

THE SPECIAL CALL SESSION OF THE BOARD OF COMMISSION
OF
UNICOI COUNTY, TENNESSEE
AUGUST 6, 2013

BE IT REMEMBERED that the Unicoi County Board of Commissioners met in Special Call Session at the Unicoi County Court House on Tuesday, August 6, 2013 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. Kenneth Garland, "Yes", Esq. Mickey Hatcher, "Yes", Esq. Bill Hensley, "Yes", Esq. James Howell, "Yes", Esq. Loren Thomas, "Yes", Esq. Gene Wilson, "Yes", Esq. Sue Jean Wilson, "Yes".

8- Present

0- Absent

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

Agenda Item #4

Recognize Visitors and Citizens

Mr. Robert Tipton addressed the commission on behalf of the Flag Pond community. Mr. Tipton stated the people in that area would have to spend in the neighborhood of \$10.00 worth of gas to come get gas and spend \$5.00 of it going back home. Mr. Tipton stated they can't buy produce up there. Mr. Tipton asked why something isn't done to get some kind of store or try to get somebody to come in and put something like a Dollar Store in. Mr. Tipton continued stating what he can't understand is why aren't we ringing door bells, sending off information. Do you (the County Commission) having anything to do with that. Esq. Mickey Hatcher responded stating the truth of the matter is that those kinds of issues are handled through the Department of our Urban Development. Mr. Tipton stated what he is concerned about isn't it an issue with all of us. Esq. Mickey Hatcher stated yes, I know. Esq. Mickey Hatcher continued stating that has been addressed, and the mayor is working on some things along those lines. Mr. Tipton stated what I'm saying is this; the home interior and I guess you would call it the live in, the people come in from out of state and live in your home, it's not working. Mr. Tipton continued stating he doesn't understand why doorbells aren't being rung to get people out. Just like I told Mr. Garland, sitting up there, why don't you let them borrow your Cadillac to drive back and forth up those gravel roads and see how you feel about it. Mr. Tipton stated it's an issue. What I can't understand is people, citizens of this county can not work together and do something about that. We invest in different things don't we, why don't we invest it up in there. That's brothers and sisters right up there, why can't we do that. Mr. Tipton continued stating he didn't know if the commission has chose, but he believes Marie (Rice) would do a fine job. Esq. Mickey Hatcher stated he could not speak to that tonight, it is on the agenda. Mr. Tipton responded okay, but that's my opinion.

Agenda Item #5

Approve Resolution authorizing interfund loan notes

Motion made by Esq. Sue Jean Wilson, said motion seconded by Esq. James Howell to approve Resolution authorizing Inter-fund Loan Notes. Esq. Mickey Hatcher asked the County Mayor, Greg Lynch if he wanted to speak on the issue. Mayor Lynch stated he

would pass it on to his book keeper. Mrs. Phyllis Bennett addressed the commission stating this is just like where we usually do Resolution's to borrow from Debt Service. We actually have to fill in the amount now, an amount the state will approve, to the General Fund from Debt Service as a retroactive. Esq. Mickey Hatcher stated that's Item #6, that's the next item. Esq. Mickey Hatcher continued the first one here, a motion has been made and seconded; are there further questions from any of the commissioners associated with Item #5.

8-Yes

0-No

Motion approved. (Copy in file)

Agenda Item #6

Approve Resolution authorizing (retroactive) interfund loan notes

Motion made by Esq. Bill Hensley, said motion seconded by Esq. James Howell to approve Resolution authorizing (retroactive) Inter-fund Loan Notes. Esq. Mickey Hatcher stated that she (Mrs. Bennett) has already spoken to that.

8-Yes

0-No

Motion approved. (Copy in file)

Agenda Item #7

Approve proposal to build metal building approx. 50' x 60', with access doors for Sheriff's garage storage and Ambulances at the Jail Annex located on Jackson Love Hwy. allowing County to advertise and accept bids

Motion made by Esq. Sue Jean Wilson, said motion seconded by Esq. Bill Hensley to approve proposal to build metal building approximately 50' x 60', with access doors for Sheriff's garage, storage and Ambulances at the Jail Annex located on Jackson Love Highway, allowing County to advertise and accept bids. Esq. Gene Wilson asked where's this money going to come from to pay for this, I think this should be tabled until we get a budget set and see what we've got. Esq. Dwight Bennett asked, this would actually be on next years, right. County Mayor, Greg Lynch stated some of it would be on next years. Esq. Loren Thomas stated so that everyone knows what we are doing, we are basically going to tear the building down that's over here next to the Sheriff's office and build a new building out here at the Sheriff's Department Annex for about \$250,000.00 or so, is that correct. County Mayor, Greg Lynch stated it is roughly \$150,000.00- \$160,000.00. Esq. Loren Thomas continued, and then we will turn right around and rebuild another one to house the records. Mayor Lynch stated the records building would come almost a year later. Right now, when we go forth with the 911, we are going to take out the Sheriff's space where they store lawn mowers and things in as well. Mayor Lynch continued stating we are also taking the bays where the ambulances normally stay, where they keep them during cold weather to keep them from being exposed to the elements. Esq. Bill Hensley asked the County Mayor, the building that we're going to tear down; I don't think I ever recall it coming before the commission. Did we vote to tear it down, did we vote to give it to someone? Mayor Lynch asked are you talking about the block building. Esq. Bill Hensley stated yes. Mayor Lynch responded stating no we've not, that's not been approved or anything. Esq. Loren Thomas asked what is going in the space where the ambulances are housed. Mayor Lynch stated 911 area; in the back area will be there Sheriff's Department Investigation Unit. Esq. Sue Jean Wilson asked where the ambulances are suppose to be stored in the winter time with all the medication that needs to be kept at a certain temperature, if you are moving them out to make room for 911 or whatever. Mayor Lynch stated we're thinking that garage will be built first. Esq. Bill Hensley stated we are talking about two or three months then, is that correct. Mayor Lynch responded right, they would just have to make due. Sometimes they will leave their ambulances running. Esq. Kenneth Garland asked why we are building another building to put the ambulances in, when did we take over the ambulance service. Esq. Dwight Bennett stated it is in the agreement; it was a verbal agreement, between the commission and them. Esq. Kenneth Garland stated well I was here but I didn't go along

with a verbal agreement, what I'm talking about is the contract. Esq. Kenneth Garland continued, we furnish living spaces for them, didn't say a thing about building garages to put their ambulance in. We give them \$180,000.00 a year in taxpayer's money, and here you want to build them a building, and give them living space, and give them 911, what else do you want to give them. Esq. Kenneth Garland continued stating the taxpayer is getting tired of this every year raising taxes for stuff we're not suppose to be doing. Esq. Gene Wilson stated he thinks that is high to pay for a metal building. Sheriff Mike Hensley asked to address the County Commission on the subject. Sheriff Hensley stated we do all this work for the citizens of Unicoi County, we go out and do maintenance to the graveyards and churches, we take care of Little League, and county buildings. We do not, since I became Sheriff, go on private property. Sheriff Hensley continued stating his department does have a large amount of equipment including lawn mowers, weed eaters, and chainsaws, we have all kinds of equipment. We absolutely have to have a building to store it in. The current building we are storing all this stuff in is going to be taken up by 911 and our offices. Unfortunately we had to move, it was something we had to do, we had no choice. Sheriff Hensley stated he could sell all the lawn mowers and the weed eaters and I can cut the services to Unicoi County or I'm going to have to have a place to store this equipment, which saves the county money by doing this. Esq. Kenneth Garland asked what about the building out here (the block building in the Courthouse parking lot). Sheriff Mike Hensley responded the building out there, Mr. Garland; I'm told is going to be torn down. Esq. Kenneth Garland asked who said we were going to tear it down; we don't know anything about that. Sheriff Hensley stated the building we are currently using out there, we do all of our mechanic work, and I can show you facts and figures, we have saved the county thousands of dollars on labor by doing our own work on our cruisers. We absolutely have to have a place to do that; if we tear the building down we won't have a place to do that. Sheriff Hensley continued stating he also has records stored out there. That building out there is leaking and is in bad shape. It will cost a lot just to put a roof on and fix it if you want to go that route. But I absolutely have to have a place to put all this equipment that I am talking about and work on the vehicles. Sheriff Hensley continued saying the main cost is the labor, it's thousands of dollars that we are saving on labor. We've got cruisers going 24 hours a day, some of these vehicles are getting a lot of miles on them, we have our own mechanic, and I can show anyone on paper how much we save. Esq. Kenneth Garland stated he understands that and you have a building. I'm the chairman of buildings and grounds; nobody's ever come and asked me about tearing a building down. The County Commission has to go through this before it's ever tore down. Sheriff Mike Hensley stated that when it was brought to his attention he told the County Mayor we probably need to run this by the buildings and grounds committee. Esq. Kenneth Garland responded nothing was ever run by us, not as I remember. I understand you have to have a place but look at the situation. Since this last eight years, it's been taxes on the taxpayer every year. I've seen a lot of things that we don't need to do right now to raise taxes. Esq. Kenneth Garland continued, some people like to give away taxpayers money, I don't. Esq. Sue Jean Wilson calls for question.

2-Yes

5-No (Esq. Sue Jean Wilson, Esq. Mickey Hatcher, Esq. Loren Thomas, Esq. Kenneth Garland, Esq. Gene Wilson)

1-Abstain (Esq. James Howell)

Motion failed.

Esq. Mickey Hatcher suggested that this item be taken before the Buildings and Grounds Committee.

Agenda Item #8

To fill Unicoi County Commissioner vacant seat in the 1st District of Unicoi County, Tennessee

Motion made by Esq. Loren Thomas, said motion seconded by Esq. Bill Hensley to fill Unicoi County Commissioner vacant seat in the 1st District of Unicoi County, Tennessee. Esq. Mickey Hatcher asked County Attorney Doug Shults to explain the procedure the commission will be utilizing. Mr. Shults addressed the commission stating you will open the meeting to registered voters to submit a name to the County Legislative body for

consideration, those names are mainly submitted by a registered voter that is coming to the podium and placing somebody's name for nomination. However, when a name is submitted in to nomination by a registered voter, that name also has to be nominated by a member of the County Legislative body. So to hold the ballot to fill a vacancy of the 1st District, you have to be nominated by a County Commissioner. Now if a name is not in consideration and a County Commissioner wants to nominate somebody, they can do that. No seconds required. Mr. Shults continued if you nominate somebody and their not here in the audience, you have to have a written statement from that person that they are willing to serve. After the nominations cease, it's at your discretion as to how, whether to interview a nominee or they make statements. Then we will go through the voting process that this commission approved at the last meeting. Esq. Mickey Hatcher asked if everyone understands. Esq. Bill Hensley stated he has a little problem with our I-Pads, voting on this process. If we make an error or it comes up wrong, can we change it? County Clerk, Mitzi Bowen stated yes, she can reset it. Esq. Loren Thomas asked the County Clerk if she would be able to have it as multiple choice. Mrs. Bowen responded yes, I will have all the names and whoever is nominated will be voted on. Esq. Mickey Hatcher stated after the folks have been nominated they will have an opportunity to come to the microphone and speak shortly to the commissioners, and the commissioners can ask any questions that they desire from those candidates before we actually proceed with the vote. Esq. Dwight Bennett stated if we're going to ask questions we need to have them go outside, so if we want to ask the same question to all three of them, two of them won't hear the question before hand. Esq. Mickey Hatcher asked if anyone has an objection to that. Esq. Mickey Hatcher then asked if there was anything else for clarification before we vote on the issue at hand. Esq. Mickey Hatcher stated that the nomination procedure is now in effect.

Esq. Sue Jean Wilson stated she would like to nominate Mr. Stacy Wigand.

Esq. James Howell nominated Mrs. Marie Rice.

Esq. Bill Hensley nominated Mr. Michael Baker.

Esq. Mickey Hatcher stated we will go in the order in which they were nominated for questions, so at this time let's ask Mrs. Rice and Mr. Baker to excuse themselves for a few moments. Mr. Wigand we ask that you would approach the microphone and convince us that you are the one that is absolutely the right one for this seat.

Mr. Stacy Wigand addressed the commission stating he lives at 135 Holly Lane and has lived there for about two years now. I've been involved in this community basically my entire adult life. At 17 years old I started volunteering in the community with the fire department, First Response, Unaka Mountain Search and Rescue and several other agencies. Through that I learned leadership roles and helping people. Then I decided helping people is what I am best at and really enjoyed. At 22 years old I went into law enforcement. There you are faced with many decisions, you can't let your personal feelings get involved, you have to do what is right legally and ethically. Mr. Wigand continued stating it's not always easily done and I feel that is a value for being a commissioner. You all have an extremely hard job. It's hard to please everyone, a lot of times you have to make the decision that is best for the county. I believe I can make the tough decisions that are needed to better this community and lead us into the future. I have a strong desire to be a commissioner and think that I will bring variety and ideas and I am familiar with the working government as it is in this county. I think this county is struggling for industry. I think as commissioners we have to focus on the budget very closely. Mr. Wigand stated he is pretty ambitious and dedicated. I like to stay on task and see it to the end. That is a valuable trait for any commissioner. Mr. Wigand quoted Henry Ford and closed saying as commissioners you have to work together to succeed in our community.

Esq. Dwight Bennett asked what is your priority, the district you come from or the county as a whole. Mr. Wigand stated it should be the county as a whole.

Esq. Bill Hensley asked Mr. Wigand if he still works for the ambulance service, MedOne. Mr. Wigand stated yes, part time. Esq. Bill Hensley then asked Mr. Wigand how he could be objective when the contract comes up if he is a commissioner. Mr. Wigand stated he doesn't have a problem resigning from the ambulance service. Most of my job is administrative. Esq. Bill Hensley continued by asking if Mr. Wigand would be able to make it to the meetings. Mr. Wigand stated yes sir. Esq. Bill Hensley went on stating you were in law enforcement for a long time and you have friends in the Sheriff's Department and we are going over their budget. Could you give an unbiased judgment on that budget? Mr. Wigand responded absolutely.

Esq. Dwight Bennett how open Mr. Wigand would be in attending classes different classes, would you put a lot of emphasis into those classes because there is a lot of good information that comes out of them that helps. Mr. Wigand stated yes, I would love to. Any time you can better yourself with knowledge it's your best option.

Esq. Mickey Hatcher asked Mr. Wigand what his other occupation is. Mr. Wigand stated he has a full time position as a public safety officer for East Tennessee State University.

Mrs. Marie Rice addressed the commission stating she was raised in the Flag Pond Community. I want to preserve and enhance our quality of living. Mrs. Rice stated there are hundreds of citizens supporting her in her bid for county commission. When I was younger we had several businesses in the south end of Unicoi County from Erwin all the way up, even in Flag Pond. Now we have to drive twelve to twenty miles just to buy the staple items. Not only do we need a convince type business, but other businesses; not just for the Flag Pond residents but for the county in general, for the sales tax revenue, for the tax base, for everything. As a county commissioner I intend to do anything and everything I can do to bring some businesses in to that end of the county. Our county debt has increased over the last several years to almost twenty seven million. We have to figure out ways to spend the taxpayer's money more wisely, pay down on these debts so we don't have to continue to raise property taxes. Mr. Rice continued stating we need to work hard to find other revenues. I'm an excellent listener and a team player. I believe I can bring a unique and diverse perspective to an already well balanced group of commissioners. I will listen to the voices of the taxpayers. My grandfather was a county commissioner, a farmer and a businessman who dearly love the county and helping others. I would like the opportunity as a county commissioner to continue his legacy. Mrs. Rice asked the commissioners as they vote to fill the 1st District seat that they vote for the candidate: to be your choice, that is most qualified, who will listen to the taxpayers, who will serve all the taxpayers.

Esq. Dwight Bennett asked is the 1st District or is the County as a whole most important to you. Mrs. Rice stated she thinks we have to look at the county as a whole, but balance it out with the 1st District.

Esq. James Howell asked if something comes up for a vote that would benefit the 1st District but would not benefit the county as a whole how would you vote. Mrs. Rice responded that would be a hard decision to make. I think this group balances it out for the county, that's why we have people from each district. It would depend on the situation.

Esq. Bill Hensley asked Mrs. Rice how long have you lived where you live now. Mrs. Rice responded we've been back since 2004. Esq. Bill Hensley asked you had a farm in Washington County. Mr. Rice stated yes, we moved away for a few years.

Esq. Sue Jean Wilson stated the four years she spent teaching at Flag Pond Elementary school, I noticed then there was only one store in Flag Pond. That situation still exists. Mrs. Rice responded saying that is something she would like to deal with. Esq. Bill Hensley stated that there use to be several businesses and a restaurant up there, and believes if that road was widened it would help.

Esq. Mickey Hatcher stated that after the next candidate speaks he will address some of those issues.

Esq. Dwight Bennett asked Mrs. Rice if she would be open to attending classes that are available to commissioners. Mrs. Rice state yes, I think that would help me get up to speed.

Mr. Michael Baker addressed the commission stating he believes he is the best one for this county commission. In the time that I have lived in Unicoi County I have been extremely involved, through my church, school and civic clubs. I commend past and present leaders for their service. Now we are at a cross roads. We have the opportunity to bring bigger and better businesses into our community. The chance to have our unemployment numbers lowered the desire to have a booming local economy. But none of that can be accomplished without the proper leadership. Mr. Baker continued stating that he has always want to be a part of Unicoi County's Government, and that is why he believes his desire to work hard for the community will benefit all citizens of the county. If appointed Mr. Baker looks forward to learning a lot from the current commissioners.

Esq. Bill Hensley asked Mr. Baker how long he has lived in Unicoi County. Mr. Baker stated he relocated to the Flag Pond area in 2006 from south Mississippi. Esq. Bill Hensley asked how Mr. Baker would bring in business and make this a booming community. Mr. Baker responded that by sending out information to business and talking to other counties to see what they are doing to bring in businesses.

Esq. Gene Wilson asked how old are you Mr. Baker. Mr. Baker stated 20 years old.

Esq. Dwight Bennett asked Mr. Baker as a 1st District Representative, if the issue comes up, will you look at the county as a whole or vote mostly for District 1. Mr. Baker stated he believes even though we are from different districts, we should be looking to see what benefits all of Unicoi County, not just our district.

Esq. James Howell congratulated Mr. Baker. To get young people who want to do something like this. If you don't (get appointed), don't be discouraged, start coming to the meetings and learn all you can.

Esq. Mickey Hatcher stated we do work through the Economic Development Board and chair on this committee is part of the Economic Development Board for a designee. The Mayor is as well. We have an executive director, and I would like to ask her, Mr. Mayor to come to one of our meeting. Hopefully you all will come back and hear some things that are going on with that. Sometimes because it's not publicized, you don't get all the information. Some things we can't publicize. Some things are in the works. Esq. Mickey Hatcher continued stating another thing, a few years ago the Mayor, myself and one of the other commissioners, as well as Mrs. Hensley went to West Virginia to attend a training procedure, and we looked at sustaining tourism in our community. Because of efforts there and lobbying in Washington D.C., we were able to get an increase in funding there. Even though we lost part of our land in Flag Pond we are going to have a designation of a state park up there. With that, hopefully that corridor that goes down there to that, businesses can grow. That's another thing, can we sustain it once it gets there. We've seen businesses be here six months then pack up and gone. Esq. Mickey Hatcher continued I just wanted to make that statement. I don't want you all to think we are ignoring anything that is going on. We are working hard to try and make it better for everybody here.

Esq. Bill Hensley addressed the commission and the audience about how is going to vote. Esq. Bill Hensley stated I'm in the 2nd district and right now I can vote to put someone on the County Commission from the 1st District. However, in the general election I can't vote for anyone in the 1st District. I personally feel that the commissioners and the people in the 1st District should be selecting who they want to represent them, not me. I've had a lot of calls and I have called a lot of people and I have talked as best I can with the residents of the 1st District through the County Commissioners that represent them. Esq. Bill Hensley continued having said that, there is no loser here. And anyone of these three

candidates would be great. I'll cast my vote as the best I see fit at this present time, keeping in mind it won't be seven or a months before you'll be on the ballot, and the people in the 1st District will indeed get to select their candidate.

Esq. Dwight Bennett stated it's good that we have three people interested to come out and put in the effort to try and get appointed. I think we would have a better county if more people would come out to the meetings and show some interest.

Esq. Mickey Hatcher calls for question.

County Clerk Mitzi Bowen stated one candidate will come up, you will vote yes or no. It will be tallied, the next candidate will come up, you will vote yes or no, and so forth. Once all three have voted, it will be tallied and the results will be on the screen. Esq. Loren Thomas asked for clarification, we will vote yes or no on each person. Esq. Mickey Hatcher stated that is correct, but only one yes vote will be recorded.

Stacy Wigand:

3-Yes (Esq. Sue Jean Wilson, Esq. Loren Thomas, Esq. Bill Hensley)

5- No (Esq. Kenneth Garland, Esq. Mickey Hatcher, Esq. Dwight Bennett, Esq. James Howell, Esq. Gene Wilson)

Marie Rice:

5-Yes (Esq. Gene Wilson, Esq. Mickey Hatcher, Esq. James Howell, Esq. Dwight Bennett, Esq. Kenneth Garland)

3- No (Esq. Sue Jean Wilson, Esq. Loren Thomas, Esq. Bill Hensley)

Michael Baker:

0-Yes

8- No (Esq. Dwight Bennett, Esq. Sue Jean Wilson, Esq. Loren Thomas, Esq. Mickey Hatcher, Esq. Gene Wilson, Esq. Bill Hensley, Esq. James Howell, Esq. Kenneth Garland)

Mrs. Marie Rice is appointed to the Unicoi County Commission to fill the vacant seat in the 1st District.

Esq. Gene Wilson exits the meeting.

Agenda Item #9

Quarterly Report

Motion made by Esq. Bill Hensley, said motion seconded by Esq. James Howell to approve Quarterly Reports for Unicoi County: Health Department, Highway Department, Trustee, and the County Mayors Office.

7-Yes

0-No

1-Absent

Motion approved.

Agenda Item #10
Motion for Adjournment

Motion made by Esq. Dwight Bennett, said motion seconded by Esq. Bill Hensley to adjourn the Special Call meeting of August 6, 2013.

GREG LYNCH, COUNTY MAYOR

MITZI BOWEN, COUNTY CLERK

DR. JAMES M. HATCHER, CHAIRMAN