

MAY 7, 2007

A regular meeting of the Bladen County Board of Commissioners was held in the Commissioners Room of the Courthouse at 6:30 p.m. with the following members present:

Margaret Lewis-Moore, Chairperson
Billy Ray Pait, Vice Chairperson
Lewis Tatum
Delilah Blanks
Larry Smith
W. D. Neill Jr.
James G. Smith
Greg Taylor
Charles Ray Peterson

Attorney: Wes Johnson, Johnson Law Firm

Chairperson Moore called the meeting to order. Commissioner Blanks provided the Invocation and County Manager Greg Martin led the Pledge of Allegiance.

A motion was made by James G. Smith, seconded by Billy Ray Pait and approved to adopt the following Consent Items:

- A. Approve Minutes:** April 16, 2007 (Regular Session)
- B. Approve Agenda:**
- C. Approve Budget Amendments:**

	<u>Increase</u>	<u>Decrease</u>
<u>Planning Department</u>		
Exp. 104220.111 Postage	\$500.00	
Exp. 104220.260 Advertising	\$1,500.00	
Rev. 103110.001 Permit Fee – Cell Towers	\$2,000.00	
<u>Sheriff</u>		
Exp. 105100.330 Supplies	\$8,665.00	
Rev. 103190.011 Insurance/Claims	\$8,665.00	
<u>Motor Pool</u>		
Exp. 105010.571 Misc. Exp. Wrecker	\$1,000.00	
Rev. 103560.082 Motor Pool Vehicle Storage	\$1,000.00	
<u>Parks & Recreation</u>		
Exp. 106600.570 Misc. Exp. Recreation	\$2,800.00	
Exp. 106600.740 Capital Outlay Equipment	\$1,000.00	
Exp. 106600.340 Recreation Equipment	\$1,500.00	
Rev. 103660.010 Rec. Fees	\$6,300.00	
<u>Social Services</u>		
Exp. 146100.451 Cont. Ser/Domestic Violence	\$7,610.00	
Rev. 143550.032 Domestic Violence/TANF	\$7,610.00	
<u>Library</u>		
Exp. 106700.330 Supplies	\$250.00	
Rev. 103190.010 Wal-Mart Stores, Inc.	\$250.00	
Exp. 106700.340 Wanda Campbell Room	\$100.00	
Rev. 103190.010 Miscellaneous	\$100.00	
<u>Administration</u>		
Exp. 106900.630 To DSS	\$27,400.00	
Rev. 103190.010 FBA	\$27,400.00	

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Social Services

Exp. 146100.740 Capital Outlay-Equip.	\$30,000.00
Rev. 143190.010 Misc. Revenue	\$2,600.00
Rev. 143550.080 FM-General Fund	\$27,400.00

Motor Pool

Exp. 105010.571 Wrecker Service	\$1,325.00
Rev. 103560.082 Motor Pool Vehicle Storage	\$1,325.00

School Construction

Exp. 806810.580 Renovations	\$18,000.00
Rev. 803190.010 Misc. Revenue	\$18,000.00

Cooperative Extension

Exp. 106805.029 Governor's One-on-One	\$750.00
Rev. 103230.018 Governor's One-on-One	\$750.00

- D. Approve County Attorney Invoices: BCH Matter \$525.00**
- E. Approve Tax Releases/Refunds for March: Docket # 105**
- F. Approve Resolution of Support for HB 262:**

*A RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF HOUSE BILL 262 AND SENATE BILL 238,
LEGISLATION THAT PROVIDES NECESSARY, ADDITIONAL FUNDS FOR AND
IMPROVES ELIGIBILITY OF FIRE DEPARTMENTS FOR STATEWIDE GRANTS*

WHEREAS, the Commissioner of Insurance of North Carolina is also the State Fire Marshal;

WHEREAS, as Insurance Commissioner and State Fire Marshal he and the North Carolina Department of Insurance administer the volunteer fire department grant funds and firemen's relief funds;

WHEREAS, fire departments in every county have counted on these annual fire grants for many years to purchase necessary equipment and supplies up to \$20,000 (with an additional match of \$20,000);

WHEREAS, there are approximately 1,400 volunteer fire departments in the State, a number which translates each year into greater grant requests than the current grant formula is able to bear;

WHEREAS, the current grant formula is also inadequate in that more and more volunteer fire departments are becoming ineligible due to the current caps on population in the respective fire districts, the number of employees in a fire department, and the overall grant cap of \$20,000 annually has not kept up with inflation;

WHEREAS, adjusting the formula and statutes for these grant funds would ensure that more departments are eligible and, furthermore, that they are eligible for larger matching grants, facts which will translate into better ratings for those fire departments and lower homeowners' insurance premiums for homes within the respective fire districts;

WHEREAS, these changes can be accomplished without raising taxes on insurance companies or citizens;

WHEREAS, legislators this year filed House Bill 262 and Senate Bill 238 upon request of the Commissioner of Insurance and the recommendation of the Revenue Laws Committee of the North Carolina General Assembly, legislation that is necessary for the proper administration of these grant funds and for the vitally needed improvements above; and,

WHEREAS, the Department of Insurance and the Office of State Fire Marshal estimate that more than 200 additional fire departments may become eligible for fire grants by this legislation alone.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Bladen Board of County Commissioners expresses its strong support for House Bill 262 and Senate Bill 238 and respectfully requests and fervently encourages that its legislative delegation do all in its might to attain passage of either or both bills during the 2007 session of the North Carolina General Assembly.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Bladen Board of County Commissioners, because of pending deadlines for legislative action this session, will hereby notify its legislative delegation in the State House and State Senate by fax, email or by hand delivery, whichever method provides the most prompt communication of this resolution.

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G. Schedule Public Hearing Regarding Rezoning Request from Charles Mitchell for Monday, May 21, 2007 at 6:30 p.m.:

ITEM 4. KEEP BLADEN BEAUTIFUL:

Keep Bladen Beautiful Coordinator Gloria Dove presented the 2007 April Spring Clean Report and Awards. Ms. Dove praised the efforts of volunteers who participated in this year's Spring Clean and advised that twenty-five groups, consisting of 364 volunteers, participated in the event. Ms. Dove called on the following volunteers to step forward to receive their prizes: Phoebe Campbell, Cybil Campbell, Amanda Parks, Jacob Nardi, Bryan Hickman, Bladenboro Primary School 4th graders, Norris Road Neighbors Group (Sonya Bishop) and Clarkton Beautification Committee.

Chairperson Moore expressed appreciation to the volunteers, as well as to Ms. Dove for the huge success of Bladen County's 2007 Spring Clean.

ITEM 5. INTERLOCAL AGREEMENT WITH LUMBER RIVER COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS:

Lumber River Council of Governments representative Jan Maynor addressed the Board regarding an Interlocal Agreement. She advised that the COG's Board of Directors is requesting Bladen County's cooperation with the other four County Boards of Commissioners in its efforts to secure financing for a new COG office. Ms. Maynor further advised that the agreement was crafted in consultation with the COG's Board of Directors and attorneys for the purpose of providing backing in its search for financing. She indicated that the project has been discussed with lending institutions and that some form of security would be needed since the COG lacks taxing authority as a governmental entity. Ms. Maynor advised that by having the backing of five County Boards of Commissioners, the COG would be able to secure significant interest from area lending institutions as well as a good interest rate. Ms. Maynor also advised that the County's interests would be protected if the COG should ever disband and would allow the Counties to become owners of the property with the ability to dispose of it to recoup any loss and to distribute the remaining equity. She indicated that the COG's current lease agreement will expire in June, 2008. **A motion was made by Billy Ray Pait, seconded by W. D. Neill Jr. to approve Interlocal Agreement regarding funding for the Lumber River Council of Governments. The vote was unanimous.**

ITEM 6. BLADEN COUNTY HOSPITAL:

- A. **PUBLIC HEARING** – Chairperson Moore declared the Public Hearing open regarding a Resolution of Intent to Lease, Sell, or Convey Bladen County Hospital. She called on Hospital CEO David Masterson to comment.

Commissioner Greg Taylor arrived.

Mr. Masterson discussed the purpose of the public hearing regarding the process of affiliation and provided background information on the Request for Proposals. He also advised that there are specific procedures to be followed as set forth in General Statute 131 E-13 when hospital affiliation is being considered.

Mr. Ralph Sasser addressed the Board regarding the hospital and advised that he wants Bladen County Hospital to remain open. Mr. Sasser further advised that he wanted the hospital to pursue other options in lieu of affiliation, regarding grants, etc. Chairperson Moore expressed appreciation to Mr. Sasser for his input and invited him to attend some of the community meetings that Mr. Masterson is holding.

Mr. Johnny Collins advised that he was not in favor of selling the hospital. He also discussed how important it is for a community to have a local hospital.

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Mr. David Clark advised that the community needs its hospital. He further advised that there are many factors that led to the financial condition of the hospital and that many people worked hard to get the hospital to where it is. Mr. Clark advised that he was of the opinion that the County is moving in the right direction to explore the affiliation idea.

Chairperson Moore recapped the public comments and said she was hearing that the citizens want to keep the hospital and do not want it sold or closed.

There were no further comments and Chairperson Moore declared the hearing closed.

B. CONSIDER REVISED RESOLUTION:

Hospital CEO David Masterson requested consideration by the Board to adopt an amended Resolution of Intent to extend the date to June 15, 2007 on which proposals to lease, sell, or convey the hospital must be received. **A motion was made by Charles Ray Peterson, seconded by Delilah Blanks and approved to adopt an amended Resolution of Intent to Lease, Sell, or Convey Bladen County Hospital which extends the date to receive Request for Proposals to June 15, 2007.**

RESOLUTION EXTENDING THE DATE ON WHICH PROPOSALS TO LEASE, SELL OR CONVEY BLADEN COUNTY HOSPITAL MUST BE RECEIVED BY THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS OF THE COUNTY OF BLADEN, NORTH CAROLINA

WHEREAS, on April 16, 2007 the Board of Commissioners of Bladen County, North Carolina (the "Board of Commissioners") adopted a resolution (the "Resolution") declaring the intent of the Board of Commissioners to lease, sell or convey Bladen County Hospital (the "Hospital"); and

WHEREAS, the last sentence of Paragraph (3) of the Resolution provided that: "All proposals for the lease or sale of the Hospital must be received by May 16, 2007, in order to be considered by the Board of Commissioners"; and

WHEREAS, the Board of Commissioners has been informed that one or more organizations interested in submitting a proposal for the lease or sale of the Hospital have requested additional time to prepare and submit a proposal; and

WHEREAS, the Board of Commissioners is willing to extend the time for receiving proposals for the lease or sale of the Hospital.

NOW, THEREFORE, THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS FOR THE COUNTY OF BLADEN RESOLVES AS FOLLOWS:

(1) *the date for receiving proposals for the lease or sale of the Hospital is hereby extended until June 15, 2007 and the last sentence of paragraph (3) of the Resolution of April 16, 2007 is hereby amended to read as follows: "All proposals for the lease or sale of the Hospital must be received by June 15, 2007, in order to be considered by the Board of Commissioners";*

(2) *Except as amended herein, the Board of Commissioners hereby ratifies and confirms the Resolution adopted April 16, 2007*

This the 7th day of May, 2007

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ITEM 7. ADVISORY BOARDS:

- A. Keep Bladen Beautiful Advisory Committee – A motion was made by Larry Smith, seconded by Delilah Blanks and approved to appoint Jeff Musselwhite to the Keep Bladen Beautiful Advisory Committee. The appointment is effective immediately and will expire March 31, 2008. (Mr. Musselwhite is filling the unexpired term of industry representative Tammy Smith.)**
- B. Kelly Water Dike and Drainage District Committee – A motion was made by Delilah Blanks, seconded by James G. Smith and approved to appoint William Corbett to the Kelly Water Dike and Drainage Committee effective immediately with an expiration date of May 5, 2010. (Mr. Corbett is filling the seat previously held by Samuel Cromartie.) The motion also included the action to reappoint Charles Russ effective immediately with an expiration date of May 5, 2010.**
- C. Elizabethtown Rural Fire District Committee – A motion was made by Lewis Tatum, seconded by W. D. Neill Jr. and approved to table the appointment to the Elizabethtown Rural Fire District Committee.**
- D. Elizabethtown Planning and Zoning Commission (ETJ) and Board of Adjustments (ETJ) – A motion was made by James G. Smith, seconded by Larry Smith and approved to table the appointments to the Elizabethtown Planning and Zoning Commission and Board of Adjustments (ETJ).**
- E. Dublin Fire District Committee – A motion was made by Greg Taylor, seconded by Billy Ray Pait and approved to appoint Dennis Troy, Jason Britt, and Thomas Grimes to the Dublin Fire District Committee effective immediately with an expiration date of May 19, 2009. These appointments are replacing the seats previously held by Jerome Marchmon, Clifton Pait, and Billy Pait Jr.**
- F. Carvers Creek Fire District Committee – A motion was made by W. D. Neill Jr., seconded by Delilah Blanks and approved to appoint Dan McDuffie and to reappoint Sherman Graham to the Carvers Creek Fire District Committee effective immediately with an expiration date of April 5, 2009.**
- G. Bladenboro Rural Fire District Committee – A motion was made by Charles Ray Peterson, seconded by Billy Ray Pait and approved to table the seat held by Reynold Hester, reappoint Greg Lennon, and to appoint Leon Davis to the seat previously held by Lonnie Faulk. The term of appointment is effective immediately and will expire April 4, 2009.**
- H. Animal Control Advisory Committee – A motion was made by James G. Smith, seconded by Delilah Blanks and approved to appoint Jerry Graham to the Animal Control Advisory Committee effective immediately with an expiration date of May 31, 2010.**

ITEM 8. COUNTY MANAGER:

- A. Calendar Update – County Manager Greg Martin reviewed upcoming calendar events: Board of Equalization and Review – May 15 at 1 p.m.; May 21 at 3 p.m.; and May 28 – Employee Holiday.**
- B. Request to Enter Closed Session – A motion was made by Billy Ray Pait, seconded by Larry Smith and approved to enter Closed Session in accordance with N.C.G.S. 143-318.11(a)4, 5, and 6.**

A motion was made by Billy Ray Pait, seconded by Larry Smith and approved to exit Closed Session and reenter Open Session.

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A motion was made by Larry Smith, seconded by Billy Ray Pait and approved to adjourn at 8:30 p.m.

**Margaret Lewis-Moore, Chairperson
Bladen County Board of Commissioners**

ATTEST:

Kathy P. Britt, Clerk