

At the regular meeting of the Giles County Board of Supervisors on Wednesday, April 7, 2010, at 10:00 AM in the Giles County General District Courtroom, 120 North Main Street, Pearisburg, the following were present:

Barbara Hobbs	Chairman (Central District)
Eric Gentry	Vice Chairman (Eastern District)
Howard Spencer	Western District
Richard McCoy	At-Large Supervisor
Paul "Chappy" Baker	At-Large Supervisor
Chris McKlarney	County Administrator
Richard Chidester	County Attorney
Susan Kidd	Board Secretary

CALL TO ORDER/INVOCATION

Ms. Hobbs called the meeting to order. Mr. McKlarney offered the invocation and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mr. Baker moved to approve the minutes of March 3, March 11, and March 18, 2010. Second by Mr. McCoy. Approved unanimously (5-0). Voting YES: Ms. Hobbs, Mr. Spencer, Mr. McCoy, Mr. Gentry, Mr. Baker.

CONSTITUTIONAL OFFICERS

Sheriff Millirons: The Emergency Response Team held training on March 8-12 and was certified. Radford University will sponsor the second half of this training in May and Giles will be invited to attend that. This training introduced new techniques and equipment to the officers and was very helpful. The department has also stepped the drug interdiction. Sheriff Millirons reported David Conley recently graduated from DARE school.

Sheriff Millirons reported that his department continues to offer programs to community organizations and are still advising people to sign up for Code RED. That program was very important during the flooding last month. He was appreciative for the county's assistance with manpower and equipment during that flood.

Sheriff Millirons gave a report on March activities. Officers picked up 84 cats and 39 dogs. They served 532 civil papers, made 6 felony arrests, had 135 misdemeanors and wrote 26 offense reports. They issued 92 traffic summons and has 5 DUI arrests.

Ms. Hobbs asked if the Sheriff's department had received any calls about door-to-door sales people for windows or other things. Sheriff Millirons said they had not. She said someone had been at her home asking about windows and came into her house. Sheriff Millirons will check on that.

Sheriff Millirons reported on a meeting with regional jail officials that was upcoming about some things going on that need to be brought to the jail's attention. He will keep the board posted on that. The other sheriffs are on board for this meeting concerning operations that just are not right for the county.

Mr. Spencer brought information on another scam that involved someone calling elderly people pretending to be grandchildren and asking for money. He said his wife received a call just like that. This is probably something local residents need to be aware of. A lot of those calls are coming from prisons or jails.

Mr. McCoy said that in referring to picking up cats, Giles is the only county actually picking them up. Some other localities accept them, but do not pick them up. With everything else in the budget, he felt it would be wise to see if the board has any interest in changing that policy. Ms. Hobbs said they should look at it. Mr. Gentry

felt this needed to be changed. Mr. McCoy said that would not be popular, but just last month the report shows they picked up over 80 cats. It is hard to keep cats at home and sometimes they may pick up cats someone owns, but it costs money to do that. He felt it was something to discuss during the budget workshops if they were interested. He asked if that was a public hearing issue. Mr. McKlarney said it would be a policy change. Mr. Gentry said they could still take cats at the shelter, just would not be picking them up. They asked Sheriff Millirons how much time he estimated that would free up for his officers. The sheriff said probably 2+ days per week. Mr. Gentry said the county is look at layoffs of people within the county system. If the Sheriff thinks he could get two additional days from his people by changing this, it would be worth looking at. That seems to be reason enough to change it. Mr. McCoy agreed and said they should continue to accept them at the shelter but just did not feel the county could afford to continue to chase them down. Mr. Spencer felt there were a lot of questions on diseases, how long cats were held, etc. that the board doesn't have answers to. He would like to see information from the Animal Control officer before deciding. Mr. McCoy agreed he was not pushing for a decision at this meeting but felt it should be made by July 1. He said this is a public service but it is one that no one else around offers. Board members asked the Sheriff to bring the Animal Control Officer and the information to the next board meeting. They wanted to know an estimate of what is spent labor wise picking up cats and housing them. Sheriff Millirons said the volunteers normally take care of the cats and he thought they cleaned those cages too. It would basically be the Animal Control Officer's time. The volunteers do push spay/neuter programs, but a lot of the cats picked up are feral/wild. Sheriff Millirons said he and Officer Dalton would be at the May meeting.

Mr. McCoy asked about the status of the new building at the Academy. Sheriff Millirons said they are moving forward with it. Mr. McCoy said he agreed they needed to do something there.

VDOT REPORT

Mr. Clarke was unable to attend and had sent a report to the board members. Mr. Spencer said he had asked to have the discussion on 35 mph speed limit for gravel roads placed on the agenda. Other counties have adopted the 35 mph limit and VDOT wanted to know if Giles was interested. Mr. McCoy said he thought VDOT changed their policy to allow counties to decide to go with the speed limit if they want. Mr. Spencer agreed they should wait and discuss that when Mr. Clarke was present.

PUBLIC HEARING

COURTHOUSE MAINTENANCE FEE

Ms. Hobbs opened the public hearing. Mr. Chidester stated this was concerning a proposed increase in the courthouse maintenance fee to \$5. The fee is currently \$2. The General Assembly amended the Code to allow an additional \$3 to be used for the construction, reconstruction, renovation of, or adaptive re-use of a structure for a courthouse. The other \$2 fee was allowed to be used for cost of heating, cooling, utilities and ordinary maintenance as well. Mr. Chidester said in order to qualify to be allowed to charge the extra \$3 the county had to go through a certification process. He was not sure of the amount this would generate but it does apply to all criminal, traffic and civil cases in excess of \$500. These funds can be used to pay on the debt service for the previous renovation since a lot of that was done to make the courthouse more accessible. There were no comments and Ms. Hobbs closed the public hearing.

Mr. Baker moved to approve the ordinance to amend the courthouse maintenance fee to \$5 as presented. Second by Mr. McCoy. Approved unanimously (5-0). Voting YES: Ms. Hobbs, Mr. Spencer, Mr. McCoy, Mr. Gentry, Mr. Baker.

EXTENSION SERVICE REPORT – MELISSA CHASE

Ms. Chase presented highlights on Extension Service programs. Camp sign-ups have been held and there was a good turn-out. There will be a class on apple grafting this month. Extension is still taking applications for multi-flora rose spraying. Ms. Chase reported that FCS will be teaching money management and nutrition classes beginning mid-April. They are working with Ms. Gautier at Giles High School to offer these. They are also offering food safety classes in the New River District and the third grade nutrition program is continuing.

Extension has recently completed child care/daycare classes at NRCC and had about 60 attendees. Ms. Chase is working with Mr. Greer at Narrows High School to offer financial planning classes. They will again coordinate the summer gardening program with Giles County Housing and Development Corporation and also do a tree planting project using 4H and other volunteers and master gardeners.

The Extension Service partnered with NR Community Action to offer a SHARE cooking class. They encourage people to purchase the SHARE packages and offer classes on how to prepare the food in those packages. About 16 people participated in that and they hope to offer a quarterly class.

Ms. Chase said most of the board is aware that Charles Lytton will be retiring on April 30th. The 4H Agriculture Club will be cooking for that and about 52 people have signed up to attend his retirement party on the 26th. She said if the board would like to do a presentation, just let her know. Ms. Hobbs asked if they had found a replacement for Mr. Lytton yet. Ms. Chase said they were waiting to hear from Virginia Tech if the position would be filled. They probably will not know until later this summer; they are looking at restructuring changes across the state. There are about 34 people retiring from Extension state-wide. Mr. Gentry said he did not feel that should be a shared position. He would like to see whoever fills that be located in Giles. Ms. Chase said they would keep the board posted.

NEW RIVER COMMUNITY ACTION UPDATE – TERRY SMUTZ

Terry Smutz with New River Community Action presented the annual report to board members. This report covers all of the New River Valley but there is an insert that details services for Giles County. They served 1,888 individuals last year. She noted the Head Start program had a federal review and received a gold rating – which means no finds or problems. Head Start operates both in Narrows and Pearisburg. The CHIP program also operates in Giles County and all staff has been certified in Parent as Teachers programming which has proven effective in preventing child abuse.

Ms. Smutz said one concern of the agency is the increase of people needing housing assistance. In Giles County they see 6 or 7 families monthly seeking housing assistance of some kind. She applauded Giles community, civic groups and churches for their continued support in meeting community assistance funding needs. Ms. Smutz also thanked the board for their support of Community Action projects.

SCHOOL BOARD REPORT – TERRY ARBOGAST

Dr. Arbogast reported that enrollment as of March 31st was 2,548 – a decrease of 19 from last year. The ADM number is 2,546.8 for March 31st and is not as high as the school board has hoped it would be. The number used in budget estimates was 2,550 so that is about 3 off. Mr. Gentry said that was not too bad for having to guess at it a year ahead.

Dr. Arbogast distributed activity calendars and reviewed some highlights with board members. He noted schools will begin SOL testing in May. He announced that Amaris Meredith of Narrows Elementary was recognized as 2009-10 Math/Science Teacher by Virginia Tech's Chapter of Sigma Xi. Ms. Meredith received a \$500 award and so did her school.

Dr. Arbogast thanked board members for their continued support of the school system. The school board met with principals yesterday and they will start meeting with individuals who are being affected this week. Ms. Hobbs said that was difficult and she did not envy them that task.

NEW RIVER VALLEY PLANNING DISTRICT COMMISSION – KEVIN BYRD

Mr. McKlarney introduced Kevin Byrd, the Executive Director of the New River Valley Planning Commission. Mr. Byrd assumed this job in October and had met with Mr. McKlarney about a month ago. He said he was trying to get around to all of the county and town government meetings over the next few months.

Mr. Byrd spoke about the 40 year history of the PDC and reviewed programs and activities they have been involved in. He also shared a bi-monthly newsletter that provides a bit more detail on a highlighted project and updates on on-going activities. There is also a portion dedicated to news on the Competitiveness Center.

Mr. Byrd said in the past, the PDC Director has also served as the director for Va.'s First Regional IDA and the NRV Development Corporation. Mr. Byrd will no longer be doing this and that will free up time and resources to devote to the PDC.

Mr. Byrd said a question he often gets is what localities get for their funding. The PDC has been involved in the past with working on the Comprehensive Plan for the county and in broadband planning. They are currently doing the second round of applications for funding to bring broadband service down Route 100 and into Pearisburg. They have also worked with the NRV HOME Consortium where Giles County is a member and are currently working to identify a project in the county. The PDC has also worked on the Hazard Mitigation plan. It was first done in 2003 and is being updated. This is required for disaster assistance and they are working on the landslide piece for Routes 460 and 100 – both being major corridors in Giles. They are assessing landslide potential and working with geologists to see what steps may need to be taken.

Mr. Byrd said PDC is also involved with special projects as request. The Town of Rich Creek has requested help on water projects. They are working with the county on Ripplemead water to meet the federal requirements of Davis-Bacon. Mr. Byrd said he looked forward to continuing to work with Giles County.

FIRE SERVICE FEE

Mr. Chidester said he did not think the county has the right to create an ordinance allowing fire departments to charge insurance companies a service fee for fire calls. His concern is if they move forward with this and bill for it, then at some point they might have to repay everyone. Mr. Gentry noted that some of the local fire departments do not want to do this. Ms. Hobbs said this really should be action by the Fireman's Association not the board anyway. Mr. Chidester said the Attorney General's opinion for Tazewell was they could do this, but they own some of the equipment. The county here doesn't own any of it. The towns or volunteer organizations may own some of it so they can charge if they want to. He said Carroll County has done this and he has talked to their attorney but still is not convinced there is a statute that authorizes it. The Town of Stewart is looking at it also, but the town owns the equipment.

Mr. Gentry said the county should stay away from this. Mr. McCoy said if departments can charge without an ordinance, then let them do it. The board agreed they would not propose an ordinance for this fee.

NATURAL GAS LINE

Mr. Spencer said Fairchild was asking about natural gas coming into Glen Lyn. The line does not extend that far but does go into Rich Creek. There are customers in Midway and Route 219 area. Mr. Spencer said they have a grant to extend sewer between Rich Creek and Glen Lyn and he wondered about extending natural gas also. He thought Fairchild and AEP might be interested in it. Mr. McKlarney said it would probably come down to capacity because that line comes from Flat Top and was put in especially to serve Celanese. He would have to talk to the gas company and it would most likely depend on the intended use.

PAYMENT OF WARRANTS

Mr. Gentry moved to appropriate \$1,049,849.77 for payment of warrants as presented. Second by Mr. Baker.

Discussion: Ms. Hobbs asked about the handwritten check. Mr. McKlarney said that was pay off on the building that was recently sold at the Mountain View Industrial Park. The IDA had to pay it off in order to obtain clear title to make the transfer. Ms. Hobbs asked about payment to R. T. Roger Oil. Mr. McKlarney said that was one of the bidders on fuel purchases. He did not know where they were located. There is only one provider located in the county and they are offered opportunity to bid each time. This was the low bidder for this

purchase. There was a question about a \$4,900 bill to Fleeman Plumbing – that was for work at Castle Rock on a pipe that was under a slab at the old clubhouse. The pipe has completely disintegrated.

Approved unanimously (5-0). Voting YES: Ms. Hobbs, Mr. Spencer, Mr. McCoy, Mr. Gentry, Mr. Baker.

APPOINTMENTS

Mr. Gentry moved to reappoint Mr. McCoy as representative to Virginia’s First Regional industrial Authority for a four year term ending June 30, 2014. Second by Mr. Baker. Approved unanimously (5-0). Voting YES: Ms. Hobbs, Mr. Spencer, Mr. Gentry, Mr. Baker; Mr. McCoy-abstain.

BUDGET MEETING

The board members agreed to set a meeting to discuss budget for April 15, 2010 at 5 PM in the County Administration Building.

No further business was introduced. Ms. Hobbs adjourned the meeting until the budget and recess meeting is Thursday, April 15, 2010 at 5 PM.

APPROVED:

Chairperson

ATTEST:

Clerk