

Board of Supervisors - May 14, 2020 Regular Meeting

The Wise County Board of Supervisors met in a Regular Meeting on Thursday, May 14, 2020 @ 6:00 p.m. in the School Board Education Center located at 628 Lake Street in Wise. The following members were present:

Honorable John T. Schoolcraft – Chairman
Honorable Steve Bates – Vice-Chairman
Honorable Robert E. Robbins, Jr.
Honorable James Lawson
Honorable Bobby Cassell
Honorable Fred Luntsford (By Phone)
Honorable Robert R. Adkins
Honorable J. H. Rivers – members of said Board and
Michael W. Hatfield – County Administrator
Karen T. Mullins – County Attorney
Annette Underwood – Executive Secretary

PRAYER

Bob Adkins led in prayer.

PLEDGE

All led in the pledge of allegiance to the flag.

MINUTES

A motion was made by Robby Robbins, seconded by James Lawson, to approve the minutes of April 09, 2020 as presented. The motion was unanimously approved.

AGENDA

A motion was made by Robby Robbins, seconded by Steve Bates, to approve the agenda as presented to include the items in red. The motion was unanimously approved.

IN RE: AUDIT FY 2019 PRESENTATION

Emily Viers, representing Robinson, Farmer and Cox Associates, provided, by Zoom, an overview of the County Audit ending June 30, 2019. She explained that there are three (3) components in the audit which include the School Board, PSA, and the IDA. In order to give a clean opinion, all reports must be in final form. It took a while to get one of the component unit's reports, which caused a delay in completing the County's 2019 Audit. The audit has now been completed with a clean opinion, which means the books and records were in good order under the quality of standards and in general compliance.

Ms. Viers mentioned several things the Board needs to consider in the coming year as a result of COVID-19 impact: such as refinancing debt and budget considerations.

IN RE: SCHOOL BOARD FY 2020/21 BUDGET PRESENTATION

Greg Mullins Superintendent of Public Schools, and Beth Shupe, Finance Director, came before the Board remotely, by Zoom, to present the School Board proposed FY 2020/21 budget.

Dr. Mullins stated that the schools, as well as others, have been impacted by COVID-19 causing many changes in the way we live and work. He explained actions that have been taken by the school system to feed the children during this pandemic as well as being available for support for those having emotional problems at this time. At this point, plans are being made for a variety of possibilities for meeting the guidelines set forth by the Governor once the schools are opened.

Finance Director Shupe stated that the State has unallocated \$1.3M to Wise County School budget, and the School Budget has not been adjusted to that change in funding. The School has been advised by the State Superintendent to present the school budget based on the Governor's proposed count template that was given before the unallocated funds came about. The General Assembly will let the school know in the Fall what adjustments need to be made for sales taxes for any of the unallocated funds. The school also has CARES Act Funding that has been designated for the school system that will be used for COVID-19 expenses only, which will last for the next two (2) years. The total budget for this year is \$63,416,500. The large increase is to instruction for personnel. The school is trying to get teachers' salaries and other employees in line with the region to enable the school system to maintain teachers and employees in Wise County. If any amendments are made to the budget, those amendments will be brought back to the Board of Supervisors for approval.

Supervisor Lawson asked the status of the money that has been budgeted for food, transportation, etc.

Ms. Shupe stated that the savings hoped for during this time has been spent on transportation and extra food. She noted that if the school is to absorb the local cuts that have been made, could they carry over any funds that the school has yielded from these savings to be used next year.

Supervisor Lawson asked that the Board be advised on how these left-over funds are to be moved forward.

There was a brief discussion on the CARES Act funding and how those funds will be divided.

IN RE: COUNTY FY 2020/21 BUDGET PRESENTATION

Administrator Hatfield provided the Board with a power point presentation of the County's proposed FY 2020/21 Budget. He noted that he has budgeted as if no impact will be felt by the current Pandemic.

Budget Update Summary: Revenues: \$56,165,556.81
Expenditures: \$56,165,556.81

Revenue changes from FY 2020:

- General Property Taxes Level
- Slight Coal Severance Decrease
- Slight Sales Tax Increase
- Overall revenues up .. \$651,002.80
- No projected increase in tax rate

Expenditures – changes from FY 2019

- School Debt increase by \$1,051,556
- VRS increase from FY 2020 – New rate is 13.19%
- Health Insurance Decrease of 2% (Employee portion no change)
- Slight decrease capital outlay expenses
- Increase in several other departments (Mandated or required)
- 0% COLA included for County Employees

Expenditures General Fund amounts over \$1M

\$16,129,427...Wise County Schools – Local Funds
 \$12,138,078 ...Social Services – Approximately 13% funded by local
 \$ 4,991,408 ... Law Enforcement & 911 (Approximately \$2.5M funded by state)
 \$ 3,147,652.... Regional Jail – All local funded
 \$ 2,074,870... Landfill & Collection costs – All local funded
 \$ 1,297,033 ...Commonwealth Attorney (\$765K funded by state)

Other information

- Wise County School Board ... (Approved school budget requests level local funding)
- Continued effort to decrease costs in all County departments in the coming year
- Spending will be scrutinized during the first part of the budget cycle until we see the final impact of the Pandemic on Revenues

Notes for Board

Total draft School Funding is \$16,129,427 (\$1,051,556 increase from FY 2019). The entire increase is due to increase in debt service. This is covered by 3 cents set aside.

IN RE: COMMUNITY SERVICES FACILITY NEEDS UPDATE

Administrator Hatfield provided a power point presentation on the facilities of need that have been noted as departments that could be moved to the Community Services Facility (Kelly building), which would be most cost effective for the County.

He reviewed different scenarios just for housing the Department of Social Services. Social Services occupied the old bowling alley building that was damaged in 2015 by a snowstorm. Due to the continued decline in the structure of the building, Social services was moved to the Sykes Facility at the Tech Park in 2019 with a two (2- year agreement with VCEDA to use the building).

The following facilities have been reviewed as a possible site for DSS:

- Renovate former Kelly Building \$6,331,500
- Demolish and build new at Kelly site \$6,789,700
- New building at Bear Creek Park\$7,244,000
- New building at old Bowling Alley site\$6,883,000

Other Facilities

- Tear down jail & build annex for Judges & Courtrooms (2009 Needs Assessment cost) ... \$22,250,956
- Lonesome Pine Office on Youth .. Estimated value (based upon Assessment).....\$132,700

-----Total estimated cost of repairs..... \$100,000

Cost Comparison

- Total estimated cost for needs with separate facilities... \$29,233,956
- Estimated cost for School renovation (Includes 15% contingency)\$23,222,834
- Estimated cost for Courthouse renovation \$1,000,000
- Costs do not include Architecture

Immediate Needs at Kelly Building

- Replace roof
- Replace Windows
- Electric Upgrades
- Plumbing Upgrades

Source of Income

- 2 cents set aside on local taxes
- Approximately \$60,000 per year from DSS
- Approximately \$66,000 per year from Health Department
- \$105,000 AML Grant

Advantages of Kelly Building

- Already owned by County
- Can start construction immediately
- One stop shop for County citizens
- Gets citizens out of Courthouse
- Cost
- May spur economic Development on Lake Street
- Improves Drainage on Birchfield Creek

Disadvantages

- Costs more than DSS Building alone
- Schools may not want to move

Administrator Hatfield reviewed the preliminary layout of the Kelly building showing each floor with details on offices that would occupy each floor. He stated that renovation of the Kelly building would be more cost effective, and meet the needs of the different offices

The Health Department needs more space. At present, closets have been turned into office space. However, Dr. Cantrell has indicated that their department does not need to move at this time.

The School Board Central offices has problems with their basement flooding and some offices are scattered to other buildings. Superintendent Mullins said they would not have to move at this time but would look at the design once it has been finished.

At the courthouse, the judges need more space. There are four (4) judges and three (3) courtrooms. There is not enough space to provide another courtroom. Several offices in the courthouse could be moved to the Kelly building, which would allow more space for the judges and other court related matters.

The Lonesome Pine Office on Youth is another office that could be moved. That existing office needs repairs for an estimated cost of \$100,000.

In 2018, cost estimates showing that renovation of the Kelly building would cost less in the long run than demolishing the building and rebuilding.

Administrator Hatfield told the Board he needs direction on whether to move forward on the Kelly building or look elsewhere for a site for Social Services.

The Board discussed several proposed sites for DSS stating advantages and disadvantages of each. It was agreed that a decision must be made soon to meet the time frame for DSS to move.

Supervisor Rivers voiced his concerns about the impact COVID-19 will have on County finances, and some of the offices may not want to move to Kelly as noted by Administrator Hatfield. He was also concerned about the outcome of the 2020 census, and the possible decrease in federal funding. With these unknowns, he would prefer finding a location to house DSS. Regarding the Lonesome Pine Office on Youth, he would not want that department moved since it is in a central location to serve other areas.

Supervisor Bates said putting all these departments together in one location would be better than building several offices and more cost effective than building several buildings. He feels that Kelly would be the best site. If not, demolish Kelly and Pound and move on.

Supervisor Lawson being concerned about County finances, made a suggestion to re-purpose an existing building such as the old Magic Mart or Goody's to house all the different offices or find a vacant site and build to meet the needs of DSS.

Administrator Hatfield explained that some of these sites that have been mentioned are in the long- range plans for economic development. By using the Kelly building, it could possibly bring development along the Lake Street area for the Town of Wise, which could spread into the County as well.

Supervisor Cassell believes that Kelly would be the best option for DSS and all the departments mentioned. However, due to the existing circumstances of today and the uncertainty of our future, he did not think the County should go that much in debt. He made a motion that Administrator Hatfield get with DSS Director Gary Blankenbecler and come up with a site or building in the next two (2) weeks for DSS or whatever time frame the Board decides, and further that the Kelly building be torn down within the next six months. Steve Bates seconded the motion and added that the findings come back to the Board in June.

Attorney Mullins advised that this item must be placed on the agenda to allow a motion on the DSS building.

Supervisor Cassell withdrew his motion. Supervisor Bates withdrew his second.

J. H. Rivers made a motion to amend the agenda to allow Board action on the DSS building and for the demolition of the Kelly building. The motion was unanimously approved.

IN RE: SOCIAL SERVICES DEPARTMENT BUILDING SITE

A motion was made by Bobby Cassell, seconded by Steve Bates, to authorize Administrator Hatfield to get with DSS Director Gary Blankenbecler to find a site or building for the DSS, and bring his findings back to the Board in June, and further that the Kelly building be torn down within the next 6 (six) months.

Supervisor Cassell was asked to amend his motion to include the demolition of Pound High School

Supervisor Cassell amended his motion to include demolition of Pound High School. Supervisor Bates seconded the amendment. The motion was unanimously approved.

It was also mentioned that some time ago it was agreed that the old jail building be torn down. Since that has not taken place, it was asked why that has not been done.

Administrator Hatfield explained that money has been set aside to demolish the jail, but circumstances has prevented that from happening. He noted that there are certain steps that must be taken before these buildings can be torn down. However, if the budget allows, all three (3) buildings will be on the table to be torn down.

IN RE: CONSENT AGENDA

A motion was made by Steve Bates, seconded by Robby Robbins, to approve the consent agenda as follows:

IN RE: RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF CDBG APPLICATION – VOUCHER ASSISTANCE PROJECT

Approved the resolution in support of Wise County wishes to apply for \$187,000 in Virginia Community Development Block Grant (VCDBG) COVID-19 Response funding for the “ Voucher Assistance Project”

RESOLUTION #18- 2020

(Said resolution is on file in the County Administrator’s Office)

IN RE: PUBLIC HEARING -ORDINANCE SECURITY PROCESSING FEE

Set a public hearing (6-11-2020 @ 6:00 p.m.) on a proposed amendment to the Wise County Security Processing Fee Ordinance

IN RE: PUBLIC HEARING – COUNTY’S FY 2020/21 BUDGET

Set a public hearing (6-11-2020 @ 6:00 p.m.) on the County’s proposed FY 2020/21 budget

IN RE: ORDINANCE #4-1998 DUAL REAL ESTATE TAX TICKET AMENDMENT

Ratified corrected amendment to Dual Real Estate Tax Ticket Ordinance #4-1998

ORDINANCE AMENDMENT

(Said amendment on file in the County Administrator’s Office)

IN RE: RESOLUTION COVID-19 LOAN PROGRAM

Ratified resolution providing funding for Wise County COVID-19 Loan Program

RESOLUTION #19 – 2020

(Said resolution is on file in the County Administrator’s Office)

IN RE: AGREEMENT ---- LOAN FOR COVID-19 LOAN PROGRAM

Approved the loan agreement between Wise County and the Wise County IDA for the sum of \$150,000 to be re-loaned to local businesses located in Wise County which have been negatively impacted by COVID-19 for working capital and operating expenses

IN RE: T&L RETAINER AGREEMENT AMENDMENT

Approved amendment #1 to Retainer Agreement between Wise County and T&L extending the term of the Retainer Agreement until December 31, 2020

IN RE: T&L RETAINER AGREEMENT (MOU #22)

Approved MOU #22 to Retainer Agreement between Wise County and T&L to prepare the 2020 Semi-Annual Groundwater Report for submission to DEQ

IN RE: SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT PLAN

Approved the Wise County 5-Year update of the Wise County Solid Waste Management Plan to be submitted to DEQ

IN RE: COMPREHENSIVE IMPROVEMENT PLAN (CIP)

Approved the County's FY 2020 CIP Plan as presented.

The motion to approve the consent agenda was unanimously approved.

IN RE: AUDIT FY 2019

A motion was made by Robby Robbins, seconded by James Lawson, to approve the County's FY 2019 audit as presented. The motion was unanimously approved.

IN RE: BUDGET AMENDMENTS

A motion was made by Bob Adkins, seconded by Robby Robbins, to approved budget amendment #39 - #44 as presented. The motion was unanimously approved.

IN RE: APPOINTMENT – LONESOME PINE YOUTH SERVICES BOARD

A motion was made by James Lawson, seconded by Robby Robbins, to appoint Shelley Richards to the Lonesome Pine Youth Services Board for a term of four (4) years. The motion was unanimously approved.

IN RE: APPOINTMENT – BUILDING CODE AND APPEALS BOARD

A motion was made by Bob Adkins, seconded by Steve Bates, to re-appoint Bill Wampler to the Building Code and Appeals Board for a term of five (5) years. The motion was unanimously approved.

IN RE: APPOINTMENT – COMMUNITY POLICY AND MANAGEMENT BOARD

Bob Adkins nominated Charles Sanders for re-appointment to the Community Policy and Management Board.

J. H. Rivers made a motion that nominations cease, and Charles Sanders be re-appointed by acclamation. Robby Robbins seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

IN RE: APPOINTMENT – IDA

A motion was made by Steve Bates, seconded by Bobby Cassell, to re-appoint Cliff Carson to the IDA for a term of four (4) years. The motion was unanimously approved.

IN RE: APPOINTMENT – PLANNING COMMISSION

A motion was made by J. H. Rivers to table the appointment to the Planning Commission until next month. John Schoolcraft seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

IN RE: RESOLUTION OPPOSING APPALACHIAN POWER RATE INCREASE

A motion was made by J. H. Rivers, seconded by Robby Robbins, to table the resolution on opposing the Appalachian Power rate increase, and direct the County Attorney and County Administrator to look for other increases and changes that are being requested other than a rate increase. The motion was unanimously approved.

IN RE: RESOLUTION – REOPENING SOUTHWEST VIRGINIA

A motion was made by Robby Robbins, seconded by James Lawson, to approve the resolution requesting the Governor of Virginia to consider modifying the reopening of the Commonwealth of Virginia on a regional basis, in which Southwest Virginia would have the flexibility to enter Phase II of reopening. The motion was unanimously approved.

RESOLUTION #20-2020

(Said resolution is on file in the County Administrator's Office)

IN RE: RESOLUTION COVID-19 PANDEMIC

A motion was made by Bob Adkins, seconded by J. H. Rivers, to approve the resolution asking our Delegates, Senators, and the Governor, to direct for distribution to Ballad Health, a portion of the CARES Act Federal Funding to assist and defray the detrimental financial impact to Ballad Health during this Pandemic. The motion was unanimously approved.

RESOLUTION # 21-2020

(Said resolution is on file in the County Administrator's office)

COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT

Administrator Hatfield gave an update on the status of the Small Business Loan Program created by the Board of Supervisors, LENOWISCO, and VCEDA for financial assistance to small businesses in Wise County due to COVID-19 impact on the economy, and the Voucher Assistance Program. He stated that funds in the amount of \$3.2M will be coming to Wise County thru the CARES Act, which will be divided between the towns and the County.

BOARD COMMENTS

Board members voiced their concerns about COVID-19 and the impact it has had on our economy as well as the whole world. Different suggestions were made that could possibly move the County forward by working together and making wise decisions.

ADJOURN

There being no further business, a motion was made by Robby Robbins, seconded by Steve Bates, to adjourn the meeting at 8:40 p.m. The motion was unanimously approved.

ATTEST:

WISE COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

Michael W. Hatfield, Clerk

John T. Schoolcraft, Chairman