

## **NORTH CAROLINA**

### **WAYNE COUNTY**

The Wayne County Board of Commissioners met in regular session on Tuesday, January 15, 2008 at 9:00 a.m. in the Commissioners Meeting Room in the Wayne County Courthouse Annex, Goldsboro, North Carolina.

Members present: Roland M. Gray, Chairman; Atlas Price, Jr., Vice-Chairman; Wilbur E. Anderson; John M. Bell; C. Munroe Best, Jr.; J. D. Evans and Efton M. Sager.

Members absent: None.

#### **Work Session**

During the scheduled briefing and prior to the regularly scheduled meeting, the Board of Commissioners held a work session to discuss the items of business on the agenda.

#### **Invocation**

Commissioner J. D. Evans gave the invocation.

#### **Pledge of Allegiance**

Commissioner Wilbur E. Anderson led the Board of Commissioners in the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America.

#### **Approval of Minutes**

Upon motion of Commissioner John M. Bell, the Board of Commissioners unanimously approved the minutes of the regular session of the Board of Commissioners on December 18, 2007.

#### **Discussion/Adjustment of the Agenda**

Chairman Roland M. Gray adjusted the agenda by adding Sheriff's Office and Solid Waste budget amendments, amending the Emergency Medical Services Fee Schedule in the 2007-08 County of Wayne Budget Ordinance and transfer Board of Health stipend to the Health Department Abstinence Program to the Consent Agenda; and by adding 2008 Wayne NET casualty insurance to New Business.

#### **Special Recognition**

The Board of Commissioners welcomed Wayne County Board of Elections Director Vickie Reed, who began work on January 1, 2008.

The Board of Commissioners recognized Blair Tyndall, Director of Emergency Medical Services and Safety, for completing all requirements for certification as an Occupational Health and Safety Technologist. This highly respected certification covers basic and applied sciences, legal and regulatory matters, control concepts, investigation, survey and inspection techniques, data computation and record keeping, education, training and instruction. Only 1,286 individuals nationwide and 32 in North Carolina hold this title.

#### **Upcoming Appointments**

The Appointment Committee announced the following persons are under consideration for appointment or reappointment:

- Eastern Carolina Workforce Development Board – Fletcher Bizzell
- Wayne County Animal Control Advisory Committee – Jean P. Hollowell
- Mount Olive Planning Board – Carol J. Weeks
- Wayne County Planning Board – Christopher R. Cox
- Neuse River Regional Aging Advisory Committee – Yvonne Corbett McLamb

### **Appointment – Wayne County Juvenile Crime Prevention Council**

Upon motion of Commissioner Wilbur E. Anderson, the Board of Commissioners unanimously appointed April Pfeiffer to fill the unexpired term of Blake Bunn on the Wayne County Juvenile Crime Prevention Council. Miss Pfeiffer's term will expire on December 31, 2009.

### **Board of Commissioners' Comments**

Chairman Roland M. Gray stated the Wayne County Humane Society would hold a fund raiser telethon on January 26, 2008 from 7:00-10:00 p.m. on PACC-10TV for the new Wayne County animal adoption and education center.

Commissioner J. D. Evans stated the Wayne County Partnership for Children has a good start for 2008. The organization is willing to provide an informational session for the Board of Commissioners.

### **Public Hearing – Proposed Initiatives for AT&T Call Center**

At 9:15 a.m., the Board of Commissioners held a public hearing to receive public comments on proposed initiatives for the AT&T call center. Wayne County proposes to give a cash grant of \$75,000 upon the signing of a performance agreement for the establishment and maintenance of 350 jobs plus additional grants of up a total of \$25,000 over a three year period based on ad valorem taxes paid by AT&T or its affiliate in the fiscal years beginning July 1, 2008, July 1, 2009 and July 1, 2010.

Ray Smith spoke against the proposed initiatives for the AT&T call center.

Willie Ray Starling spoke against the proposed initiatives for the AT&T call center.

Joanna Thompson spoke in favor of the proposed initiatives for the AT&T call center.

At 9:22 a.m., Chairman Roland M. Gray adjourned the public hearing

### **Initiatives for AT&T Call Center**

Commissioner Wilbur E. Anderson stated the county is not giving money away to AT&T. The Board of Commissioners wants jobs in order for the youth to remain in the county. AT&T will be required to guarantee 350 jobs for at least five years. The county must look beyond the immediate future and increase its tax base by growing the economy.

County Manager W. Lee Smith, III stated the Board of Commissioners carefully determines its investment return on economic development projects. The AT&T call center jobs were jobs, which were off shore and are now coming back. The AT&T employees will be receiving benefits.

Commissioner J. D. Evans thanked the Wayne County Development Alliance for working to get the AT&T call center.

Commissioner Efton M. Sager stated it would be wonderful if governmental entities did not have to offer economic development incentives. This project is a win-win situation.

Upon motion of Commissioner John M. Bell, the Board of Commissioners unanimously approved and authorized a cash grant of \$75,000 upon the signing of a performance agreement for the establishment and maintenance of 350 jobs plus additional grants of up a total of \$25,000 over a three year period based on ad valorem taxes paid by AT&T or its affiliate in the fiscal years beginning July 1, 2008, July 1, 2009 and July 1, 2010.

## **Local Sales Tax Option Referendum**

The 2007 State Appropriations Act (HB 1473) provides counties with the authority to levy either a land transfer tax (up to 0.4 percent) or a local sales tax (0.25 percent), following approval in a non-binding advisory referendum. Wayne County is subject to Section 5 of the Voting Rights Act of 1965 and will need to submit its request for pre-clearance to the U.S. Attorney General. All counties must contact their local board of elections and the State Board of Elections in order to have the advisory referendum included on the ballot. A Board of County Commissioners is not obligated to levy a tax if the majority of those voting in a referendum on the sales tax vote support the levy. It is estimated Wayne County would receive \$2.4-2.5 million from an additional local one quarter cent sales tax.

Commissioner Wilbur E. Anderson stated the Board of Commissioners is not obligated to levy the tax, if approved by the voters. The quarter cent sales tax option was given to counties as part of Medicaid relief to help replace the half cent sales tax, which the state will withhold to pay its additional Medicaid expenses.

County Manager W. Lee Smith, III stated the Board of Commissioners believes property taxes are regressive taxes. A quarter cent local sales tax would be equivalent to 4-5 cents on the tax rate. A sales tax spreads the cost to everyone. The local option sales tax money can be used for any purpose.

Vice-Chairman Atlas Price, Jr. stated everyone pays a sales tax. A sales tax is spread more evenly than a property tax.

Upon motion of Commissioner C. Munroe Best, Jr., the Board of Commissioners unanimously authorized a quarter cent local option sales tax referendum be put on the May 6, 2008 ballot.

## **Continued Funding for Court Liaison Position**

Upon motion of Vice-Chairman Atlas Price, Jr., the Board of Commissioners unanimously continued funding the court liaison position through a temporary employment agency for the remainder of the 2007-2008 fiscal year budget with the court liaison position to be reconsidered during the 2008-2009 fiscal year budget process.

## **2008 Property and Liability Insurance Renewals**

The County of Wayne received property and casualty insurance renewal proposals and Emergency Medical Services insurance for the February 1, 2008-February 1, 2009 coverage period, attached hereto as Attachment A.

Upon motion of Vice-Chairman Atlas Price, Jr., the Board of Commissioners unanimously renewed the County of Wayne's main property and casualty insurance, excluding Emergency Medical Services, Office of Emergency Services and Wayne NET, with BB&T/Argonaut in the amount of \$455,325 for the February 1, 2008-February 1, 2009 coverage period and awarded Emergency Medical Services, Office of Emergency Services and Wayne NET coverage to CODE 3 in the amount of \$72,660 for the February 1, 2008-January 31, 2009 coverage period.

## **Consent Agenda**

Upon motion of Commissioner J. D. Evans, the Board of Commissioners unanimously approved and authorized the following items under the consent agenda:

1. Petition for addition to the state maintenance system for Towbridge Lane, Lauren Place and East Jamestown Street in North Plantation Subdivision, Stoney Creek Township, attached hereto as Attachment B
2. El-Roy Volunteer Firefighters, Inc. tax exempt loan certificate, attached hereto as Attachment C

3. 2007 property tax exemptions
  - a. Trustees Barnes Chapel Missionary Baptist Church
  - b. Goldsboro Worship Center Church of God, Inc.
  - c. El Bethel Assembly, Inc.
  - d. Philadelphia Community Church
  - e. St. James Church of Christ
  - f. Trustees Bible Faith MB Church
  - g. St. Luke United Methodist Church
  - h. Highest Praise Tabernacle
  - i. Mt. Olive Free Will Baptist
  - j. Trustees Eureka Christian Church
4. Budget amendments
  - a. Wayne County Public Library
  - b. Board of Elections
  - c. Sheriff's Office
  - d. Emergency Medical Services
  - e. Sheriff's Office
  - f. Day Reporting Center
  - g. Sheriff's Office
  - h. Sheriff's Office
  - i. Solid Waste
5. Amend the Emergency Medical Services Fee Schedule of the 2007-2008 County of Wayne Budget Ordinance, attached hereto as Attachment D
6. Transfer Wayne County Board of Health stipends to Wayne County Health Department Abstinence Program

### **Public Comments**

Willie Ray Starling questioned the \$20 million, which the county has in reserves. The Mount Olive shell building is empty. It is difficult for people on fixed incomes to pay taxes. The county needs to conserve money.

### **Board of Commissioners Comments**

Commissioner John M. Bell commended the Wayne County Emergency Medical Services personnel for saving his four-year old granddaughter, who was choking. The personnel were very professional.

In response to Commissioner John M. Bell's question, County Manager W. Lee Smith, III stated governmental entities are required by law to have reserves. Wayne County has established capital reserves in order to pay cash for projects. Wayne County will be paying for future capital needs for schools, library, detention center, Social Services and Health.

Commissioner Wilbur E. Anderson stated we must be conservative. Wayne County is growing and income is needed for the county to grow.

Commissioner Efton M. Sager stated Wayne County has major projects ahead, for which the county must have capital. The sales tax is a fair tax. He appreciated the Board of Commissioners for not supporting a land transfer tax.

Chairman Roland M. Gray stated Emergency Medical Services works well with the fire departments. The Wayne County Firemen's Association will hold its annual banquet tonight at 7:00 p.m. at Lane Tree Country Club.

### **Board of Commissioners Retreat Topics**

County Manager W. Lee Smith, III stated the Board of Commissioners will hold its annual retreat on February 13, 2008 at 9:30 a.m. at Goldsboro Country Club. The staff plans to discuss capital needs, facilities and financing. Other topics include utilities and water resources. He requested the Board of Commissioners inform him of any other topics it would like to discuss.

## **Closed Session**

At 9:52 a.m., upon motion of Vice-Chairman Atlas Price, Jr., the Board of Commissioners unanimously declared itself in closed session to consult with an attorney employed or retained by the public body in order to preserve the attorney-client privilege between the attorney and the public body, which privilege is hereby acknowledged.

At 10:25 a.m., upon motion of Commissioner J. D. Evans, the Board of Commissioners unanimously declared itself in regular session.

## **Board of Commissioners' Information**

The Board of Commissioners was advised of the following personnel changes:

1. Board of Elections  
Name of Employee – Vickie Reed  
Date of Employment – January 1, 2008  
Classification – Board of Elections Director, Full-time  
Salary – \$45,473 per year
2. Social Services  
Name of Employee – Deborah A. Bryant  
Date of Employment – January 1, 2008  
Classification – Office Assistant III, Full-time  
Salary – \$19,746 per year
3. Social Services  
Name of Employee – Janet Moore  
Date of Employment – January 7, 2008  
Classification – Income Maintenance Caseworker II, Full-time  
Salary – \$27,123 per year