MINUTES – JANUARY 16, 2018

The Caswell County Board of Commissioners met in regular session at the Caswell County Historic Courthouse in Yanceyville, North Carolina at 6:30 p.m. on Tuesday, January 16, 2018. Members present: Nathaniel Hall, Chairman, Rick McVey, Vice-Chairman, Sterling Carter, Nathaniel Hall, Jeremiah Jefferies, David Owen and Kenneth D. Travis. Absent: William E. Carter. Also present: Bryan Miller, County Manager and Brian Ferrell, County Attorney. Paula P. Seamster, Clerk to the Board recorded the minutes.

MOMENT OF SILENT PRAYER

Chairman Hall opened the meeting with a moment of Silent Prayer.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Board of Commissioners and all the guests in the audience recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Chairman Hall stated that one item needed to be added to the agenda, Piedmont Meats will be added after Item #7 and Item #7 will be moved down to after Item #12

Commissioner Jefferies moved, seconded by Commissioner McVey to approve the agenda as amended. The motion carried unanimously.

APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA

Commissioner Travis moved, seconded by Commissioner McVey to approve the Consent Agenda. The motion carried unanimously.

The following item was included on the Consent Agenda:

A. Approval of Minutes of January 2, 2018 Regular Meeting

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Chairman Hall stated that before Public Comments there will be comments from Commissioner Owen.

Commissioner Owen stated “Thank you Mr. Chairman. Those of you on this Board that I have served with for 3 years already and for our new ones you probably realize or have seen that I have a lot of zeal and passion about being a commissioner for Caswell County and about Caswell County and about what this Board does. Well this past week as I was doing my study in Proverbs the Lord had a little talk with me and I realized that I allowed that zeal and that passion to overcome good reason and even thought what I said is factual, what I said is true I should not have said it at that time and I am referring back to our organizational meeting in December, December 2nd so tonight, I did not know that Commissioner Carter was not going to be here but I am going to make a public apology to him, to this Board and to the citizens of Caswell County, that was not something that should have been said in a public arena but I allowed that zeal to overcome my good thinking and I would like to say with all honesty that my zeal and passion won’t rear up again and cause me to do something like that but I can’t guarantee it but I will work on it. I just wanted to make a public apology for what I said in a public meeting. Thank you.” Chairman Hall responded “Thank you Commissioner Owen.”

Chairman Hall opened the floor to Public Comments.

Ms. Jo Sicz came before the Board and made the following statement:

Ms. Sicz stated that she lived at 1453 County Home Road, Blanch. She appreciates the efforts of those trying to correct the failures in the animal policies. She is tired of hearing ‘It is not my jurisdiction and we can’t do anything because the laws are weak.’ She stated that she has found 4 articles where counties have charged individuals with animal abuse within the last month. There are serious issues that need to be addressed: 1) Animal Control must be made a division of the Sheriff’s Department. Ms. Sicz stated that she has been told they have no authority to take out warrants or conduct searches without legal assistance and this change has been proposed several times. She asked who is blocking this decision and why. 2) She asked if Animal Control calls and gives notice before investigating a complaint. If this is true there is no wonder why nothing is found. 3) Ms. Sicz stated that she is grateful to the Caswell Messenger for their article on the puppy mill. She added that the county’s response was disappointing and eye opening. She quoted ‘There seemed to be far less in the number of dogs that Holmes estimated’ and ‘the inside living conditions were not bad’ and ‘there was a stark contrast between what was reported and what we found.’ She stated that a first grader could see that the puppy mill had been cleaned up and many dogs were removed before investigators arrived. Nothing was said about further investigation and it was insinuated that the whistleblower’s evidence was false. Ms. Sicz stated that some associated with close ties with law enforcement have publicly accused Mr. Holmes of lying and falsifying evidence. She asked who was covering up for whom. 4) The Animal Control Ordinance seems to have no mention of puppy mills, it must be amended to protect dogs and cats, breed for sale in puppy mill conditions. Ms. Sicz stated that the rescued puppy, Charlie, had surgery five days ago to remove 9 rocks from his stomach. The attending vet stated that this is common for starving dogs to eat rocks. She asked why kind of person starves a dog to do this and what kind of person sees this and turns a blind eye. Each commissioner was given nine pieces of gravel just like those removed from Charlie’s stomach by a veterinarian. She stated that pictures don’t lie, x-rays don’t lie, and veterinarians don’t lie. She asked for actions to be taken.

Chairman Hall asked the audience to silence their phones.

Ms. Judy Hatchett came before the Board and made the following statement:

Ms. Hatchett stated that she lives at 1800 Hughes Mill Road, Burlington. She stated that her maiden name was Judy Hatchett. The Hatchetts have lived here in Caswell County for 260 years. They still live on the original 2000 acres that King George granted her family. Her great grandfather was a judge in Caswell. Her father and grandfather were part of service organizations for many years and they also had a commissioner and a congressman from the family. She left Caswell when she was 18 and went to college, she came back recently after retiring from a teaching career at the college level and she was very disappointed, disgusted and shocked when she saw the Caswell Messenger last week. She added that while the nation was becoming enlightened concerning animal welfare and enacting laws to stop the abuse of animals, Caswell County commissioners were sitting on their hands. At least that is what it appears like to Ms. Hatchett and many others and she asked for this to change. She stated with someone being ‘left off the proverbial hook’ when it comes to hunters and how they take care of their dogs, dogs are dogs. The rest of the world experiences great joy owning dogs and cats but they get cold just like humans do. Animals need to be not tethered and they need to be in an enclosed lot so when it is cold outside they can huddle together. Ms. Hatchett stated that her 6 dogs live in her house and do not have to experience that. She asked why a hunter’s dog should experience this. She added that apparently the commissioners like they are just dogs because that is how it is viewed by the animal lovers in Caswell County. She added that these animal lovers demand additional ordinances be enacted in Caswell County for the welfare of all animals and if this is not done then the commissioners may be looking at the incoming new commissioners seated behind Ms. Hatchett and they would make sure of that. She added that they will be a thorn in the commissioners’ side until animals are shown the respect they deserve. Ms. Hatchett stated that her husband has 3 months left to live and he is her priority but when he is no longer with her animal welfare will be her priority.

Ms. Lynn Talley came before the Board and made the following statement:

Ms. Talley stated that she lived at 2076 US Highway 158W, Yanceyville. She lived there when she went from Bartlett Yancey Elementary through high school and she retired from Caswell County Home Health. She thought the puppy mill had been addressed enough so her concern is that animals are like family members. She saw a lot of bad things when she worked at Home Health in homes and now she sees bad things like an old dog that can hardly get up being chained with a logging chain or dogs with a muzzle on them that can’t get to food and water. These are the kinds of things she is concerned about. She added that in 1981 Sheriff J.I. Smith proposed that animal control come under the Sheriff’s office where it belonged. There are criminal and civil laws that are covered by government and needed to be acted upon. Sheriff Smith was going to deputize the animal control officer at the time and when this person was not busy with animal control issues he would serve civil papers. Sheriff Smith had the support of the county manager at that time but not the county commissioners and now 37 years later something has to be done. She begged the Board to do something for the animals.

Mr. Bill Bush came before the Board and made the following statement:

Mr. Bush stated that he lived at 8040 Park Springs Road. He encouraged the commissioners as they move forward with animal care and control to look at more to encourage spay and neuter in the county. Spay and neuter is a needed service and it is provided in the county. Mr. Bush added that with spay and neuter this will eliminate a lot of the county’s issues with animal welfare and there will be fewer animals showing up at the animal shelter. He asked that the commissioner encourage spay and neuter of animals in the county.

Ms. Louise Duvall came before the Board and made the following statement:

Ms. Duvall stated that she would like to speak about the animal ordinance and the latest revision. She stated that she loves dogs and loves animals. She added that having the exclusion in the animal ordinance is wrong and that tethering dogs is wrong. Ms. Duvall stated that tethering is wrong and the facts are out there. She added that she hoped the commissioners have had plenty of time to go out and research why tethering is cruel and she would like to see this exclusion dropped in the ordinance. Ms. Duvall stated that there are 20 counties in North Carolina with some type of tethering restriction and that Caswell County is way behind and there should be something already in place. She asked the commissioners to look at the evidence on tethering. She added that she knows there are people that take care of their dogs and they take care of them but this ordinance does not apply to them. This ordinance is to protect animals that are neglected and abused. Tethering needs to be stopped or needs to be limited. Ms. Duvall asked the commissioners to base their vote on the facts and not their opinion.

Ms. Kim Steffan came before the Board and made the following statement:

Ms. Steffan stated that she lives at 3598 Corbett Ridge Road, Mebane. She stated that she wanted to address two topics with the animal control ordinance. She wished the Board would adopt the animal control ordinance that was originally presented rather than the amended one because she does believe that hunters should have to abide by the tethering limitations but if the commissioners are just unwilling to do that then the most recent revisions is worth doing because there are other regulations in the tethering portion that would apply to the hunting dogs. She added that the commissioners may ask if the ordinance will be hard to enforce the ordinance with the tethering provisions and her response was that if this was the case then there would not be laws on drunk driving or vaccinating against rabies because you don’t pass laws based on the ability to enforce them at 100%, you pass laws because they are a good policy. When a law is passed it is aimed at two groups: one is the law followers and the other group is a small group that will not follow the law because they don’t care and the county needs this law for them because it is the only way to make them comply. Ms. Steffan stated that the county needs this new animal control ordinance because the old ordinance ties the hands of the animal control officers. The new animal control ordinance will give the animal control officers specifics that they can follow and take action. Ms. Steffan asked the Board for their support on the animal control ordinance.

Mr. V. Mac Baldwin came before the Board and made the following statement:

Mr. Baldwin thanked the Board for allowing him to speak. He added that he did not have anything negative to say, he had something positive to say. He thanked the Board of Commissioners and the previous Board members that made the decision along with Joey Knight to apply for a Golden Leaf grant to place packing equipment in the Matkins Meat plant. This piece of equipment has become very important to the meat farmers in the county because in order to place meat in the retail market it has to be able to sit in a refrigerated counter unfrozen for up to 30 days and this piece of packaging equipment can do that. He added that Larry and Donna have purchase a state of the art facility in Asheboro to move this process forward. Mr. Baldwin brought some packaged meat to show to the Board. He thanked the Board again for apply for this grant and for taking care of the farmers in the county.

Chairman Hall asked if anyone else would like to speak at this time.

Mr. Randy Poole came before the Board and made the following statement:

Mr. Poole stated that he lives at 596 Jones Road. He stated that a lot of people have spoken tonight about studies on tethering and what other counties are doing but he wanted to talk about the facts. Mr. Poole stated that he has lived for over 35 years on Oak View Loop Road and he kept dogs on chains and barrels for 35 years and the things that the say about tethering he does not know where they are getting it from because he has never had a problem with tethering. He added that tethering and barrels is the same thing has having a lot. If you don’t take care of the dogs you will have problems. He stated that you have to go every day to feed and water the dogs and check the equipment and make sure everything is right. If you don’t then you will have animal abuse. He did agree that Animal Control needed to be under the Sheriff’s Department. Without doing this there is no bite in the ordinance because there will be no way to enforce it. Mr. Poole stated that a lot of what has been said about the tethering and barrels, in his opinion, is not true.

Ms. Cathy Sheley came before the Board and made the following statement:

Ms. Sheley stated that she lives at 2355 Old US Highway 29, Pelham. She stated that she is a newcomer to Caswell and sometimes you need fresh eyes and at some time the county has to depend on the reputation that it has. It does matter if the county wants to grow what other people think about the county. She added that when she moved to Caswell about a year ago she did not know about the laws or set up. She does know about the laws that protect animals and they are not quite as simple as people think. She agreed with Mr. Poole on tethering but she does not like to see it herself. On her road she see irresponsibility, people do not check on their dogs, no water, chains too short, etc. and it is very hard for her to go home at night when it is very cold and she knows there is a dog outside right down the road that has nothing in its dog house and at one point did not have a dog house. When she looked at the laws in this area she was very disappointed because she did not want someone to tell her that the place that she lives in is backwards and that the county does not keep up with animal rights. Ms. Sheley stated that she is a Christian and anyone knows that Christians are supposed to take care of creatures that cannot take care of themselves. She added that people say they are dogs and she continued that is true but people have taken the dogs out of their natural environment and people owe them protection. Ms. Sheley stated that she hopes that she is not looking at cold hard faces that do not care because if they do not care she does not want to live here anymore. She added that she is a retired nurse and ex-cop so she has seen the worst of everything but she has also seen some wonderful hearts and she was trying to decide what she is looking at right now. She asked the Board to do something with the animal control ordinance. She added that she will be watching, she will not be just silent, if she has to live here she cannot live here and watch this treatment of animals go on. She asked the Board to no disappoint her because it will matter what the county looks like to the rest of the world.

Chairman Hall asked if anyone else would like to speak during Public Comments. With no further comments Chairman Hall closed Public Comments.

RECOGNITIONS

Chairman Hall asked if there were any recognitions.

Commissioner S. Carter stated “Thank you Mr. Chairman, fellow Commissioners and citizens of Caswell County, 2018 marks the anniversary when one hundred and fifty years ago, the State Constitution of North Carolina was rewritten and included therein was the reorganization of the structure of each governing body in North Carolina counties. Preceding this governing body was the Court of Pleas and Quarter Sessions, which served not only as the legislative and executive arm of county government, but as well as the judicial branch for minor civil and criminal offenses. This body was composed of justices of the peace. As few as three made a quorum and as many as thirty-five individuals transacted county business, meeting quarterly for a five day session. The Court of Pleas and Quarter Sessions played an important role in the daily administration of county life, as it oversaw the construction and maintenance of roads, bridges, and public buildings; the distribution of licenses for ferries, mills, and taverns; and the apportionment and collection of taxes by the sheriff. Justices also acted as an Orphans’ Court for the county and supervised the settling of estates. Instead of being elected, Justices were appointed by the State Legislature. Firstly, I would like us all to take a moment tonight to recognize the numerous individuals who led this county before the Board of Commissioners form of government was established. I plan to research these individuals as well in the future back to the inaugural year of Caswell County in 1777. The North Carolina Constitution of 1868 produced exemplary progress for people across the state. Slavery and secession had been abolished and gave it more power to the people and to the governor of the state. The governor was now elected for a four year term rather than for two years and his authority was increased. State and county officials were to be elected by popular vote, and all men regardless of race or property qualifications were eligible to vote and to hold office. Representation in the state senate would not be divided by population versus by wealth. The constitution also called for free public schools for North Carolinians between the ages of six and twenty-one. The Caswell County Board of Commissioners first met in this room on July 24, 1868 to swear in its new members and then again on August 4, 1868 to transact county business. Its first members were Dr. Nathaniel Moore Roan, a Yanceyville physician; Mr. Yancey Jones, a Yanceyville farmer; Mr. William B. Bowe of Locust Hill who was a farmer, mechanic and later a member of the N.C. state legislature; Mr. Calvin Graves of Locust Hill, a farmer, lawyer and former Speaker of both the NC House and Senate; Mr. Giles Mebane, a farmer and later member of the state legislature from the Dan River region of the county, which we now refer to as Blanch and Providence; and Mr. William Morris Mason, a farmer from Anderson who replaced Mr. Graves after his resignation in August. Morris Mason as he was known was the first appointed African American commissioner for Caswell County appointed by Governor William Woods Holden in 1868. In total, including present members, we have had thirteen African Americans commissioners serve on this Board. Mr. Wilson Carey of Yanceyville being the first elected African American commissioner was a farmer, teacher, legislator, member of both the 1868 and 1875 State Constitutional conventions, and the first African American postmaster in North Carolina, where he served the citizens of Yanceyville right here in Caswell County. The late Rev. John Henry Blackwell of Locust Hill served as this Board’s first African American chairman. In addition, three women have served on the Board, Maud Gatewood of Yanceyville who served as the first female chairman; Ms. Pat Warren of Prospect Hill and Mrs. Cathy Lucas of Pelham who also served as Chair. The Board was constituted of five members originally until 1989 when it was increased to seven members. In total one hundred and twenty-one individuals have served the citizens of Caswell County on the Board of Commissioners since 1868. 27 of those individuals including current members are still living and a few of which are here tonight to join us. We welcome each of you and thank you for your service. I would like a round of applause for them being here tonight. (Applause) I would like to recognize and thank Commissioner Travis for first suggesting to the Board that we should recognize all former Board members by creating and dedicating a plaque to place in the Historic Courthouse. With that, a fire was placed beneath me and twice during the last year I spent three days each going through the minute books of the Board of Commissioners in the Register of Deeds office. Once a list was accumulated nearly half were not complete names. This concerned me, so I spent an additional three days just researching each individual where I gathered their full name to the best of my ability, their year of birth and death, the township in which they resided and what their professions were. Even with this much research, I say with humility this list and information is not yet perfected, but I hope by unveiling this plaque tonight, more interest may be generated by this Board and by the citizens of Caswell County. My hope is, information yet uncovered may surface and these name plates further perfected. May future generations of this Board continue to keep the accomplishments of these great men and women alive and we all live up to what our county motto states: Preserving the Past, Embracing the Future. I am honored to be a member of this Board and to serve the citizens of Caswell County and I am honored to work with each of you in moving this county forward and serving the people to the best of our ability. I would like to thank the Register of Deeds office for their help during this project, my mother, Lisa Ashby and my cousin, Zoie Ashby, who are here tonight for helping me research the names, and for Scott Preston at We Mark It here in Yanceyville who made the plaques. Without further ado, I would ask the Board’s permission if I could respectfully read aloud each of these names and afterwards honor them by all current members of the Board and all those who came here tonight who are former members of the Board to unveil these plaques in their honor and ask that everyone join us in applause afterwards. Dr. Nathaniel Moore Roan, Yancey Jones, William B. Bowe, Calvin Graves, Giles Mebane, William Morris Mason, Philip Hodnett, William W. Adams, Wilson Carey, Henry J. Phelps, Richard H. Jones, Jerry Smith, John S. Barnwell, George Herndon, Antiochus Boswell, Jesse C. Griffith, Nathaniel Monford Richmond, Samuel Smith Harrison, James W. Allen, Henry F. Brandon, Anderson Banks Newman, Edward Green Covington, William Henry Gatewood, Dr. Jackson Graves Pinnix, Thomas J. Farrish, John Wesley Corbett, Cairy A. Howard, Jr., Robert L. Walker, Dr. William G. Stephens, Barzillai Shuford Graves, Joseph C. Allison, James M. Hodges, John F. Walters, William Green Covington, DeBerniere Yancey Mebane, James W. O'Ferrall, Grant Smith, Monroe Oliver, George T. Williams, George Allen Chandler, Walter Lea Thomas, Thomas Lewis Lea, Jr., Thomas Dandridge Worsham, William Weldon Miles, John R. Burton, John Robert Smith, Peter Mack Somers, Thomas Pancoast Womack, John Edward Herndon, Osborne R. Hinton, Samuel Thomas Covington, John S. Harvey, John W. Slade, Thaddeus Cornelius Jones, John Lewis Warren, Carry H. King, Thomas Henry Hatchett, Jr., James Monroe Williams, David Preston Walker, William K. Williams, Samuel Pinckney Newman, John J. Lipscomb, Littleton A. Gwynn, Edgar A. Allison, Edward Willis Carter, John Drewry Burton, William Preston Aldridge, George Washington Oliver, Daniel Otis Leath, Thomas Edward Steed, William Wallace Pointer, Emory McCormick Hooper, Eugene Stokes Butler, Charles Sidney Walters, George Rosser Carter, Arthur Pinnix Dabbs, Clyde Banks Rogers, William Preston Cook, Arthur Delbert Swann, James Worsham White, George Irvin Aldridge, Oscar Bryant Watlington, Jr., William Robert Briggs, James Yancey Blackwell, Jr., Charles Franklin Murphey, George Julian Myers, George Weldon Walker, Jr., Lynn Banks Satterfield, Harvey Wilson Watlington, Robert Victor Wiley, John Burton Woods, Maud Florence Gatewood, Bobby Franklin Aldridge, Claude Bennett Rowland, William Wallace Pointer, Jr., Gordon Graham Satterfield, Linwood Harold Hamlett, William Conway Moorefield, Lynn Walker Massey, Faiger Megra Blackwell, Jeremiah Jeffries, Rev. John Henry Blackwell, William Nathaniel Taylor, Patricia Bynum Warren, John David Foster, Richard David Wrenn, Mel Ott Battle, Nathaniel Hall, John Kinder Watlington, Kenneth Dwight Travis, Cathy Walker Lucas, Larry Gene Hamlett, Jackie William Hooper, George William Ward, Jr., Clay Hester Vernon, III, William Edward Carter, Erik Donnell Battle, Norris Kent Williamson, David Jasper Owen, Ricky Gordon McVey and Andrew Sterling Carter. Thank you all for your time.”

RECESS

The Board took a brief recess.

PIEDMONT MEATS

Mr. Miller stated that the county has received a formal bid for the purchase of all the equipment associated with the original Matkins Meat Golden Leaf grant received in 2009. The equipment is now operated by Piedmont Custom Meats but the equipment is owned by the county. The offer to purchase the equipment is $50,000. The grant was made to Caswell County by Golden Leaf for $450,000 to purchase the now fully depreciated equipment. A fair market value has been assessed by the Cooperative Extension agents to be $50,000 or less. Any proceeds from the sale of the equipment must be returned to the Golden Leaf Foundation but based on discussions that the county manager has had with the Golden Leaf attorneys the County can request for consideration for those funds to be used for other Ag related projects the county may have in the county. Piedmont Custom Meats is not closing their facility in Caswell; they are expanding and renovating this facility. Their plan as the county manager understands it is to expand the livestock holding area and renovate the existing kill floor and provide the value added processing of meats in their Asheboro location. The county has 2 options: the county can surplus the equipment and accept the offer from Piedmont Custom Meats and enter into the negotiated offer, upset bid process and complete the process and return any proceeds to the Golden Leaf Foundation. The second option the county has is for Piedmont Custom Meats to return the equipment to the county, the county would then surplus the equipment and enter into the negotiated offer and upset bid process or any other method that North Carolina allows for the disposal of county property and then the county would return the proceeds from the sale of the equipment to the Golden Leaf Foundation. The county manager’s recommendation to the Board is to accept the offer from Piedmont Custom Meats and enter into the negotiated offer, upset bid process. Tonight just starts the process one way or the other. Mr. Miller stated that the second part of the request from Piedmont Custom Meats tonight is if the county decides to surplus the equipment and enter into the negotiated offer, upset bid process that while the county is in that process that Piedmont Custom Meats would be allowed to move the equipment to their Asheboro facility. Piedmont Custom Meats has assured the county that if they were able to move the equipment during the bid process, they would make the equipment available to anyone else that wanted to make an offer on the equipment as well as if they were not the recipient of the equipment in the end they would fund the return of the equipment to Caswell.

Chairman Hall stated that the county manager had given the Board a lot of information so he wanted to make sure that everyone understands what the county manager said.

Commissioner Owen asked if the offer would change if the Board did not agree to allow the equipment to be moved to the Asheboro facility. Chairman Hall responded that the Board can address that.

Commissioner Travis asked if Piedmont Custom Meats decides not to purchase the equipment if they would pay for it to be moved back. Mr. Miller responded yes. Commissioner Travis continued by saying even if the Board accepted his offer of $50,000 for the equipment and then someone else buys it how will that be handled. Mr. Miller responded the Piedmont Custom Meats said that if they are not the recipient of the equipment they being Piedmont Custom Meats would fund for the equipment to be returned to Caswell County.

Chairman Hall stated that before the Board makes a motion several things need to be done. The first order of business is does the Board want to surplus the property.

Commissioner Travis moved, seconded by Commissioner Owen to surplus the equipment at Piedmont Custom Meats. The motion carried unanimously.

Chairman Hall stated the Board has agreed to surplus the property. Now that the Board has surplus the property so now it has to go through a process, a negotiated offer, upset bid process, the law requires this.

Mr. Ferrell stated that there are a couple of legally recognized ways that county governments can dispose of its property and what is being recommended to the Board by the county manager is one of those ways and that is the negotiated offer, upset bid process set out in General Statute 168-269. A public auction is another choice. An offer has been given for the property; the Board will then accept that offer and then advertise that bid to receive the highest bid possible. He continued by saying if the Board is interested in moving forward with the upset bid process there is a resolution before the Board tonight that would begin this process. If no further bids are received you accept that bid and move forward with the disposition of the property as laid out in the resolution.

Chairman Hall asked if the Board was clear because there are other options for the disposition of county property.

Commissioner McVey moved, seconded by Commissioner Owen to approve the resolution to accept the offer by Piedmont Customer Meats and to start the upset bid process. The motion carried unanimously.

Chairman Hall stated that while the county is in this process, the question is can the equipment be moved.

Commissioner Owen moved, seconded by Commissioner McVey to allow Piedmont Custom Meats to move the equipment to their Asheboro facility.

Chairman Hall stated that from what he heard this would be under the provision that if the initial offer is upset then Piedmont Custom Meats would return the property back to the county at their expense. Mr. Miller responded that this was correct.

Upon a vote of the motion, the motion carried unanimously.

Chairman Hall instructed the county manager to follow up on the process.

LIBRARY PROJECT CONTRACTOR BID APPROVAL

CONTINGENT UPON LGC APPROVAL

Mr. Bill Burgin stated thank the Chairman and the Commissioners for allowing him to come before them. Bids were received on November 28, 2017 for the addition and renovation to the Gunn Memorial Public Library and he wanted to present the bids to the Board. There was a strong interest in the project. There were 15 original interests in the project and 11 bids were received. The low bidder was HM Kern Corporation with a bid of $2,357,000 and then with alternates in which Mr. Burgin is recommending for a total of $2,411,700. Mr. Burgin added that within the $2,411,700 there is a contingency of $75,000 so there is some reserve for the construction project and there is also sales tax in which the county can reclaim approximately $50,000 in sales tax monies. A contract has been prepared for construction and this has been forward to the county manager and the county attorney.

Mr. Ferrell followed up by saying if the Board decides to award the bid tonight subject to final contract and subject to the Local Government Commission’s final approval for the financing of the project it can do that.

Chairman Hall asked if there were any questions for the county manager or general counsel.

Commissioner S. Carter moved, seconded by Commissioner Owen to accept HM Kern as the low bid as the general contract for the Gunn Memorial Library additional and renovation project in the amount of $2,411,700 subject to the final contract approval and subject to the Local Government Commission’s approval for the financing of the project. The motion carried unanimously.

ANIMAL CONTROL ORDINANCE

Chairman Hall asked the Board if it had a copy of the proposed Animal Control Ordinance. He added that there is a copy in the Board’s packet. Chairman Hall suggested that he would start at the top and go Section by Section and he asked that when he gets to a section that the Board has a concern with to speak up and the Board will handle that concern. He started with Section I. Declaration of Purpose. There were no concerns. Section II. Authority. There were no concerns. Section III. Definitions. Chairman Hall asked that within Section III in line 24 Adequate Shelter where it says ‘Metal barrels do not provide adequate shelter...’ he asked if everyone was okay with this statement.

Commissioner McVey stated that plastic barrels are allowed.

Chairman Hall stated if there were no more concerns he was going to move on. Still in definitions on the next page line 21 it says ‘Only Caswell County employees shall be designated as an Animal Cruelty Investigator.’ He added that be believed in the past the Board appointed someone other than a county employee as an animal cruelty investigator.’ The Board was okay with this statement. The Board moved on to Section IV. Agency Authority and Responsibility. There were no concerns. Section V. Rabies Control. There were no concerns. Section VI. Vaccination of Dogs, Cats and Other Pets Required. There were no concerns. Section VII. Confinement, Control and Disposition of Potentially Dangerous and Dangerous Dogs. There were no concerns. Section VIII. Display & Keeping of Wild Animals, Wild and Dangerous Animals & Exotic Animal Prohibited.

Mr. Ferrell stated that the Board was fortunate to have Dr. McBride from the United States Department of Agriculture in the meeting tonight and she mentioned that she may have some comments and one or two tweaks to some of the language. Chairman Hall responded that the Board would address her once this process step is completed.

Chairman Hall stated Section IX. Required Notification by Owners and Keepers of Wild Animals, Wild and Dangerous Animals, or Exotic (Non-Domestic) Animals.

Commissioner Owen stated that notes were given to the Board from the Animal Protection Society and the Conservators’ Center about calls going necessarily to 911or to the sheriff’s office. From the Conservators’ Center stated ‘The County certainly needs a central reporting hub for Animal Control and the Health Director to collect potential disease-related animal concerns, and it appears to be coordinated by the Sheriff’s Department. I would hate to cause unnecessary alarm to the 911 dispatcher calling in a non-emergency from our location, such as to report a bite from a small vaccinated cat 2 hours earlier. We are willing to report all issues in this manner, but I thought we might suggest that non-emergency calls be reported to the Sheriff’s Department through their other number is we are reporting an issue during normal business hours. I will certainly direct our staff to follow whatever procedures the County prefers.’ Commissioner Owen added that the Animal Protection Society suggested that the language stay as is and to go to 911. Ms. Kim Steffan stated that the Animal Protection Society share the same belief as the Conservators’ Center as long as it is an employee that they can call the Sheriff’s number instead of 911 but if medical attention is required or anyone else other than staff that it should be reported to 911. Commissioner Owen read the Animal Protection Society response ‘It is not required that a report be made where the human being upon which this is committed is the owner or keeper or the employee of the owner or keeper, and the injury is minor enough that no medical care from any doctor, physician’s assistant, nurse practitioner, hospital, or urgent care was obtained or reasonably necessary.’

Chairman Hall asked the Board if they understood what is being said on the 911 call issue. He suggested keeping the requirement to report the incidence through 911 or another administrative number.

Mr. Miller asked the Board if they wanted to include the Sheriff Department’s non-emergency number in the ordinance as well for reporting. Commissioner S. Carter responded “Yes.” Chairman Hall directed the county manager to put the sheriff department’s non-emergency number in the ordinance for reporting purposes.

Commissioner Owen stated that in the ordinance it states to call no later than 12 hours and then in Item #4 ‘The roaming or escape of any animal required to be restrained or confined to a secure enclose.’ 12 hours is a long time to give an agency for this. He asked for a reduced amount of time for this type of situation as to when the call should come in, he hoped it would come immediately.

Chairman Hall moved to the next section, Section X. Seizure and Impoundment. No comments were made. Section XI. Procedures with Respect to Redemption of Animals. No comments were made. Section XII. Fees. No comments were made. Section XIII. Unwanted/Owned Animals. No comments were made. Section XIV. Destruction of Wounded, Diseased, or Unweaned Animals. No comments were made. Section XV. Animal Welfare and Control: Offenses.

Commissioner Owen stated that he understands the citizens’ concern on tethering but it will create an administrative nightmare for the Animal Control department which has 2 employees. Commissioner Owen stated that he has a conversation with the officers and one outside officer about this and once they get a call that an animal has been tethering for more than 3 hours the officers will go out there to see if the dog is chained and talk to the homeowner if he or she is there but then they would have to leave and return after 3 hours to see if the dog is still tethered before the officers can do anything. He asked how this could be enforced if it is going to be restricted to 3 hours. Commissioner Owen likes the changes in the animal control ordinance and he believes it lays out a lot of protection for the animals and even if tethering is allowed the ordinance will keep animals safe and healthy. Commissioner Owen stated that he hunted for years and their dogs were kept in pens and they were tethered because those dogs climbed out of the pens and he hoped that no one would keep an animal tethered for 24 hours a day. He added that it is just as inhumane to him to put an animal in a 10 x 10 cage and never let the dog out. He did not think tethering was any worse than keeping a dog in a 10 x 10 cage for 24 hours. He stated that as long as the animal is properly tethered, has plenty of food and water and proper shelter, that the county may be overstepping its boundary but that was Commissioner Owen’s personal opinion.

Chairman Hall asked for more comments on Section XV. Animal Welfare.

Commissioner Travis stated the Board has talked about the tethering issue and Dr. Fuller recommended allowing the hunters to be excluded from this requirement. He added that the Board needs to think about all the taxpayers of Caswell County and not just the hunters. There are people who can tether a dog just as well as a hunter can because everyone pays the same amount of taxes in the county and everyone needs to be treated the same. Commissioner Travis stated that he would not support the animal control ordinance for this reason.

Commissioner S. Carter asked “Just a clarification on what you said Commissioner Travis, not supporting the entire ordinance or not supporting that provision?” Commissioner Travis responded that he would not support the ordinance unless this exclusion for the hunters is taken out and the tethering is the same for everyone. Commissioner S. Carter continued “I would just like the rest of the Board and the rest of the county citizens to know that personally, individually I’m not for tethering, I believe it is inhumane. I understand the concerns from the hunters, I have seen the dogs jump out of the cages, crawl up the sides of the pens and I am sensitive to that. I know how well they also take care of those animals growing up in the Leasburg community surrounded by that kind of activity I never saw mistreatment of animals and the great majority of the hunters in the county I know take care of them. I’m at the point with the ordinance…I’m…it’s either tethering is prohibited or tethering with the exception of the hunters. I also understand Mr. Travis’ point and I do think we should try to treat everybody equally to the best we can because everybody doesn’t qualify to be in those two groups. I think the ordinance otherwise is very healthy and is very needed in the county. I think it was Ms. Louise that said currently the animal control officer’s hands are tied, that is very true, they need this kind of ordinance to back up the work that they do and I am also sensitive to the fact that 2 animal control officers have a very busy job in this county and with this type of ordinance and with citizens knowing the provisions we have now moving forward if we pass it does calls will increase and advocacy for animal or against animal cruelty will increase but I did want the Board and the people to get clarification that I still remain personally against tethering but to also understand the position that we are in being sensitive to all of those perspectives, trying to do what is best for everybody while also trying to reduce animal cruelty which we know exists and we know we have waited too long to act on it at this point but that is why we are here tonight and I hope we can at least get a good start by having the majority of the ordinance passed. I also think that if it’s perilous for the ordinance to pass tonight that maybe to address tethering not to just put it under the rug but to handle that issue separately where we can really work out all of those different perspectives and have a more apt conversation on it because I know from the public they’ve heard little from us in that regard as a group. That’s all I have to say.”

Chairman Hall asked if there were any more comments of concerns.

Someone from the audience asked if they could speak. Chairman Hall responded not at this point.

Chairman Hall asked what is the pleasure of the Board.

Commissioner McVey asked if the Board could hear from Dr. Foster on the revised portion of the ordinance. Chairman Hall asked what Commissioner McVey meant by revised portion. Commissioner McVey stated that he would like to hear about the changes that have been made since the last meeting such as plastic barrels being allowed and the hunters being able to tether. Chairman Hall responded that at this point the Commissioners need to decide on what they want to do with the ordinance. He added that there has been a public hearing and received a lot of information therefore a decision has to be made. Commissioner McVey stated that the Board would not get to hear the revised portion of the ordinance. Commissioner S. Carter responded “You have had time to read it; we’ve had time to read it.” Chairman Hall asked what the revised version is. Commissioner McVey responded that the revised version allows plastic barrels; the hunters may tether their dogs according to the general statutes. The puppy mill has not been addressed.

Chairman Hall asked the county manager if there has ever been anything in the various versions of the animal control ordinance that addressed the puppy mill. Mr. Miller responded no. Chairman Hall stated so it will not be addressed tonight but the other two issues will be addressed.

Mr. Ferrell stated that based on comments and feedback from the public hearing the plastic prohibition was removed and it has been mentioned that tethering will be as permitted by state law so based on public feedback the ordinance creates an exemption for the hunters from the 3 hour time limit of tethering for certain breeds of dogs recognized as hunting dogs as long as the dogs are kept for hunting purposed and kept by those with valid hunting licenses. Chairman Hall stated for clarification that other that this exclusion tethering is prohibited. Mr. Ferrell stated that this is correct the tethering prohibited would prevent someone from tethering animals for more than 3 consecutive hours during 24 hour period.

Commissioner Owen stated that he does not mind hearing from Dr. Foster but he want the Board to get the tethering issue out of the way before moving to other items in the ordinance. He added that what the state says is in the current revision of the animal control ordinance, that hunting dogs are exempt and the various breeds.

Commissioner McVey asked Dr. Foster if the hunting hounds were exempt totally. Dr. Foster responded that the Animal Protection Society met after the last meeting and discussed this issue and proposed that hunting dogs would be exempt from the tethering regulation.

Chairman Hall addressed Dr. Foster and stated that the Board was clear on this information and he is clear on what Commissioner McVey is saying. He added that in the ordinance it states that the time limitations above 3 hours shall not apply to owners of hunting dogs. Chairman Hall stated that the Board has two items in the ordinance that it needs to make a decision on which is regarding tethering. One would be tethering period and the other is an exemption for hunting dogs, those are the two items, the two distinct differences. Chairman Hall asked the Board what their pleasure was on this section of the ordinance on one or both of the tethering items.

Commissioner S. Carter asked “Mr. Chairman, clarify, we are basically determining whether we agree with how it is presently written, part 4 of Section VX, correct? Yes or no on this section at this point? Mr. McVey do you understand that?” Chairman Hall responded that there are two distinct things in this section of the ordinance that seems to cause a disagreement based on the discussions. Commissioner S. Carter continued “So we would like to go around the table and say tethering yes or no first?” Chairman Hall responded that what he was going to proposed that the Board do is make a motion and vote on it so it would be official and then the Board can move on to the next section.

Commissioner Owen moved, seconded by Commissioner Travis to allow tethering with no restrictions.

Mr. Ferrell stated that he wanted to make sure the Board was clear on the tethering restraint in section 4 of Section VX of the ordinance has a time limit prohibition as well as other provisions related to the length of the chain, swivels etc. so when the Board says no tethering Mr. Ferrell wants to make sure that it’s is not about the other provision or if it is just the tethering. Commissioner Owen responded that it was just the time limit, so his motion is that there is no time limit with tethering.

Commissioner S. Carter asked “With the…including the dogs, hunting dogs correct?” Commissioner Owen responded that the Board is dealing with the tethering right now. Mr. Ferrell responded that if there is no time limit then there would be no need for the exception.

Upon a vote on the motion, the motion carried by a vote of four to two with Commissioners S. Carter and McVey voting no.

Commissioner Owen asked for some clarification from general counsel on the ordinance passage. He stated that on the first vote if the vote is not unanimous it would have to come back. Mr. Ferrell responded that this was correct during the first reading of the ordinance and if it does not pass unanimously it will have to come back within the next 120 days. Commissioner Owen then asked if the sections that the Board is voting on could be passed as an amendment to the ordinance without a second vote. Mr. Ferrell responded yes the Board can vote on sections of the ordinance and then have a final vote on the ordinance.

Chairman Hall asked the audience to silence the discussions due to the clerk not being able to hear.

Commissioner S. Carter stated “Mr. Chairman I also wanted to mention with the final passage tonight Mr. Carter is absent so we would not have the unanimous vote because all members should be present for that.” Chairman Hall responded that it would be based on the members who are present. He added that this was on the agenda and Mr. Carter was aware of what was on the agenda. Mr. Ferrell stated that this could be looked at once we get to the vote.

Chairman Hall asked if there was anything else for discussion on Section XV. There were no further comments. Section XVI. Feral and Community Cats. No comments were made. Section XVII. Penalties. No comments were made. Section XVIII. Appeal Procedures. No comments were made. Section XIX. Jurisdiction. No comments were made. Section XX. Severability. No comments were made. Section XXI. Relation to Hunting Laws. No comments were made. Section XXII. Effective Date.

Commissioner McVey asked if the residents would have time to come into compliance with the effective date. Chairman Hall responded yes.

Chairman Hall stated that before the Board moves forward there is a representative from the USDA that wants to make some comments as it relates to the wording in the animal control ordinance.

Ms. Mary Ann McBride, Veterinary Medical Officer for the United States Department of Agriculture came before the Board. She had concerns about several of the definitions in the exotic animal definitions in Section 3, 8 and 9 but her primary concern was in Section 8 where is lists an animal permitted by the USDA, the USDA does not permit animals, the USDA registers facilities and inspect facilities and she added that this was a very big distinction for the USDA. Chairman Hall responded that this change could be made. Ms. McBride added that the Wildlife Resources Commission needed to be consulted on the permitting issue. She stated that she did not know if the Wildlife Resources Commission had been engaged in this process or not. Ms. McBride stated that the other issue is the county is setting up the USDA licensed facilities for a problem is in Section 2. D. (ii) ‘institutions regulated by the USDA that are in compliance with all applicable USDA regulations…’ it is rare that the facilities will have a 100% clean inspection. She added that if they are dinged on a violation it will be in conflict with the county’s regulation and she did not believe this was the intent of the regulation. Chairman Hall responded that it was not and an adjustment would be made because the county does not intend to be in conflict with any USDA regulations. Ms. McBride suggested that the county contact the NC Wildlife Resources Commission regarding native animals and who regulates them. She stated that the way it is written in the ordinance the county was very close to being in conflict with the state and federal regulations. Chairman Hall responded that the county would look at this. Ms. McBride encouraged the Board to not rush the ordinance through.

Chairman Hall asked the Board, county manager and general counsel if they had any further comments.

Mr. Ferrell stated that the two comments just heard from the USDA wants a material compliance with the USDA rather than a strict compliance, a material, non-safety compliance. Those items can be changed and change the word from animal to facility as well.

Commissioner S. Carter stated “Some comments that have been made both on the side, the public and even tonight and what was mentioned in the past and in which I believe Ms. Hatchett mentioned it, the Sheriff’s Department being involved in enforcing that’s something I think we should bring into the discussion and to make sure that this is a top notch ordinance. I think that is something this county would be interested in pursuing and I wanted to make that position known.” Chairman Hall responded that there were two comments made were about placing Animal Control under the Sheriff’s Office and the Board of Commissioners do not have the authority to do this but it can be pursued moving forward.

Chairman Hall asked the Board what its pleasure was as it related to the ordinance as amended.

Commissioner Owen stated that he would like to make a motion but he had a couple of items to be addressed and one of those items concerned the Wildlife Commission. He thinks these issues need to be resolved before taking a vote to make sure the wording is correct as far as what the Wildlife Commission handles. Chairman Hall responded that it is his understanding as it relates to wildlife as well as exotic animals is the ones that are kept in someone’s possession and if it is in their possession it needs to be included in the ordinance. Commissioner Owen stated that he thought it was more in the definitions that were conflicting with the North Carolina Wildlife Commission. Ms. McBride responded that the North Carolina Wildlife Commission regulates the coyotes and the county would be in conflict with that. She added that the North Carolina Wildlife Resources regulates any native species. Chairman Hall asked if what Ms. McBride was saying is that any of the native species cannot be included in the ordinance. Ms. McBride responded that she did not say that but her question was if the county wanted to have local regulations as well as state and federal regulations and the county needs to make sure that they do not conflict which would be her recommendation. Commissioner Owen stated that if the North Carolina Wildlife Commission already has laws and regulations for native species he does not want the county’s ordinance to conflict with those.

Mr. Ferrell stated that he thought it would be fine to state ‘not to be in conflict with state and federal regulations’. He did feel there was room for the county to have regulations and that is what is included in the ordinance. Mr. Ferrell added that there are federal and state regulations but there is room for local regulations as well and there were some ideas provided in the ordinance. He asked for specifics on the conflicts and then they could be addressed and it could be brought back before the Board in an amendment if the Board wanted to move forward.

Commissioner Owen moved, seconded by Commissioner Travis to accept the proposed Caswell County Animal Control ordinance as amended and to work on issues that may be a conflict.

Mr. Ferrell stated that he wanted to clarify that it is the County’s Animal Control Ordinance.

Chairman Hall asked if there was any further discussion.

Upon a vote of the motion, the motion failed by a vote of three to three with Commissioners S. Carter, Jefferies and McVey voting no.

RECESS

The Board took a brief recess.

APPOINTMENTS TO APPELLANT BOARD FOR DANGEROUS DOG CASE

Mr. Miller stated the County’s current Animal Control ordinance calls for any appeals to the deeming of a dangerous dog to be heard by an Animal Control Appellant Board. An Animal Control Appellant Board is a three member board with members appointed by the Board of Commissioners consisting of one member from the Board of Health, one member from the Board of Commissioners and a licensed veterinarian to review appealable decisions pursuant to the current animal control ordinance that the county has. Two people have made appeals for a total of four dogs that have been deemed dangerous and because of this the Board needs to appoint an Appellant Board to hear these appeals. Jennifer White with the Board of Health and Dr. Donald Fuller, licensed veterinarian, both have volunteered to be on this board. Mr. Miller stated that if it is the pleasure of the Board it can appoint these two members.

Chairman Hall asked who the third member was. Mr. Miller responded that it would be a member from the Board of Commissioners. Chairman Hall asked who has volunteered from the Board of Commissioners. Commissioner S. Carter responded “I will be glad to Mr. Chairman.” Chairman Hall stated okay so that would make 3 members.

Chairman Hall stated that he wanted to make it clear that the regulations require that there be a member from the Board of Health, a licensed veterinarian and a member from the Board of Commissioners so that is who the three names were obtained. Mr. Miller responded that this is what the Caswell County Animal Control ordinance requires.

Commissioner Travis moved, seconded by Commissioner Owen to accept the county manager’s recommendation on appointing Jennifer White, Dr. Donald Fuller and Commissioner Sterling Carter to the Animal Control Appellant Board. The motion carried unanimously.

Commissioner S. Carter asked “Mr. Chairman just a quick question for the county manager, is there a certain time limit once we receive these appeals that we have to answer with the appellant board decision or determination.” Mr. Miller responded yes. He added that from the date of the appeal the board has to schedule a meeting within 10 days. Mr. Miller stated that he or the clerk will reach out to the 3 members and determine a time for the meeting to be held. The residents who have filled the appeals will be notified of the date, time and location of the hearing. Each member of the appellant board will receive a copy of the current animal control ordinance so they will understand the provisions with the ordinance. Commissioner S. Carter stated “Thank you.”

OPIOID CRISIS RESOLUTION AND CONTRACT

Attorney George Daniel thanked the Board for allowing him to come back tonight to speak on the opioid crisis. The opioid crisis is everywhere in the news and newspapers. He stated that he just finished speaking in Alamance County. In 1969 congress passed the Controlled Substance Act. Mr. Daniel stated that he had seen drug problems at the Department of Social Services, at the health department, EMS and the prisons. Something has to be done to stop the opioid from coming in the communities. A law firm from West Virginia started taking action on behalf of the counties against the drug manufacturers, wholesale distributors and pharmacies. Rockingham County has filed a suit. Person County has passed a resolution to move forward. There is a difference in this case and the tobacco settlement case, the monies that come back with come back to the individual counties that filed the suit. These lawsuits through the country have been put into a MDL status which is a multi-district litigation status and will be heard by one judge. This judge, Dan Poister, is in Cleveland, Ohio. This suit does not put local pharmacies in jeopardy. This is not a class action lawsuit; it is a different kind of lawsuit. He presented the resolution and the fee contract. The firms put up all the monies to litigate, the counties do not pay anything. Mr. Daniel stated that he would be happy to answer any questions the Board has. Mr. Daniel suggested that he Board talk to the health department and DSS to get their opinions on this lawsuit.

Mr. Miller stated that he has spoken with the DSS director, Health director, CEO of the Caswell Family Medical Center, the Sheriff, Kelly Cobb, nurse practitioner at the Health Department and everyone agrees that the opioid crisis is a problem in Caswell County. They are seeing children being addicted, CPS cases and children being placed in foster care. He added that if the Board would like to have these individuals at a meeting he could arrange that.

Chairman Hall stated that the Board will come back to this issue in a little bit.

CYBER SECURITY COMMITTEE DISCUSSION

Commissioner S. Carter stated “I told the Board in December that I was going to bring this back, was planning to earlier in the month but I was sick and out of commission but I’ve been thinking about the Cyber Security Committee and some goals and maybe a vision, a direction for that committee to go into. I think after speaking to our IT director, looking into some research and information myself, it is very hard for us to have a committee that can deal with very sensitive information in regards to potential or threatening security breaches which the whole point of this committee when it started was with the situation that happened with the Town, not with the county. It has not met in years as I mentioned in the previous discussion. I do know that I think that for our policies regarding maybe not cyber security per se but we can just think of this as more of a technology policy, our internet use policy, our social media policy, those things need to be addressed. I think I asked Ms. Seamster how old the internet use policy was, is that the one that is very old, not he social media but the internet and it has not been amended or talked about since its inception so I was going to put that out there to the rest of the Board to may we would like this committee to look into those as a start and also with the White Space project coming up soon to begin implementation that we also be involved in that as a committee more closely than the public or the Board when that comes to us directly but we can be involved in that project. Also I wanted to have direction for who this Board thought would be best to serve on this committee. I guess I am still defacto chairman of it. It was a county committee, not involving any other entity, government entity so I am just looking for direction from the Board with those few thoughts and suggestions.”

Chairman Hall asked if there were any comments for Commissioner Carter.

Chairman Hall stated that he had some thoughts and he made some notes and said that he would send them to Commissioner Carter as soon as he could type them up but no later than next Monday or Tuesday. Commissioner S. Carter responded “Okay.

Commissioner S. Carter asked “So the first question, are we keeping this committee going? Should we start meeting? Should we think of individuals to serve on it? I need to kind of know who to gather together.” Commissioner Owen responded that he thought it was decided the last time it was discussed to continue the committee. Commissioner S. Carter continued “The same members aren’t still on it.” Commissioner Owen responded that Commissioner Carter wanted to dissolve it. Commissioner S. Carter stated “That was the original discussion but you said to keep it. Commissioner Owen asked if the other Commissioner Carter was on this committee. Commissioner S. Carter responded “Only Commissioner Williamson was the only commissioner; he was the only one on it at that time. Now that could be more than just me.” Commissioner Owen continued that he thought when the Board talked about it that night that Commissioner S. Carter said he would be on it and he also thought Commissioner Bill Carter said he would as well. Commissioner S. Carter responded “Of the top of my head I can’t remember that but that is fine.” Commissioner Owen stated he just wanted to clarify that. Commissioner S. Carter asked “Any department heads, the county manager, the IT director, who would do we want involved in it?” Commissioner Owen responded the IT director definitely. Commissioner S. Carter continued “Okay.” Chairman Hall responded the county manager as well. Commissioner S. Carter stated “Okay. When I talked to Mr. Webb he said you know two big departments that the county has a lot of computers and a lot of traffic that way is the Health department and Social Services, didn’t know if you wanted to involved anybody from those buildings or departments.” Chairman Hall responded to allow him to give Commissioner Carter his thought and then Commissioner Carter can report back to the Board on a recommendation after that. He added that the county manager has started doing some surveys and the Board needs to take a look at that. Commissioner S. Carter continued “I have those surveys.” Chairman Hall responded that he has looked at them but he did not want to go into any details. Commissioner S. Carter stated “But basically there were no security issues that departments reported, to summarize it.” Chairman Hall responded that Commissioner Carter is right and that concerned Chairman Hall. Commissioner S. Carter continued “And final thing, should this be a committee that we should start meeting quarterly versus every month? I have to get that direction before we even start meeting.” Chairman Hall responded that once the committee starts Commissioner Carter can report back to the Board how often the committee needs to meet. Mr. Miller stated that the committee should initially start meeting as needed to start. Chairman Hall responded that he did not like ‘as needed’ because as needed did not get anything done. He suggested starting monthly because Commissioner Carter did not know everyone’s thoughts yet and he did not have Chairman Hall’s notes so Chairman Hall thought that monthly would be best and then later on down the road the committee could meet quarterly. Commissioner S. Carter stated “So I should pursue meeting before the end of January. It is more than possible; it is definitely possible to do that.” Chairman Hall responded that this would be up to Commissioner Carter. Commissioner S. Carter continued “Okay, that is what I will plan to do and I will report at the February 5th after an initial meeting. Any other individuals y’all would like involved in the committee at that first meeting? And then my other concern was again sensitive information, if I get input from them, I mean, all of that is subject to public meetings law correct? So we can’t have, for example, a committee and this is my as a new member of the Board asking, you can’t have a closed session in a committee meeting, you can’t have a, you know…?” Chairman Hall responded that the committee would be able to if they are talking about security. Commissioner S. Carter stated “Right and it is called cyber security and that is why I am asking for direction?” Chairman Hall stated that the committee does not want to through security protocols out to the public. Commissioner S. Carter continued “Correct.” Mr. Ferrell responded that if Commissioner Carter gets to a point with his work with the committee that there is something that Commissioner Carter thinks is safety sensitive to contact the attorney and he can deal with that so the county stays in compliance with the Open Meetings laws. Commissioner S. Carter stated “Thank you.”

NEW COUNTY COMMITTEE FOR POVERTY & HUNGER

Commissioner S. Carter stated “County Committee for Poverty & Hunger, this was the other committee that I was assigned to; I think I briefly mentioned it in that same discussion. I’m on what’s called the Homeless Initiative which is a committee that has met in the past; it has not met in over a year. Mayor Foster for Yanceyville was in charge of it and I of course went to him and discussed what they were working on, what the deal was, there is a lot of nitty, gritty involving access to funds that has to go through federal regulations and protocol. It wasn’t a lot of money but they had basically given up on trying to go for that and being a middle man for divvying out funds to anybody that comes to the committee and they are homeless and they need help. I was trying my best to understand it from him but he basically said there is no need for the committee anymore. They did not have qualified staff to handle it. For example, he mentioned that other counties have paid employees that handled this same process and he said they were just not able to handle it and I just took that for what it was with him and I asked him I said okay well can we have a county committee that handles maybe poverty in the county in which we all know was a serious issue. Has there ever been anything brought up with that and he said that would be a great idea. In the past when the Homeless Initiative started he said there were county department heads involved and it dwindled over time. He said there was very productive conversations at first. I have not seen minutes to these meetings. I don’t know any more than what Mr. Foster, Mayor Foster told me but I was going to throw that out there to the Board if we would like a county committee to involve several entities to discuss the issue of poverty and hunger in which we know hunger with the Local Foods Council or the County Outreach Ministries and several other groups that are trying their best to address that but maybe if a larger group of people were involved it would maybe help the situation so I did not know what the Board thought about that possibility.”

Chairman Hall asked Commissioner Carter to get specifics on what the county would need to do to push forward either poverty or hunger. Commissioner S. Carter responded “It would be a matter of us just starting the committee at this point and selecting who we would like involved, have an initial meeting and see what the discussion produces because I don’t know everything, you know, individually as far as what our needs are and what the real situation is.” Chairman Hall asked Commissioner Carter if he had any information on the funding sources to support these issues. Commissioner S. Carter responded “I don’t know if that’s how we are wanting to go forward with it if we want to filter through monies or are we just going to have a countywide discussion on what things can we do in the communities, county departments, etc. I am very open minded, I mean, I am basically assigned to a committee that doesn’t exist as I was with Cyber Security.” Chairman Hall stated that what he was getting at was he thought he heard Commissioner Carter or Mayor Foster stated there was a funding source behind this project. Commissioner S. Carter responded “For homelessness specifically, yes it still exists but however they had handling it and from what I understand had nothing to do with a county department or the Board they were overworked, overwhelmed and just weren’t competent and capable to handle all of that.” Chairman Hall stated that he understood all of that but all he wanted to know was if the funding source was still out there. Commissioner S. Carter responded “Yeah, yes and the name escapes me at this point in time, I just know it was not a lot of money, I think $4,000. I may be wrong but I think it was a very small amount for just homelessness specifically and that is why I kind of expanded the idea of maybe we can just handle poverty. Just have some kind of committee and involved county citizens as well on something like that.”

Commissioner Owen stated that he hoped the Board would not move on this yet. He hopes the Board will think on this and research this because he did know that there are several organizations in the county that deal with food issues and household issues for the citizens. Commissioner Owen mentioned the Caswell Parish, the County Outreach Program which feeds the kids during the summer and during the school year the Backpack program, Partnership for Children, and throughout the county there are Food Pantries so the Board needs to consider if this needs to come from the county or to gather the different organizations to combine as a committee. Commissioner S. Carter responded “Sure. That would not originate with the Board; it would have to be them coming together and maybe have one of us assigned to it.” Commissioner Owen agreed. He added that all of the Board is concerned about this issue.

Commissioner S. Carter stated “You know at this point if the Homeless Initiative doesn’t exist there’s not an organized group on that, I was going to see if y’all just wanted to removed that from the committee list. It is just kind of sitting there. It’s not our committee; I think it is a conglomerate and the only reason I mention this is do we want a county committee to handle anything in that realm not necessarily hunger but just anything? I was just willing to throw that out there if we wanted something to replace that?” Commissioner Owen responded that this was not the county’s committee anyway. Commissioner S. Carter continued “No it won’t. So if we are going to stew on it a little while…” Chairman Hall responded that he wanted to go back to the funding source. He asked Commissioner Carter to see what he could find out about the funding sources and if there are any particular restrictions on who can receive the funding. If the funding sources do not require a local government then the committee can be pushed out to the local organizations and encourage them to move forward on this issue. Commissioner S. Carter stated “Sure. So we will wait on that information and see if we can do something.”

APPROVAL TO APPLY FOR NC HISTORIC ROAD MARKER FOR WILSON CAREY

Commissioner S. Carter stated “Mr. Wilson Carey, I don’t know if y’all remember in that long list of names I called out earlier, the individual’s name, Wilson Carey, served on the Board…he was on here several times and I don’t have those dates off hand but I do know he first got on the Board in 1870. Mr. Wilson Carey was a man born in Amelia County, VA. In addition to being the first African American elected to the Board of Commissioners he was also one of the first African Americans elected to the North Carolina General Assembly after the Constitution of 1868 and I am going to read this briefly to you, it’s not very long, I’m just going to skim through it and tell you more about this individual. Wilson Carey served 5 terms in the State House of Representatives. He of course was a Republican. He also served briefly as the state’s first black postmaster as I mentioned before, he was here in Yanceyville. He was an educated individual moving to Caswell County in the 1850s. He was a farmer, a school teacher, became very active in state politics. When the State Constitutional Convention occurred, the citizens of Caswell overwhelmingly supported this man to represent the entire county to go to the State Constitutional Convention in 1868. He was also selected in 1875 for that convention and he was the only African American in the entire state that served on both. He was very instrumental in the suffrage laws for African Americans. He was trying to advocate for the right things and he also after the death of Senator Stephens represented us in the State Senate at that point. He was on several committees. He was one of seventeen African American members in the legislature when that first occurred. He ended up leaving the county for a brief time. Coming back and being elected on the Board of Commissioners at that point. You know politics and the culture were very turbulent in that part of our history but he served on this Board I believe 6 or 7 years if I am not mistaken. Because of his political service not only to Caswell County and the entire state what he did in the Constitutional Conventions of 1868 and 1875 but also being the state’s first black postmaster which is something that people in the county, people in the town of Yanceyville at large do not know of, in fact I did not know about it until I read about it maybe 6 months ago, I knew he was a commissioner but the man has done a whole lot in the past. I think for his statewide historical significance I think he’s worthy and he meets the criteria for a roadside historic marker for the state. The criteria for those markers, it has to be an individual of statewide historic significance so, for example a local elected official back during that time could not be nominated for this. There are two deadlines for the marker program. One is in April for this marker to be received in May. The other is in November for the marker to be received in December. I mentioned this of course at the planning retreat and I am bringing this again before you tonight, having a little bit more information about Mr. Carey now and I am asking the Board’s permission that we apply for one of these historic markers for Mr. Carey.”

Chairman Hall asked if there were any questions for Commissioner Carter.

Commissioner Owen stated that he thought Mr. Carey is a very worthy individual but he asked if Commissioner Carter found other candidate during this research that fit the criteria. Commissioner S. Carter responded “For sure. That is very valid and I’m personally making an effort to try to search for others as well. Again the significance is statewide significance so there is not too many out there but that is my general idea is that this will maybe spark that. That we will get some local interest and families will search and more research will be done not only by myself but the Historical Association, independent researchers and that we will have more of these individuals recognized. This program was started in 1939 and I think if I am not mistaken we have 14 of these markers in the county presently. There has not been a new marker since the 70s so of course no efforts have been made in between then and now, not that is anybody’s fault but I just think it’s time that we do another one if we have a worthy one and we have research already completed but I am not against any additional names as well. Commissioner Owen asked if Commissioner Carter knew of any other people who would qualify for this. Commissioner S. Carter responded “Give me some time, at the next meeting I will probably have a couple more.” Commissioner Owen stated that he would hope that family members would state their ancestors did things and ask for these to be markers and then bring them before the Board.” Commissioner S. Carter responded “And it will, I think it will spark that because when you have one of these markers it is not just a road sign that just pops up one day, we actually have a ceremony and it’s a public event and it’s publicized, you know news crews hopefully might be there and if we let Raleigh know we are interested in this because he doesn’t have on anywhere in the state at all that that will spark statewide researchers, representatives, etc. I think that will spread but with February coming up I thought this was a guy that we could start that with, having been the first African American to serve on this Board and one with the state legislature as well but if y’all are interested we can go ahead and pursue this one for April and have additional ones come up as we find them and as people suggest. I just think it is something the Board needs to be involved in progressively moving forward.”

Chairman Hall asked if there were any more questions or comments.

Commissioner Jefferies moved, seconded by Commissioner McVey to move forward with the application for a historic road marker for Mr. Wilson Carey. The motion carried unanimously.

RECESS

The Board took a brief recess.

EMPLOYEE HEALTH & WELLNESS CLINIC POLICY/

WORKSITE WELLNESS OPPORTUNITY

Chairman Hall stated to put this agenda item on for the next meeting.

COUNTY MANAGER’S UPDATES

Codification Update

Mr. Miller stated the clerk, the county attorney and himself had a conference call with Municode. He thought the work that Municode has done on the codification so far looked very well. Municode identified a lot of things that need to be tweaked to bring the county ordinances into code with state statutes. The county attorney and county manager were given a couple of tasks to complete and given back to Municode by the end of the month. Mr. Miller hopes to have the Board something to review shortly on the ordinance codification.

ANNOUNCEMENTS AND UPCOMING EVENTS

A. Joint Meeting with Town of Yanceyville and Town of Milton – Thursday, February

 8, 2018 @ 6:00 p.m. – Thomas Day Tavern, Milton, NC.

The clerk informed the Board that the Joint meeting with the Town of Milton and Town of Yanceyville has been changed from Thursday, February 9, 2018 to Thursday, March 15, 2018.

Chairman Hall responded that the Board will accept that change.

Commissioner S. Carter stated “Two small things, very small. I received a message earlier this afternoon from Stokes Reagan with the Caswell County Local Foods Council. She wanted to mention to the Board if we would be interested in setting up a Meet and Greet at one of their Farmer’s Markets this year for the Commissioners to be out and about in public and help encourage their program.” Chairman Hall responded that the Board would get back with her. Commissioner S. Carter continued “We’ll get back with her. And then the second thing I hope the Board would join me tonight in commemorating the life and service and the vision of Dr. Martin Luther King and one of his quotes I wanted to share with you and one I cherish pretty well ‘It’s always the right time to do the right thing.’”

Mr. Ferrell stated that the NCACC and the Association of County Attorneys is also taking a hard look at this opioid litigation that is going on and there is a conference call for county attorneys on this subject on Friday and Mr. Ferrell plans to participate in this and he will be prepared to provide the Board with more information as the lawsuits gain traction throughout the state.

Mr. Miller stated that he appreciated the work the Board did on the Animal Control Ordinance tonight and he added that he knows that this type of work is not easy but he appreciated the work and the guidance that the Board did on this tonight.

CLOSED SESSION

Commissioner Owen moved, seconded by Commissioner Travis to go into Closed Session to prevent the disclosure of information that is privileged or confidential (NCGS 143-318.11(a)(1)) and to preserve attorney/client privilege (NCGS 143-318.11(a)(3)). The motion carried unanimously.

REGULAR SESSION

Commissioner Owen moved, seconded by Commissioner Travis to resume the regular meeting. The motion carried unanimously.

Chairman Hall stated that the Opioid Crisis Resolution will be put back on the next agenda for a vote if the Board does not want to vote on it tonight. Commissioner Travis responded that the Board needed more information before voting. Commissioner S. Carter stated “I agree with that.”

ADJOURNMENT

At 9:57 p.m. Commissioner Travis moved, seconded by Commissioner Owen to adjourn.

Chairman Hall stated that before the meeting is adjourned he had some confidential information for the Commissioners to receive before they leave.

Upon a vote on the motion, the motion carried unanimously.

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Paula P. Seamster Nathaniel Hall

Clerk to the Board Chairman

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