

THE REGULAR SESSION OF THE BOARD OF COMMISSION
OF
UNICOI COUNTY, TENNESSEE
MARCH 24, 2014

BE IT REMEMBERED that the Unicoi County Board of Commissioners met in Regular Session at the Unicoi County Court House on Monday, March 24, 2014, at 6:00 p.m. Present and Presiding, the Honorable Greg Lynch, County Mayor, the Honorable Mitzi Bowen, County Clerk, Doug Shults, County Attorney, and the following Commissioners:

ROLL CALL: Esq. Dwight Bennett "Yes", Esq. Marie Rice, "Yes", Esq. Kenneth Garland, "Yes", Esq. Mickey Hatcher, absent, Esq. Bill Hensley, "Yes", Esq. James Howell, "Yes", Esq. Loren Thomas, "Yes", Esq. Gene Wilson, absent, Esq. Sue Jean Wilson, absent.

6- Present

3- Absent

Esq. Loren Thomas opened the meeting with Prayer and the Pledge to the Flag was led by Esq. Bill Hensley.

Agenda Item #4
Approve Minutes

Motion made by Esq. Bill Hensley, said motion seconded by Esq. James Howell to approve the minutes of February 24, 2014 (Regular Session).

6-Aye

0-No

3-Absent (Esq. Mickey Hatcher, Esq. Gene Wilson, Esq. Sue Jean Wilson)

Motion approved. (Copy in file)

Agenda Item #5
Recognize Visitors and Citizens

Mr. Stephen Wilson addressed the commission stating he received a letter in the mail this month. He is coming before the commission to ask questions some citizens have. The letter (email) was sent to the Mayor's office from Esq. Loren Thomas asking for list of Sheriff's Department employees who have accumulated comp time since January 1, 2011 and several other questions. This list included Chief Deputy Frank Rogers name. Mr. Wilson stated this appears to be a confirmation that Mr. Rogers is an hourly employee. Mr. Wilson stated he would like to know how you can prove that Chief Deputy Frank Rogers is an hourly employee. Mr. Wilson also stated that some other citizens and former county employees advised Mr. Wilson that Esq. Loren Thomas had advised them to sue the county. Mr. Wilson asked Esq. Loren Thomas to explain this. Esq. Loren Thomas stated first of all the email was sent to Mayor Lynch, so how did you obtain a copy? Mr. Wilson responded anonymously. Esq. Loren Thomas stated to address why I asked those questions; the comp time that some officers gave up, I was interested in if that is actually allowed by state law. Esq. Loren Thomas asked if he typed that name in the email. Mr. Wilson stated that it was attached with the officer's name that they sent you back. Esq. Loren Thomas stated they didn't send anything back, I was advised to go by the Sheriff's Department. Esq. Loren Thomas asked, Mayor did you not advise me that you would not have those letters. County Mayor Greg Lynch responded I'm not sure what I advised you. Mr. Wilson continued asking Esq. Loren Thomas if the Sheriff's Department has bought you a bullet proof vest. Esq. Loren Thomas stated yes, I volunteer as a special deputy. Mr. Wilson asked if Esq. Loren Thomas felt that this is a direct conflict of interest.

Sheriff Mike Hensley stated he would like to address this matter; stating Mr. Thomas is a good person and a good citizen. Mr. Thomas has taken great interest in the budget of Unicoi County; he has tried to save the county money. Esq. Loren Thomas stated I'm not compensated what so ever, all I do is volunteer, is it a direct conflict- no sir. Esq. Dwight Bennett stated comp time has been an issue; we've addressed it with the Sheriff and gave him until next year to get those numbers down. Esq. Bill Hensley asked if any employee has asked us to pay back overtime or comp time. Esq. Marie Rice responded no. Esq. Bill Hensley asked Sheriff Hensley (regarding Chief Deputy Frank Rogers) if it is up to him to determine salary and hourly employees. Sheriff Hensley stated that all county employees are hourly employees. Mr. Wilson stated that is my question, is he hourly or salary. County Mayor Greg Lynch stated the audit paperwork has been sent to the Comptroller Office in Nashville, and if there is a problem it should come back as an audit find. That's what the Comptroller Office and audit will determine. Mr. Wilson asked, so it's up to them to determine that. Lynch stated no, he is hourly now and it is up to them to determine when he was taken to hourly.

Ms. Rossanna Aldridge addressed the commission stating the Chief Deputies position, to my understanding, has always been a salary position in Unicoi County. Where is the documentation to show that was taken to an hourly position. And how is it that this board of commission doesn't know with the county employees who is considered exempt and non-exempt. Esq. Dwight Bennett responded we've been told that's not really our responsibility, they handle their employees. All we control is the line items, the money. Ms. Aldridge stated someone, the Mayor or the Sheriff, should have documentation to show he was actually taken from exempt to an hourly status. Sheriff Hensley stated that when I took over the County Sheriff signed the payroll. The auditor came in, now I have to sign each individual time sheet, including Chief Deputy. My Chief Deputy does more than sit behind a desk, he wears many hats. Ms. Aldridge stated the bottom line is where the documentation is showing he was reduced to an hourly employee. Esq. Bill Hensley stated he thinks it should be in the payroll department. Ms. Aldridge stated thank you very much, where is it in the payroll department that shows what county employees are exempt and what county employees are hourly.

Agenda Item #6

Recognize Diana Brady- Woman of the Year (Marie Rice)

Motion made by Esq. Dwight Bennett, said motion seconded by Esq. Bill Hensley to approve the Resolution recognizing Ms. Diana Brady as Woman of the Year. Ms. Brady addressed the commission stating thank you very much Marie, I appreciate all your work. I thank you all.

6-Yes

0-No

3-Absent (Esq. Mickey Hatcher, Esq. Gene Wilson, Esq. Sue Jean Wilson)

Motion approved. (Copy in file)

Agenda Item # 7

Recognize Nathan Farnor- Receiving the Roan Scholarship (Sue Jean Wilson/Marie Rice)

Motion made by Esq. James Howell, said motion seconded by Esq. Kenneth Garland to approve the Resolution recognizing Mr. Nathan Farnor for receiving the Roan Scholarship. Mr. Nathan Farnor addressed the commission thanking everyone. Mr. Farnor stated he is honored to be Unicoi County's first Roan Scholar, and proud to say I'm from Unicoi County. Mr. Farnor also thanked all the teachers, School Superintendent Denise Brown and everyone who works at the school system.

6-Yes

0-No

3-Absent (Esq. Mickey Hatcher, Esq. Gene Wilson, Esq. Sue Jean Wilson)

Motion approved. (Copy in file)

Agenda Item #8

Recognize Reneau Dubberly in Regards to Bike Race on Temple Hill Road (Mayor Greg Lynch)

Motion made by Esq. Loren Thomas, said motion seconded by Esq. Dwight Bennett to approve the Bike Race on Temple Hill Road. Mr. Reneau Dubberly addressed the commission asking for permission to have the bicycle race again using the same format that we've done the last few years. One particular difficulty we've resolved for this year, Mr. Jack Strickland has given us permission to use his lot for parking. Mr. Dubberly continued stating they have a new sponsor, Tupelo Honey, so your event will be titled Tupelo Honey time trial. The race will be on Saturday June 7, 2014. The road race will start around 9:30-10:30. The time trial is on Temple Hill Rd. and starts at 5:00pm, so the road will have limited access from 4:30-7:30.

6-Yes

0-No

3-Absent (Esq. Mickey Hatcher, Esq. Gene Wilson, Esq. Sue Jean Wilson)

Motion approved. (Copy in file)

Agenda Item #9

Recognize Carl Overton with Telecom Audit Group

Motion made by Esq. James Howell, said motion seconded by Esq. Dwight Bennett to table this agenda item. Mr. Carl Overton addressed the commission stating he is the senior auditor with Telecom Audit Group, based out of Alabama. Mr. Overton stated what we do is audit phone bills. At no time does the county lose control over the auditor. Mr. Overton continued the audit is done in two phases: get the refunds/credits and save money/cut cost. This is a no risk guarantee. Esq. Bill Hensley asked if a contract is signed can it be broke. Mr. Overton stated it is an eighteen month agreement. We've never had that come up in my twenty-four years, but if you wanted to do that for whatever reason we usually walk away.

Esq. Marie Rice addressed the commission thanking Mrs. Denise Brown and the school system for their generous donation to the Sheriff's Department. Esq. Marie Rice continued she also wanted to thank Mr. Kenneth Garland for coming up with the idea to make use of the desks and equipment at the Love Chapel School that is no longer being used or needed. This will result in thousands of dollars in savings for the county. Esq. Marie Rice stated she also wanted to thank Barbara Scalf, the Sheriff's Department staff, the inmates, as well as the school system employees for all of their hard work loading and moving all of this equipment. This is a perfect example of the good things we can accomplish when we work together in Unicoi County.

Agenda Item #10

Recognize School Director Denise Brown and Bruce Tolley with the Board of Education in regards to Apple Lease Agreement

Motion made by Esq. Kenneth Garland, said motion seconded by Esq. James Howell to approve the Apple Lease Agreement with the Unicoi County Board of Education. Mrs. Denise Brown stated we are not here to ask for anything. Mrs. Brown stated this year they had a pilot program with two of their fifth grade classes at the Intermediate School; we provide them with iPads. We've had great success. We are seeing with those two classes, and the same teachers teach two other classes, we compared Benchmark test and we are seeing a 15% increase with the students with iPads. Apple will lease the Ipads for three year basis, we have to have County Commission approval because we are leasing, and again we are not asking for money. There will be a savings of money compared to text books. Mrs. Brown continued, stating we are going to purchase 1,190 devices.

Through this all students in 4th and 5th grades (Intermediate School), all students in 6th to 8th grades (Middle School) will have iPads. Then we are taking 200 and will start with the Social Studies department in the High School. Over time we will continue adding iPads. Mr. Bruce Tolley addressed the commission stating that the system that will be used will be able to lock each iPad down so that each device can be tracked, the apps can be tracked, and will also be able to block certain sites such a social media. Mr. Tolley stated that a military grade case will be purchased for the iPads as well. They are a very well made case and also have a stand for the iPads. All devices will have a pin lockdown system so that students will not be able to uninstall any of the security measures. Esq. Dwight Bennett asked if the students would pay a deposit or what would happen if the device isn't returned. Mrs. Brown stated they will go through the same process as they do for the text books; parents have to sign for the students to use the iPads. Esq. Marie Rice asked what happens if they are damaged. Mrs. Brown responded that there is a warranty that goes with the device to cover it; also the tech guys can replace a screen. Esq. Loren Thomas asked when the devices are four or five years old, how will you replace them. Mrs. Brown stated that with Apple's contract you can turn around and trade them back in at their value, so we can trade them in and get one for half (the total cost) or less. Esq. Dwight Bennett asked if it would be expanded to all of the classes. Mrs. Brown answered at this time we are not going to give them to K-3; we think that hand writing and some of the basic skills are still very important. They will be using them in interactive learning.

6-Yes

0-No

3-Absent (Esq. Mickey Hatcher, Esq. Gene Wilson, Esq. Sue Jean Wilson)

Motion approved. (Copy in file)

Agenda Item #11

Recognize Jason Monday with AirMedCare (WINGS)

Mr. Jason Monday addressed the commission regarding AirMedCare (Wings) Air Rescue Membership Program for Unicoi County. Mr. Monday handed out information to the commission and explained the cost to operate Wings. Mr. Monday continued by making a proposal to cover Unicoi County, every resident would be covered under the program. The county would pay \$99,000.00 annually, and then individuals could upgrade their benefits for an additional \$35.00 a year.

Agenda Item #12

Reconsider Resolution Establishing Audit Committee (Mayor Greg Lynch)

Motion made by Esq. Dwight Bennett, said motion seconded by Esq. James Howell to table this agenda item. Esq. Loren Thomas stated that the majority of us voted to have that taken out. County Mayor Greg Lynch stated the Comptroller's Office recommended that we keep section 3; item #3.

4-Yes

2-No (Esq. Kenneth Garland, Esq. Loren Thomas)

3-Absent (Esq. Mickey Hatcher, Esq. Gene Wilson, Esq. Sue Jean Wilson)

Motion fails.

Motion made by Esq. Kenneth Garland, said motion seconded by Esq. Dwight Bennett to put section 3; item #3 back in to the Resolution to Establish an Audit Committee.

ROLL CALL: Esq. Marie Rice, "Yes", Esq. Mickey Hatcher, absent, Esq. Bill Hensley, "Yes", Esq. James Howell, "Yes", Esq. Dwight Bennett, "Yes", Esq. Kenneth Garland, "Yes", Esq. Gene Wilson, absent, Esq. Loren Thomas, "No", Esq. Sue Jean Wilson, absent.

5-Yes

1-No (Esq. Loren Thomas)

3-Absent (Esq. Mickey Hatcher, Esq. Gene Wilson, Esq. Sue Jean Wilson)

Motion approved. (Copy in file)

Agenda Item #13

Approve Unicoi County Water Utility District Commission Election for 2014 (Mayor Greg Lynch)

Motion made by Esq. Kenneth Garland, said motion seconded by Esq. Dwight Bennett to approve Unicoi County Water Utility District Commission Election for 2014. This election was to fill the expired term of Mr. Jerry Byrd. Mr. Jerry Byrd was re-elected for the (4) year term.

6-Yes

0-No

3-Absent (Esq. Mickey Hatcher, Esq. Gene Wilson, Esq. Sue Jean Wilson)

Motion approved.

Agenda Item #14

Budget Amendments

Motion made by Esq. Bill Hensley, said motion seconded by Esq. Loren Thomas to approve Budget Amendments: Chancery Court (\$406.50), Health Department (\$82,180.00), Sheriff's Department (\$6,667.72), and Rabies and Animal Control (\$100.00).

6-Yes

0-No

3-Absent (Esq. Mickey Hatcher, Esq. Gene Wilson, Esq. Sue Jean Wilson)

Motion approved. (Copy in file)

Agenda Item #15

Elect Notaries

Motion made by Esq. Kenneth Garland, said motion seconded by Esq. James Howell to approve Patricia Ann Gentry (Unicoi County Nursing Home), Tracey Lynn Harris (UCMH), Matthew Rice (Erwin Utilities), Brent S. Pilon (Erwin Utilities). Esq. Loren Thomas asked if these are all renewals. County Clerk Mitzi Bowen stated that no, both Matthew Rice and Brent S. Pilon are new.

6-Yes

0-No

3-Absent (Esq. Mickey Hatcher, Esq. Gene Wilson, Esq. Sue Jean Wilson)

Motion approved. (Copy in file)

Agenda Item #16

Motion for adjournment

Motion made by Esq. Bill Hensley, said motion seconded by Esq. James Howell to adjourn the meeting of March 24, 2014.

GREG LYNCH, COUNTY MAYOR

MITZI BOWEN, COUNTY CLERK

MARIE RICE, CHAIRMAN

