municipalities working part-time at the courthouse as well as a waiting list from those interested in the job.

Commissioner Blount asked if the level of manpower would change. Sheriff Wilhelm said if part-time help is used the level of manpower wouldn't change. The Sheriff explained that if there would not be enough money to pay the part-time help for the remainder of the year, the level of manpower would drop some. Sheriff Wilhelm discussed radio systems that could be used in the Clerk of Court's office, the Judges' and District Attorney's office where a button could be activated to call over the radios for help. Sheriff Wilhelm said the random security checks for entry into the courthouse might also have to be implemented.

Commissioner Blount applauded the ingenuity of the Sheriff for the operations of the department however; the issue of courthouse security concerned him. Commissioner Blount recalled that a courthouse security plan had been developed with concerns that it might not be adequate to provide security. Commissioner Blount said, "It appears that we're downgrading that." Commissioner Blount also recalled that the Board had appropriated funds for two full-time staff to perform only courthouse security. Sheriff Wilhelm interjected that funds were appropriated for three full-time staff and that he was "taking two of those positions." Commissioner Blount said the random checks worried him.

Sheriff Wilhelm agreed with Commissioner Blount and said he hoped this would only be a temporary move. Sheriff Wilhelm said he hoped the Board would "see to fill those positions back, but I've got to do something to answer those extra 10,000 calls." Sheriff Wilhelm said he felt it was more important to prioritize serving 135,000 people versus 500 to 1,000 people entering the courthouse each day.

Commissioner Blount agreed that the needs of the citizens should be met but stressed that the courthouse would be a target for terrorism. Commissioner Blount reiterated that the Judges had ordered a courthouse security plan to be developed.

Sheriff Wilhelm said he had stressed at the time the plan was developed that he needed "six people instead of three people and I still believe that." Sheriff Wilhelm continued by saying, "I have to work with what you give me and this is what you've given me."

Commissioner Blount pointed out that during the planning stages the Sheriff had agreed that he would be able to provide courthouse security with three people, plus existing staff. The Sheriff responded that since that time he had been "taxed everywhere" with manpower. Sheriff Wilhelm said he was willing to challenge that no other county department had experienced a 600% increase in calls for service during the past ten years.

Sheriff Wilhelm said he was also willing to bet that the other departments had more employees “percentage wise” to handle the calls.

Commissioner Blount suggested that the committee might need to meet to discuss the original courthouse security plan and how the reorganization changes might impact security.

In response to a query from Chairman Andrews, Sheriff Wilhelm clarified that courthouse security would be performed with part-time officers and that random security checks would be performed “if I run out of money.”

Commissioner Blount said random checks would create a major change in the original security plan.

Commissioner Tadlock questioned the use of “seizure money” for the part-time officers. Sheriff Wilhelm said he could not use seizure funds to supplant the budget. Sheriff Wilhelm said he could use the funds for “additional” part-time officers.

Chairman Andrews asked about utilizing auxiliary officers. Sheriff Wilhelm explained that auxiliary officers are volunteers who are required to work eight hours each month. Sheriff Wilhelm said most of these officers have daytime jobs elsewhere and they normally assist with patrols.

In response to a query from Chairman Andrews, Sheriff Wilhelm said he has two deputies paid through a federal grant that are assigned primarily to traffic.

Chairman Andrews said the issue was a budget issue and the concerns would be reviewed at that time. Sheriff Wilhelm said he would try his best to handle the courthouse security but that he may need to come back to the Board for additional funds.

Commissioner Blount requested that the Sheriff come back to the Board if the staffing level concerning courthouse security were to be changed.

Commissioner Belk also requested that Sheriff notify the Board before changing the process of screening each entrant into the courthouse.

Commissioner Mitchell asked the Sheriff how many officers he was asking for. Sheriff Wilhelm responded by saying, “If you would give me twenty people, they would all be busy before the day is over with.”

Commissioner Mitchell praised the Sheriff for his reorganization.

Chairman Andrews commended the Sheriff for an excellent job of reorganization and thanked the Sheriff for the presentation. Chairman Andrews said the Board recognizes the dilemma. Chairman Andrews said he had traveled with the deputies and cited an example of when a deputy responded to a call “straight across the county” but within the

district. Chairman Andrews said the call required twenty-one minutes to travel from “one extreme to the other extreme.”

Chairman Andrews requested that any adjustments to courthouse security be presented to the Board before the changes take place. Chairman Andrews said the Board would be addressing the issues and working closely with the Sheriff.

CONTINUATION OF BOARD DISCUSSION ON JOBS

Commissioner Belk reported that she was encouraged about the Committee of 100 and the involvement of the citizens in bringing jobs to the county.

Commissioner Tadlock said he was optimistic about what he had been reading concerning the economy. Commissioner Tadlock stressed that the Board needed to stay focused on the jobs issue.

Chairman Andrews reported that he, Commissioner Blount, Mr. Russell and members of the EDC would be traveling to Raleigh to meet with the Biotech recruiter and Biotech leaders for North Carolina. Chairman Andrews said the visit would provide the opportunity to learn about the Biotech industry and to share what Rowan County has to offer the industry.

Chairman Andrews commended the EDC for “pushing” the Committee of 100, the public/private partnership to stimulate development and growth. Chairman Andrews encouraged everyone to attend the Committee of 100 on January 7th.

CONSIDERATION OF CHANGING THE JANUARY 19TH MEETING

Chairman Andrews mentioned that there were several events scheduled for January 19th, 2004 to commemorate the Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday. Chairman Andrews said the events would conflict with the regularly scheduled commission meeting.

Commissioner Tadlock moved to reschedule the commission meeting to 9:00 am on Tuesday, January 20, 2004. Commissioner Belk seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously.

Chairman Andrews called for a short break at 10:35 am.

Chairman Andrews reconvened the meeting at 10:45 am.

BOARD APPOINTMENTS

RTS Advisory Committee

Commissioner Belk moved to approve staff’s recommendation to have no defined terms and that the current representatives would continue to serve at the pleasure and approval of the Board of Commissioners.

Rowan County Planning Board

Chairman Andrews expressed pleasure at receiving nineteen applications for the Planning Board. Chairman Andrews said he felt all of the applicants were qualified to serve.

Chairman Andrews stated that Joe Teeter and Terry Hill were not eligible for reappointment. Amelia Watts and Edwin Hammill were eligible for reappointment and the completion of Steve Johnson's term would need to be filled.

Chairman Andrews said the Board would need to select five of the nineteen applicants.

Commissioner Blount nominated Amelia Watts, Edwin Hammill, Robert Allen, Lynn Dula and Charles Floyd.

Commissioner Belk moved to approve Butch Bivens, Betsy Webster and Buddy Gettys.

Commissioner Mitchell said the Planning Board was such an important board in the county and that he personally was not comfortable to vote for or against the applicants at this time. Commissioner Mitchell said it was his intention to contact all nineteen applicants and that he had not had the time to research and speak with each of them regarding their views on various issues.

Commissioner Mitchell moved to table the Planning Board appointments to the next board meeting. Commissioner Tadlock seconded the motion.

Commissioner Blount expressed concern with tabling the applications, saying the applications had been "in hand" since early December. Commissioner Blount mentioned that the Planning Board was scheduled to meet on January 26th with a number of important issues to discuss, including the radio tower. Commissioner Blount strongly recommended that the Board make the appointments "today" to allow members time to meet with staff regarding the upcoming Planning Board meeting.

Commissioner Mitchell said the applicants had most likely researched the issues facing the Planning Board and Commissioner Mitchell felt that six days would be adequate time for members to work with staff. Commissioner Mitchell stressed caution about making a decision in order to give someone an extra week to prepare for a public hearing.

Commissioner Belk stressed that the applications had been in hand for approximately three to four weeks.

Commissioner Mitchell said he felt the Board had a responsibility to appoint citizens that not only represent a "cross section" of the community in regards to geography but those that represent a "cross section" of ideas and beliefs regarding planning and zoning.

Commissioner Tadlock said it would not hurt to delay the process and that he would like the Board to postpone a decision to the next meeting.

Chairman Andrews said he was traveling during the holidays and been unable to contact all of the applicants. Chairman Andrews said he was also in favor of delaying the decision.

Upon being put to a vote, the motion to table the appointments to the next meeting carried 3-2, with Commissioners Blount and Belk opposed.

Rowan County Board of Health

Commissioner Belk moved to approve the term ending dates as requested. Commissioner Mitchell seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously.

The requested term dates were as follows:

Name	Current Term End Date	Proposed Term End Date
• Norman Sloop	11/30/2004	12/31/2004
• Martha Harrell	11/30/2004	12/31/2004
• Norene Foster	11/30/2004	12/31/2004
• Dave Roberts	06/30/2005	12/31/2005

Chairman Andrews mentioned that he had served as the Board's liaison to the Rowan County Board of Health and that he would be relinquishing the responsibility to Commissioner Mitchell.

Commissioner Blount moved to approve Commissioner Mitchell to the Board of Health. Commissioner Tadlock seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

North Carolina Jury Commission

Commissioner Belk moved to reappoint Stephen Thackery and the motion carried.

Agricultural Advisory Board

Commissioner Belk moved to table the appointments to the next meeting. Commissioner Tadlock seconded the motion and the motion carried.

Rowan County Landmarks Commission

Commissioner Blount moved to reappoint Dallas Campbell and the motion carried.

ADDITIONS

Budget Amendment for Health Department

Leonard Wood, Health Department Director, explained that the Health Department had received notification that it was the recipient of \$2,259 from the North Carolina Immunization Branch. Mr. Wood said the department intended to use the funds to purchase a commercial freezer for the storage of vaccines. Mr. Wood reported the freezer to be on sale for \$2,115 and that the price would be honored until January 14, 2004. Mr. Wood said he would also be presenting the request to the Health Board.

Commissioner Blount moved to approve the request as stated. Commissioner Belk seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously.

Discussion Regarding Board Appointments

Chairman Andrews discussed the current Board Application Form, saying that the “Recommended by Commissioner” statement appears to be a requirement for a citizen wishing to apply for a board.

Chairman Andrews felt that the term “Recommended by Commissioner” should be amended.

Commissioner Tadlock agreed with Chairman Andrews, saying that once a citizen contacts a Commissioner, the citizen expects that Commissioner to “follow through” in securing the board appointment. Commissioner Tadlock said he would like to see the application “fairly reviewed” by all commissioners.

Commissioner Blount suggested adding the Commissioners’ names and telephone numbers at the bottom of the application and dropping the statement “Recommended by Commissioner.”

By consensus, the Board agreed to Commissioner Blount’s suggestion. Chairman Andrews requested the Clerk to encourage applicant’s to contact a Commissioner when applying for a board.

PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

Arnold Chamberlain jokingly told Chairman Andrews that he would like to go on record as saying, “I don’t have any problem with you as Chairman and Commissioner Tadlock as Vice-Chairman, but personally, and publicly, I have a huge problem with you being the Sheriff and Mr. Tadlock being the Chief Deputy.” (Mr. Chamberlain was referring to a moment earlier in the meeting when Commissioner Tadlock accidentally called Chairman Andrews the Sheriff.)

EXECUTIVE SESSION

The Board went into Executive Session at 11:10 am.

ADJOURNMENT

Upon returning to Open Session, and with no further business to be discussed, Chairman Andrews adjourned the meeting at 11:30 am.

Respectfully Submitted,

Rita K. Foil, CMC
Clerk to the Board