

**THE REGULAR SESSION OF THE BOARD OF COMMISSION**  
**OF**  
**UNICOI COUNTY, TENNESSEE**  
**JANUARY 24, 2011**

BE IT REMEMBERED that the Unicoi County Board of Commissioners met in Regular Session at the Unicoi County Court House on Monday, January 24, 2011, at 6:00 p.m. Present and Presiding, the Honorable Sue Jean Wilson, Chairman, the Honorable Mitzi Bowen, County Clerk, Doug Shults, County Attorney, and the following Commissioners:

ROLL CALL: Esq. Dwight Bennett, "Yes", Esq. Doug Bowman, "Yes", Esq. Kenneth Garland, "Yes", Esq. Mickey Hatcher, "Yes", Esq. Bill Hensley, "Yes", Esq. James Howell, "Yes", Esq. Loran Thomas, "Yes", Esq. Gene Wilson, "Yes", Esq. Sue Jean Wilson, "Yes".

9- Present

0- Absent

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Esq. Mickey Hatcher opened the meeting with Prayer and the Pledge to the Flag was led by Esq. Dwight Bennett. A moment of silence was observed in honor of Robert Manuel and his family.

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Agenda Item #4  
Approve Minutes

Motion made by Esq. Gene Wilson, said motion seconded by Esq. James Howell that the minutes of December 15, 2010 (Ethics Committee), November 15, 2010 (Special Call), November 22, 2010 (Finance and Regular Session). Chairman Sue Jean Wilson also asked that the name Gilbert H. Murisha be corrected to Joseph Bernard Kelly of Jonesborough on the November 22, 2010 minutes.

8- Aye

0- No

Esq. Doug Bowman abstained.

Motion unanimously approved.

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Agenda Item #5  
Recognize Visitors and Citizens

Honorable Sue Jean Wilson recognized visitors and citizens.

Road Superintendent Terry Haynes addressed the commission concerning the cost during the snow this fiscal year. Mr. Haynes stated that they have had a few accidents and have spent \$112,021.96.

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Agenda Item #6  
Quarterly Reports

Esq. Doug Bowman stated that the budget 2010-2011 cut travel on all of the officeholder's budgets. Mr. Bowman stated that he thought the commissioners should live with the same rules set for the officeholders. Chairman Sue Jean Wilson asked what line item this was. Esq. Bowman responded it was line item #355 Page #1 of the County Commission Budget. Esq. Dwight Bennett stated it was probably form going to orientation. Esq. Bennett also asked for a breakdown by the next meeting to see where the money went.

Chairman Sue Jean Wilson stated that she would like to have a more in depth quarterly report from the school system than what has been received previously. Mrs. Wilson then asked County Mayor if his office could send a letter to the Director of Schools requesting that their quarterly reports be more specific in nature.

Motion made by Esq. Mickey Hatcher, said motion seconded by Esq. Gene Wilson to approve quarterly reports.

9-Aye

0-No

Motion unanimously approved.

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Agenda Item # 7

Consider Resolution regarding Unicoi County Memorial Hospital

Motion made by Esq. Doug Bowman, said motion seconded by Esq. Gene Wilson to approve the Resolution regarding Unicoi County Memorial Hospital.

9-Aye

0-No

Motion unanimously approved.

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Agenda Item #8

Discuss disposal of surplus property

Mayor Greg Lynch addressed the commission regarding the compactor at the Higgins Creek site having several problems over a six month period. Mr. Lynch stated that it was determined that the cost to fix the compactor was more than it would be worth to fix it and continue using it. Some of the parts were taken off the compactor at the Higgins Creek site to fix one at the Unicoi site. At some point Waste Management asked where to put it and Mr. Lynch had the compactor taken to the Hoover site and put outside the gate. A gentleman from R W Edwards Equipment Company stated that he could take a look at the compactor and see what it would cost to repair it. This person notified Mayor Lynch that the compactor is worth \$1,000.00 and he is willing to bid \$1,000.00 on it. Mr. Lynch asked the commission for permission to place the piece of surplus up for bid with the minimum bid being set at \$950.00.

Motion made by Esq. Kenneth Garland, said motion seconded by Esq. Dwight Bennett to sell compactor from Higgins Creek Site to the highest bidder with a reserve at \$1,000.00 minimum bid.

ROLL CALL: Esq. Dwight Bennett, "Yes", Esq. Doug Bowman, "Yes", Esq. Kenneth Garland, "Yes", Esq. Mickey Hatcher, "Yes", Esq. Bill Hensley, "Yes", Esq. James Howell, "Yes", Esq. Loran Thomas, "Yes", Esq. Gene Wilson, "Yes", Esq. Sue Jean Wilson, "Yes".

9-Yes

0-No

Motion unanimously approved.

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Agenda Item # 9

Consider Resolution to opt out of minimum building codes

Mayor Greg Lynch addressed the commission concerning the Resolution to opt out of minimum building codes. Mr. Lynch stated that in July 2010 the county opted out of the

minimum building codes the State of Tennessee wanted the counties to pass. This is not a mandate from the State of Tennessee; however there is a \$100,000.00 grant to local organizations for weatherization. The purpose of the Resolution the State of Tennessee wanted passed is for energy efficiency and fire safety. Mr. Lynch also stated that although the county opted out of the resolution that the hospital lost fifteen points on the grant through the hospital. The Resolution must be voted on again within 180 days which will be up in about a week. Mayor Lynch recommended that the commission vote to opt back out of the minimum code requirement. The Resolution states that at any time the decision can be reversed on action taken. Mr. Lynch has spoken with the assistant fire inspector with the state and he is willing to come and talk to the commission about the codes. Mr. Lynch also stated that what is done tonight is binding in fact that the county would be opted out, but is not binding in the fact that the county could at some point opt in. Esq. Doug Bowman stated that there are some requirements that would be good at some point in time, but some of the building codes and set of regulations could take a long time to learn, much less enforce.

Motion made by Esq. Doug Bowman, said motion seconded by Esq. Kenneth Garland to approve Resolution to opt out of minimum building codes. Chairman Sue Jean Wilson stated that due to the fact the county had previously opted out of the minimum building codes the hospital had to go to the Town of Erwin in order to get approval for replacing the windows in the hospital.

9-Aye

0-No

Motion unanimously approved.

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#### Agenda Item #10

##### Continue discussion on old school bus garage property

Esq. Kenneth Garland stated that in June 2006 the commission had talked about building a school bus garage. Mr. Garland spoke with the owner of the Vance property and asked if he would sell that property to the county with the answer being yes for the amount of \$500,000.00. Mr. Garland then spoke to the school superintendant and she agreed to that. On June 26, 2006 Esq. Garland asked the commission for \$500,000.00 for a school bus garage. It was voted on with a total of 8 yes and 1 no. Esq. Garland amended it at the time that if the bus garage was moved somewhere else then the old county garage would revert back to the county if sold, and the money would be put into Debt Service. Several months later the property was purchased with over one million dollars spent. Now the buses cannot be parked on the property because of sinkholes. Mayor Lynch called attention to a letter sent from the school board concerning the issue. Esq. Gene Wilson asked if the building was still used for storage. Mr. Lynch said yes. Chairman Sue Jean Wilson added that they also parked the buses there as well. Esq. Wilson stated that he had been in the new garage and he is proud to have a building like that for them to work in and it is really nice. Esq. Bill Hensley stated he had three constituents ask him why was property purchased with sinkholes on it, and was the not an ecological survey done on the property to determine if there were sinkholes existed? Esq. Gene Wilson stated that this was the first he had heard of any sinkholes. Esq. Hensley stated he did not have an answer, and didn't know about it until Ms. Rogers made a statement that the buses could not be parked on the property because there are sinkholes on it. Chairman Wilson added there was also a retention pond. Esq. Dwight Bennett asked if they were in agreement with the school board that they would sell it. Esq. Kenneth Garland state that there was a girl from the school board there that night and he doesn't remember what was said but he was going to get the tape of the minutes for that night. Esq. Bill Hensley stated that Mr. Runnion said that the \$500,000.00 on the building and the land. Now if the present property is not used, sale of the property will revert back to the Debt Service fund. Esq. Hensley then stated that when they took that \$500,000.00 they were in agreement. Esq. Gene Wilson said to get the facts right and then we'll come back.

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Agenda Item # 11

Approve Unicoi Water Utility District Commissioner Election

Motion made by Esq. Dwight Bennett, said motion seconded by Esq. Gene Wilson to approve Unicoi Water Utility District Commissioner Election electing Bart Ray with 127 votes to serve a term of four years.

9-Aye

0-No

Motion unanimously approved.

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Agenda Item # 12

Budget Amendments

Motion made by Esq. Dwight Bennett, said motion seconded by Esq. Mickey Hatcher to approve budget amendments. Esq. Kenneth Garland questioned about the medical on the Sheriffs Department Budget Amendment stating that almost \$45,000.00 has been spent, and would like to know how the money is spent. George Berry addressed the commission stating that they do not get the best people in the world. Mr. Berry also stated that Dr. Whitaker of Unicoi is their doctor now and between that and inmate medicine is where most of the money goes. Esq. Garland said that almost \$45,000.00 and we are half way through the budget year and it gets expensive. Mr. Berry responded that about a year ago he checked with the same people that Washington County use, Healthcare Services, and asked the price and it came back to around \$120,000.00 and Sheriff Kent Harris said no to that offer. Esq. Garland said his concern was taking out of budget and putting it into another when it is \$10,000.00. Mr. Berry stated that he believed where the workhouse isn't open yet they are splitting it. Here lately they have been running in the seventies as far as inmates, and they come in with medicine and they have to continue it. Esq. Gene Wilson stated that it is sad when we have seniors who can not afford to buy their medicine but the taxpayers are paying for the inmate medicine. Esq. Kenneth Garland asked why they couldn't take money out of the Drug Fund and transfer it over to medical for the jail. Mr. Berry stated he didn't think that could be done. Mr. Berry did mention a state program "Thinking for a Change", that is a type of rehab that seems to be working pretty good. Esq. Gene Wilson asked how many state inmates were being housed in the jail. Mr. Berry replied there are twenty one state inmates. Mr. Wilson asked if the county had to buy their medicine as well. Mr. Berry replied that we do but supposedly the money the county receives for the state inmate covers it. If a state inmate is in the hospital overnight then the county is reimbursed for that. Esq. Dwight Bennett asked if the inmates could be taken to the Health Department. Mr. Berry stated that they used to be able to take some of the female inmates to the Health Department with female problems and that has kind of slid to the side. Esq. Bennett asked if that is what the Health Department is for, for people who can not afford to go to the doctor. The director of the Health Department then addressed the commission stating that they do not provide primary care services here in the county and there is not a physician on site.

9-Aye

0-No

Motion unanimously approved.

(Copies in File)

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Agenda Item # 13

Committee Reports

Chairman Sue Jean Wilson announced an ambulance service meeting on Thursday, January 27, 2011 at 5:00pm in the small courtroom.

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Agenda Item #14  
Elect Notaries

Motion made by Esq. Kenneth Garland, said motion seconded by Esq. Dwight Bennett to approve the following as Notary Publics: Patricia Gearldine Tilson (Edward Jones Investments) and Patty D. Treadway (County Mayors Office).

9-Aye

0- No

Motion unanimously approved.

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Agenda Item #15  
Motion for Adjournment

Motion made by Esq. Dwight Bennett, said motion seconded by Esq. James Howell to adjourn the meeting of January 24, 2011.

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GREG LYNCH, COUNTY MAYOR

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MITZI BOWEN, COUNTY CLERK

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SUE JEAN WILSON, CHAIRMAN